

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1801

Somehow, Joan felt like Larry had not been as enthusiastic as he used to that morning. It was as if the man was only reciting a well-rehearsed line like he was doing it out of obligation.

Her face fell.

Knock, knock. Joan was perplexed to hear someone knocking on her door.

Especially since she was at someplace not many people knew who she was. All of a sudden, she recalled something and rushed to her door.

It's really him! ||Dustin, what's the matter with you? It's still so early.||

Joan deliberately said

as she stretched herself out.

—What early? Will you look at the time already? Let's go, hurry!|| Dustin said.

—Where are we going? What's the hurry?|| Joan looked at the man before her with a surprised look.

—Joan, I'm being serious right now. I know a lot of had happened recently, and so you need

to do another round of body check-up to make sure there won't be any complications in

the future.|| Dustin looked at Joan solemnly.

—Alright, get packing. Don't worry, I won't lay a finger on you. We're friends, right?|| Dustin said.

Why am I so prejudiced toward Dustin? He's my best friend, for goodness' sake!

Dustin actually cared more for Joan's health more than anything right then. All that other

stuff about Larry or love or any possibilities of relationships could not compare to the health

of Joan. There was only hope for all those stuff if she was healthy.

—Okay, would you wait for a moment? I'll be ready in a second,|| Joan said and dashed for the washroom.

Dustin was right. She had been preoccupied with a lot of things recently, and there was always one thing or another to worry about. Suddenly, she was overcome by fear that a tumor or something might have cropped up in her brain again. She had lost Larry once, and she could not bear with the thought of parting with him again. They reached the hospital in no time.

—Joan, would you wait for me for a while here? I'll go handle the registration.|| Dustin added.

—Sure.|| Joan nodded her head in reply. She was suddenly thankful for Dustin, as she would not have thought about this check-up if it wasn't for him. There were a lot of people in the hospital. Even though he was a doctor, Dustin was not spared from the rules. He had to line up for the registration procedure as well.

She waited in the lobby, waiting for Dustin to come get her.

—Uh...|| An old man appeared in front of Joan all of a sudden.

The man clutched his abdomen and appeared to be in agony.

Joan glanced at her surroundings and noticed that there was no one who could be the old man's relative. The hospital was bustling with patients and busy nurses, and nobody had noticed that the old man was in pain.

—Mister, what's wrong?|| Joan stepped forward to steady the old man.

—My stomach... it's so painful...|| The old man leaned against Joan's shoulders.

—Mister, hold it in, we're going to get you a doctor,|| Joan said with a gentle voice as she patted his back.

—Miss, would you please help me to my ward? There are doctors there...|| The old man

seemed to have drained all his energy to utter that sentence.

Joan steadied the old man into the ward without hesitation.

As the old man said, there were two doctors in the ward, and they arranged tubing for the

old man as soon as they noticed him writhing in pain.

—Doctor, is he going to be alright?|| Joan looked worriedly at the old man on the hospital

bed.

It had been too dangerous back in the lobby just now. Joan was afraid that he might even faint back there.

—He's going to be alright.|| The doctor did not even bother to lift his head.

However, Joan suddenly found the old man's face to be quite familiar. Have I seen him someplace else?

Her mind went into overdrive trying to recall the face but to no avail.

—Water...|| The old man finally opened his eyes.

Joan poured a glass of water and handed it over to him. —You're still here,|| the old man said.

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Joan managed an awkward smile. There was no one by the old man's side, and she could not bear to leave him alone. Besides, the man looked like he was from Chanaea too.

—Mister, where is your family?|| Joan asked.

Dustin was still waiting for her, and she could not stay for long to accompany the old man.

—My family? I didn't ask them to come here.|| The man drank a sip of water and replied in a small voice.

Is he saying that he really has no one else besides the doctors and nurses here?

—My son is back in Chanaea, and he's busy with work. I cannot bother him with this...|| the old man explained.

Does your son think that his company is more important than you?

Joan's face turned grim at the thought.

—His career is finally getting off the ground. I cannot distract him.

—Miss, I noticed that you looked quite troubled back in the lobby too. Did something

happen to you?|| The old man asked with a weak voice.

Joan smiled awkwardly again. She had not expected that the old man was asking about her despite him being in that state.

—Oh, it's nothing. Just something bugging me back in Chanaea,|| Joan replied meekly.

The man looked at her with a puzzled look on his face, —Miss, if you trust me, please tell me

what's bothering you. I'll help you out,|| the old man said with a determined tone.

Forget it. I'd better not burden others with such matters. Besides, he wouldn't be able to help me anyway.

—Mister, it's complicated. I'll think of something, don't worry about it.||

Joan rubbed his back

gently and reassured the man.

The old man narrowed his small eyes and smiled. There is really nothing I can't solve in this world.

—Miss, I don't like being indebted toward others. Please do tell me what's bothering you

back in Chanaea. Don't worry, I will make sure that it gets resolved,|| the old man sounded really confident.

Joan cast a glance around the ward and looked at the man on the bed.

He doesn't seem like

he's an ordinary old man.

Joan hesitated for a moment and told him the thing about the Alpire Group trying to take

over the subsidiary of the Norton Corporation. She was not actually pinning any hopes on

the old man. To be frank, she was just trying to vent her frustration since the old man was

keen to listen.

—Oh, that.|| The glint in his eyes dimmed.

—Joan! Joan!|| Dustin kept calling out her name in the hallway.

He was just away for the registration procedure, but Joan was gone in the blink of an eye.

—Mister, this is a hospital. Please keep it down.|| A doctor grabbed him by his arms and warned him.

Joan bade goodbye to the old man after noticing Dustin calling out her name and turned around to leave the ward.

—Dustin, I'm here!|| Joan waved in Dustin's direction.
—Where did you go just now? You really gave me a good fright, woman.
I thought I lost
you.|| Dustin complained in a low voice.
—Where else can I be? I just helped an old man get back to his ward.
Can we proceed with
the check-up now?|| Joan patted Dustin's shoulders lightly.
They reached the room for Joan's check-up. Dustin gave her a few pieces
of advice before
he waited for her to complete the check-up.
It would be a lie if Dustin had said that there was no ulterior motive to
his trip this time,
although he was genuinely worried about Joan's health. However, this
trip had proven to be
the chance for Dustin and Joan to hang out alone. As for Larry, the man
must have been
swamped back in the Chanaea.
Sometimes, Dustin wondered if he should thank Gabriella.
Joan had only come out of the room after some time. —How is she?||
Dustin asked the doctor
immediately.
He had not personally examined Joan because he was afraid of finding
out that there was
indeed a new tumor in her brain.
—Um...|| The doctor stuttered.
—Why don't you come and take a look yourself?|| The doctor asked
Dustin. Joan felt a wave
of apprehension wash over her as she noticed the doctor's odd
demeanor.
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Has something gone wrong with my brain... again? Joan sat at a chair
aside and rubbed her
hands together nervously.
—Joan has fully recovered, but Dustin, you have to know that a patient's
emotions will affect
the rate of her recovery. Don't burden her with too many things in the
future as she needs
to be in better control of her emotions. I'm not sure what happened to
her but it was

obvious that she had not managed her emotions well,|| the doctor said with a stern look on his face.

—However, I'd like to add that she's doing rather well. She just needs to be in control of her emotions. Do spare some time and take her out for some fresh air. It will help her

condition,|| the doctor added, as an attempt to ease Dustin's worries. After stepping out of the doctor's office, Dustin looked at Joan apprehensively.

I have to protect her from getting upset. She cannot bear to be troubled by any more harrowing news.

—Dustin, what's the matter? Is there something wrong with my brain again?|| Joan was feeling anxious as she waited for Dustin to break the news to her.

—Look at you being all anxious. The doctor said you're fine. But Joan, you have to promise me not to overthink those complicated matters okay? You need to take a good rest and just relax.|| Dustin looked at the woman seriously.

So, I'm alright. Joan heaved a sigh of relief.

She thought that a new tumor had been growing in her brain again when Dustin was summoned into the doctor's office right away.

—Don't worry about it. I'm out of the country to relax, Dustin,|| Joan said as she tapped on her chest confidently.

Dustin knew the woman was just putting up a strong front. Of course, he was well aware that Joan was still worried about the Alpire Group acquiring the Norton Corporation's subsidiary company. However, Gabriella was the mastermind behind it, and there was nothing he could do.

There was no changing Gabriella's mind unless Jory's father decided to intercept in the matter.

—Okay, Joan. I'll be honest with you. The doctor told me that there's nothing wrong with

your body. It's just that you have to manage your emotions well because it affects the health

of your brain. So, you need to relax,|| Dustin said with a stern face.

I see. My emotions have been all over the place, especially when I was back in Chanaea. She

would lose her sleep along with Larry and would get upset together with Larry. It was

especially apparent when the man felt anxious and helpless at the acquisition of the

subsidiary of Norton Corporation by the Alpire Group.

—Okay, well noted on that, Dustin. Thank you for taking me here today.||

Joan managed a

thin smile.

She needed to take good care of her body because she was not alone.

I have Larry now. I cannot leave him, and I can't.

—Joan, let's go hiking tomorrow. It's been a while,|| Dustin suggested out of the blue.

Why is he thinking about hiking right now?

However, she thought it was a good way to distract herself.

—Okay, let's go hiking tomorrow,|| Joan replied in a heartbeat.

She did not wish to give the thing about Larry and Gabriella much thought. Joan knew that

she had to learn to let some things go, and to erase certain images from her head for the

sake of her body and her brain.

Ring...

—Larry? Why would you call at this hour?|| Joan was stumped.

They would always call in the morning and at night, but it was the noon.

The timing was

odd.

—Joan, the company is back!|| The excitement on the other end of the phone was infectious.

The company is back? What does he mean?

Joan was bemused.

—Larry, what did you just say? I don't understand,|| Joan asked in a low voice.

—Joan, you know the thing about the Alpire Group acquiring the subsidiary of Norton

Corporation? They've just decided to revoke the decision! For real! Oh, I don't know how to

thank you!|| Larry beamed.

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Joan was confounded. What does the matter at the company have anything to do with me?

—Larry, this is really great news, but why are you thanking me?|| Joan asked out of confusion.

She had contributed nothing to the matter as she had been overseas all this time.

Larry paused for a moment and cleared his throat.

—Yes, I am thanking you. Didn't you save Jory's father? He called and asked Jory to give the

company back to us,|| Larry explained.

What? When did I save Jory's father? Joan felt like she was in a very strange dream.

—Larry, what are you saying? When did I save Jory's father?||

—Joan, just stay there for the time being. I'll catch a flight there after I've dealt with matters

here.|| Larry hung up the phone afterward.

The line went dead, and Joan realized that he had hung up on her.

I saved Jory's father? When? How?

She had only been there for a few days, and had not met anyone in particular, only Dustin...

and the old man.

Could he be the old man?

Is he Jory's father? Really?

What a coincidence.

Then, the old man's words rang in her ears, about how he could help her solve her

problems.

She made her way back to the old man's ward. The old man was laying on the bed, reading

a newspaper with his spectacles on. She noticed that the old man was engrossed in his

paper, and Joan almost could not bear to disturb his tranquil moment.

—Get in here. What are you standing out there for?|| The man did not even lift his head and

said.

How does he know that I'm standing right outside?

—Um, Mister. I'd like to ask you something.|| Joan said awkwardly as she scratched the back

of her head.

—Fire away. Is it about the company?|| The old man readjusted his glasses.

—Um, yes. Did you really ask Jory to do that? Are you really Mr. Synder's father?|| Joan

gauged the man before her, flabbergasted at the coincidence.

The old man looked at Joan and smiled.

Yes, that's true.

—Yes, you're right. I am Jory's father,|| the old man replied.

—Thank you, thank you so much for helping us.|| Joan hurriedly bowed to the generous old man.

Somehow, Joan found it surprising that the man was indeed Jory's father.

—So, how do you plan on thanking me?|| The old man folded his papers. It was a tough question.

She did not have money, power, nor the ability to repay him. How should I thank him

then? Helpless, Joan lowered her head.

—Miss, why don't you just cook for me?|| The old man suggested.

—I haven't been able to enjoy a proper homecooked meal ever since coming here. So, could

you just cook for me, until the day you leave here? We'll call it even then.|| The old man

smiled.

—Really? Is it that simple?|| Joan looked at him in disbelief.

—Yes, it is. I know that you're going to be even more uncomfortable if I don't ask you to do

something. So, just cook for me, will you?|| The old man then continued to browse through

his paper.

—Okay, Mister. Since you've already requested it, I will cook for you starting tomorrow,|| Joan

said reassuringly.

The old man chuckled to see her all worked up.

The sun had already come up for some time while the woman in bed still had her eyes

closed while she enjoyed the warmth.

It had been a long time since Joan last had a good night's sleep.

Ring...

—Hello,|| Joan greeted as she yawned.

—Joan, what are you doing? Are you still in bed? We're heading out right now. Hurry up,||

Dustin egged her on.

Joan sprung out of her bed right away.

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—What are you talking about, Dustin?|| the woman asked while rubbing her eyes.

—Come on, Joan, don't tell me you've forgotten about it. Didn't we say we're going hiking

today? I've waited a long time for this.||

Joan suddenly remembered their plan and shot out of bed, rushing for the bathroom.

—I'll be there in a bit!|| she cried out before hanging up the phone.

She had taken some sleeping pills to get a good night's sleep, so she accidentally overslept this morning.

Dang! This is so embarrassing. Everyone must be waiting for me...

—Hey, Joan, where are you now?|| Dustin asked wearily when he called again, —Are you even

coming?||

—I'm here! I'm here!|| Joan rushed out over the phone as she ran toward him.

Dustin was looking into the sky when she saw him.

She looked around but saw no one else.

Hm? I thought he said there were other people. Where are all of them?

Did they go

somewhere?

—They headed off already. Come, let's take a picture to commemorate this special moment,||

Dustin said, finding a good angle for a selfie.

Joan cast him a confused look.

—Joan's late today,|| Dustin said as his fingers flew across his phone's keyboard before

posting the picture on his social media.

Gabriella saw the photo right after Dustin posted it.

Joan Watts, you're seriously unbelievable. You're stringing Larry along over here while

playing around with Dustin when you're abroad. What a b*tch.

Gabriella quickly took a screenshot of the picture and saved it. All she had to do was let

Larry have a look at what Joan was up to when the woman went overseas.

—Hey, Larry, you free to talk right now? I have something to tell you,|| Gabriella asked with a cute voice.

—What is it? I don't have time for your bullshit,|| Larry replied blatantly. Do you really find me that annoying?

Gabriella clenched her jaw while listening to his antipathic voice. —You might be interested in a picture I have...||

—I'm not interested,|| the man stated curtly, cutting her short.

—I've already sent it to you. I'm sure you'll be interested,|| she insisted. Ding! A notification sounded, indicating that the picture of Joan and Dustin had just been sent to Larry's phone.

Why are they together?

Larry's glare turned cold the moment he saw the two people in the photo.

—Seriously, why are you so slow?|| Dustin shouted at Joan.

The latter was panting desperately as she turned to look at Dustin, who was standing not too far away from her.

—I'm just not as fit as you, okay?||

He only cares about himself. Can't he see I'm dying here already?

Despite knowing that her stamina was not as good as his, Dustin deliberately climbed faster to tire her out. He wanted her to forget about everything else and focus on this moment. In

his eyes, that was the only way she could vent all her pent-up emotions.

He could read Joan

like an open book. Although the woman was not verbal about her emotions, he knew exactly how she felt.

—The sun's gonna set if you don't hurry up!|| he cried out ahead of her.

Joan trailed his gaze and looked at the darkening sky.

It really is getting late. I can't give up now. I've already come so far. With that thought in

mind, Joan mustered all her strength and headed up toward Dustin.

By the time the two of them reached the top of the hill, the sky had already turned dark.

Joan sat on the ground, rubbing her sore knees.

—Ha!! Dustin suddenly shouted at the top of his lungs, looking from the hilltop.

Joan whipped her head towards him, horrified.

Why's he shouting? Is he depressed or something? He seriously has nothing to worry about.

He does everything he likes.

—Come over here, Joan. Shout your heart out,|| Dustin said, pulling her up.

—Why should I? I'm feeling okay. I have nothing to shout about,|| Joan said, pushing him

away.

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Joan did not want to behave like a lunatic. Besides, she was sapped of all her energy after

hiking all the way up to the top.

—Come on, don't be such a bore. It's not like you come hiking every day. You need to vent all

the frustration you keep in your heart,|| Dustin urged, patting her on the shoulder.

Despite his attempts at persuading her, all Joan could think about at that moment was her

bed. —I'm so tired. I just want to rest. There's nothing I need to vent about. I'm serious.||

Dustin looked at his passive companion and took out his phone with a sigh. —One, two,

three, smile!!

—Hey, why didn't you tell me you're taking a picture? I didn't have time to pose!! Joan

complained, combing her hair with her fingers.

She looked disheveled after all the climbing. Her legs, her arms, and her face were all

smudged with dirt.

—Don't be so fussy. I should stop going easy on you from now on. I'm gonna start training

you,|| Dustin chided, looking at her from the corner of his eyes.

After lingering at the hilltop for a while, the two went down as the moon drew nigh.

Although the surrounding was almost pitch dark, Joan was not fearful. The night inexplicably calmed her down. It was probably because she had not gone hiking for some time.

She was spent, but satisfied.

Suddenly, she let out a sharp cry. —Ah!|| Dustin dashed back toward her when he heard her shriek.

—What’s the matter?|| he asked with concern and worry written all over his facial features.

—Nothing. I just need to rest a little. I might have sprained my ankle.||

Joan’s face contorted in pain as she spoke.

The man looked at her ankle and confirmed that she was really hurt.

Without further ado,

Dustin squatted down and put her on his back before going down the hill.

—What are you doing? Put me down. You’re going to tire yourself out like this,|| Joan insisted, squirming in an attempt to get down from his back.

—Stop moving. We’re not reaching the exit anytime soon if you’re walking on your own. I still

need to get some sleep,|| he scowled, rejecting her request outright.

Joan looked at the ill-lit sky and relented.

There were a few other hikers who were headed down the mountain with them.

—Wow, look at that man. He’s so handsome!|| a woman commented enviously.

—What a beautiful couple. The boyfriend is so sweet to his girlfriend,|| the woman’s companion added.

All Joan could think about was Dustin. She felt so bad for putting him in such a situation.

The sweat on his forehead rolled down his collarbone furiously, soaking his shirt. Joan wiped

his sweat away whatever way she could despite feeling a little awkward.

—I should take a picture of them. I bet they’ll go viral on Twitter,|| the woman from before

said as she took out her phone.

—Hey, you'll need to get their permission first,|| her friend reminded her.

—It's okay. It's not like we can see their faces from where we're standing anyways. Their backs are facing us.||

The woman snapped a photo of Dustin and Joan as she spoke. Dustin's body had grown so numb he lost track of time. He almost did not realize they had already reached the foot of the mountain. Joan dipped her head and looked at him worriedly, afraid that he would collapse.

—It's too late to get back safely now. We should just put up the night at a hotel,|| Dustin

suggested while panting heavily.

Joan could not bring herself to make any further requests, so she went with his plan and followed him into a nearby hotel.

—What? There's only one room left?|| Joan exclaimed with her eyes wide in disbelief.

—You heard that right. Many people come here to hike these days, so our hotel only has one available room now. It's no big deal for a man and a woman to stay together in one room.

We're living in the 21st century after all,|| the receptionist said.

At that statement, Joan's eyes widened a fraction. What? Dustin and I aren't even a couple!

But this was the only hotel around the area – they had no other option. Dustin took a careful look at Joan before suggesting cautiously, —Why don't we just stay here tonight?||

—Of course not. How am I supposed to explain the situation to Larry after I get back?|| Joan questioned.

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Speaking of Larry again!

Gloom spread across Dustin's eyes when he heard that man's name.

—There's nothing else we can do right now. It's not like we can just camp outside however

we like, and I don't think any more cabs are operating at this hour.||

Joan looked around at the empty road, feeling vexed at how his statement rang true.

Before she could make up her mind, a woman barged into the hotel. —Are there any rooms available?|| she asked.

Dustin shot Joan an anxious look.

—Excuse me! I thought we already reserved the room?|| The former darted over to the receptionist, wearing his brightest smile.

The receptionist looked at the dashing young man before her and smiled.

—I'd love to give the room to you, but your girlfriend hasn't agreed to it,|| she stated,

shooting a pointed look at Joan.

—It's fine. We'll take the last room,|| Dustin replied swiftly.

The woman who had just come in glared at him from the corner of her eyes and left in a

huff after hearing his reply. Joan still had not figured out what her next course of action would be.

—Are you coming, Joan? I've already booked the room. Stop thinking about Larry already.

You can explain everything to him after this. Yes, I like you, but it's not like I'll do something

to you without your consent,|| Dustin muttered.

It was true that he had his designs on her, but he would never force himself on her.

Joan silently made a vow. I promise I'll explain everything to you when I see you, Larry.

A flicker of worry gleamed in her eyes at the thought of what would happen.

—Come on, let's head up,|| Dustin said, squatting down again in front of her.

Meanwhile, Jory was having a difficult conversation with Gabriella. —Mr. Synder, don't you

think you owe me an explanation?|| the latter demanded.

A smirk played on Jory's lips at the woman's impudent request.

—I didn't do it,|| he said.

My dad did.

A fit of anger rose in Gabriella's heart. In order to force Larry to his knees before her, she wanted to work with Jory to bring down Norton Corporation. However, the man's dad had come in out of nowhere and spoiled her plan.

She stared at the young man coldly. —I know your dad did it, but you promised me that I'll get Larry and you'll get Nancy when we made a pact. You can't back out of the deal now.||

She had not expected a great businessman like Jory to go back on his word. It was a misstep

on her side. She really should not have trusted this cunning man.

—Yes, Alpire Group acquiring Norton Corporation was never part of our plan, but the

divestiture of Norton Corporation's subsidiary was all the old man's idea,|| Jory explained.

There was no changing the old man's mind once he decided on something, more so

because he hated feeling indebted toward other people. Joan had saved him at the hospital,

so he would do everything he could to return the favor.

—Stop giving me excuses, Jory Synder. You should hold your end of the bargain!|| Gabriella

seethed.

Perhaps Jory sensed her anger or realized he was at fault when he finally cocked his head

and looked at Gabriella.

—I'll make compensation. Name your price,|| he stated forthrightly.

I know you need money. And I know you like spending money too.

I bet it doesn't feel nice being chased out. You won't be able to say no to my offer.

—How could you do this to me? After everything I've been through to make sure things work

out between you and Nancy? What did you give me in return?|| Gabriella spat out, growing

more and more agitated.

The moment the woman brought this topic up, Jory decided to strike the iron while it was

hot.

—Now, now, I did promise you to take care of Larry if you helped me with Caspian, but I didn't say you could use underhanded ways to make such a thing happen. Do you think I would need to stoop so low to get Caspian out of the game?|| Jory admonished, glaring at her unreservedly.

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Despite being a shrewd businessman, Jory despised people who used unscrupulous means to get what they wanted. Besides, Caspian was innocent. What happened between Nancy and himself was their own fault.

Gabriella stared at the man before her in disbelief.

Why does he even care about how I do it as long as I give him what he wants? It's the end that matters, not the means!

—Take this and leave,|| Jory demanded, taking out a check. —This should be more than

enough for you. Let me know if you need more. I'll give it to you.||

The woman let out a scoff of nonchalance.

Do you think one million will solve everything? What I truly want is Larry and only Larry!

Gabriella's cold stare landed on the check Jory had just placed on the table.

Where there's life, there's hope. I'll make sure all of you pay for what you've done to

me. Just wait until I get all the money I need!

Bearing that sinister thought in mind, she swallowed her pride as a bitter smile played on her lips.

—Do you think you can settle our score with just one million, Mr. Synder?||

Who do you think I am? One million alone will not appease me.

Jory looked at her in disdain.

—How much do you want?|| he asked without giving her a second glance.

Gabriella didn't hesitate. —Two million. Give me two million now, and I'll leave.||

Jory lifted his gaze in slight surprise. Whatever. As long as I don't have to see you ever again.

Gabriella's eyes went red as she watched the man scribble away on the check.

She could not believe she had just stooped so low to bargain for two million. She grabbed up the fresh check and left right after, contacting Larry almost immediately.

Ring!

Larry took a quick look at his phone but did not bother answering it, seeing as the call was from Gabriella.

He did not want anything to do with the woman.

He carried on busying himself until a sudden thought washed over him.

He had almost

forgotten about the message Gabriella had sent him earlier on. He hurriedly swiped his phone open, and a photo popped up.

The woman in the picture was smiling blissfully at a man, who looked equally happy. The

couple seemed to be having a good time at the beach.

The woman was none other than Joan, and the man with her was Dustin.

Larry's fists clenched tightly as he looked at the two in the photo.

He could not understand why Joan still wanted to have anything to do with Dustin. Why

didn't she tell me she met Dustin abroad?

Is this why she sounds so tired and distracted when we find time to talk on the phone these

few days? Is the reason behind her fatigue spending the whole day fooling with Dustin?

Larry's gaze turned cold and hard at the thought.

He wished the photo was fake. He wished it was an edited photo. But from the looks of it,

no one had made any changes to the photo.

He scrolled through his contact list and dialed Joan's number, but he was sent straight to

voicemail no matter how many times he called.

Out of the blue, he received a call.

—Yes?||

Gabriella was surprised her call got through. —Where are you, Larry?

Can we meet up over a meal? I have something to tell you.||

What's it this time around? I'm sure it's nothing good. Nothing good comes from this woman.

—What is it? Just tell me over the phone. I'm busy.|| He turned her down crudely.

—What are you busy with? Isn't everything regarding the company already settled? Besides, I really don't want Alpire Group to acquire Norton Corporation. Come on! It's already past working hours. Let's have a meal together. I have something to talk to you about.||

Her adamant response sparked Larry's curiosity.

He had asked Gabriella what the news was about a few times, but the woman refused to

breathe a word to him over the phone.

She really is capable of doing anything. I guess I'll hear her out and see what she's done this time.

—Fine. Send me your location.|| Larry finally caved.

A sinister hint of malice shone in Gabriella's eyes as she gave him the details of her location.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1809

Gabriella slammed her palms flat on the table as she glared through the empty space right

at the wall. She was waiting for Larry to come so she could unveil Joan's true colors.

Joan Watts, I'll show Larry that you have no true loyalty.

When Larry arrived and saw the photos Gabriella presented him, he feigned indifference and

asked, —What exactly do you want?||

Spite played in Gabriella's eyes as she looked at him.

—Take a good look at everything here, Larry. Joan is having a good time with Dustin

overseas. It seems like they're enjoying their little reunion.||

Larry was no fool; there was no way he did not see through the wicked woman's tricks. He

could not say he was totally unfazed looking at the photos, but he trusted Joan wholeheartedly. He knew Dustin and her were just friends.

—Is there anything else you want to tell me? If not, I'll be making a move first,|| Larry said, taking a sip of his coffee.

He knew Gabriella was up to no good. All she wanted was to split him and Joan up.

But he did not need an outsider to tell him what was really going on. The best way to get to the bottom of it would be to call Joan himself.

—Larry, don't tell me you still have no idea what's going on. Joan is clearly two-timing you.

She's deceiving you!|| Gabriella was getting testy.

Larry smirked internally at her outburst. Ha! Don't act like you're a good person yourself.

You don't really care about me.

—Just let me get this across, Gabriella. Don't ever call me again over something so petty. I have better things to do than to listen to your petty gossip,|| Larry warned her.

Gabriella huffed. You're busy to a point where you don't even have time to eat? I know you just don't want to see me.

—Also, don't even try sowing discord between Joan and me. Just mind your own business.||

With that said, Larry turned and left immediately.

Fury burned within Gabriella as she watched him leave.

I'll make sure I crush you, Joan Watts! Just wait and see! Her tight fists quivered in anger as feelings of hatred consumed her.

After calming herself down, Gabriella made a call. —Hey, I heard you're overseas right now. I have a job for you. Are you down for it?||

It was time she took action. She simply needed to wait for Joan to see those photos.

Ding!

Joan checked her phone when she heard a notification. Someone had just sent her a few photos.

Her mind went blank when she saw Gabriella and Larry in the photos. The woman was clinging to Larry after she got drunk at a bar.

What am I seeing? Is this real?

—Joan!|| Dustin had been calling out to her, but all the woman could think of was the photos someone had just sent her.

The beach was packed with people. Children were playing around, and Joan was resting on a recliner chair, completely lost in her own thoughts. She felt completely detached from the buzz going on around her.

—Hey, Joan! What are you thinking about?|| Dustin patted her on the shoulder lightly.

—Hm? Oh, it's nothing, Nothing much. I'm just a little tired,|| she quickly replied.

The man observed the lethargy on her face and decided to leave her to herself so she could rest.

Joan was distracted and down the whole day. She did not even realize when Dustin had gone to buy something. People were leaving the beach as the sky dimmed.

—Hey, are you alone?|| A well-built foreigner suddenly approached Joan. What does he want? She turned her head aside and ignored his question.

The man was piqued when he saw her disregarding him.

—Do you want some company?|| He sat down next to her, fixing his gaze on her face.

Joan looked around and realized there were not many people around the beach anymore, so she stood up hurriedly and got ready to leave.

—Where do you think you're going?|| The stranger caught her by her arm.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1810

—I'm sorry, but I really need to leave now.|| Despite her polite refusal, the foreigner pulled her into his arms, leaving her no opportunity to leave.

—What are you doing? Let me go! Get your hands off me!||

Joan struggled to break free from the man's strong hold, but to no avail. His forceful arms

locked rigidly around her as he looked at her lasciviously.
One million for a good time with this woman? That's a bargain. The man stroked her cheeks slowly, causing Joan to turn her head away in disgust. Seriously, why do I keep running into weird people lately? Firstly, it was the old man who staged an accident. If it was not for Dustin, I would have ended up at a police station! And now, it appears that I have met a pervert.
—Let me go! I'm here with my friend! He'll come back and get me in no time!|| Joan yelled as she tried to push the man away. However, despite how much she struggled, the man paid no attention to her words. He continued to fondle her collarbone. Joan knew she stood no chance against the man, so she took a deep breath and started shouting.
—Help! Help!|| Unfortunately, no one around the beach seemed to understand her.
—Stop shouting. Why don't we play a game somewhere else? What do you think?|| the man said suggestively, tossing a wink in her direction. Dustin! Where on earth are you? Joan looked around in terror but saw no sign of Dustin. I can't just die in this man's hands.
—Please, let me go!|| Joan began begging for him to stop. Incipient tears welled up in her eyes as every possible outcome flashed in her mind. She was scared.
—Come on, what's so bad about having some fun with me? You're one hot chick, and I'm a snack myself. Surely the two of us are meant to be.|| The man lowered his head and breathed his words into her ears.
—Ah!|| The man suddenly cried out in pain. Joan had bitten him on the arm, causing his grip on her to loosen. She grabbed that window of opportunity to dash as far as she could.

—You b*tch! How dare you bite me! Stop!|| The man wasted no time chasing after her at full speed.

Joan called out for Dustin as she ran, but her friend was nowhere to be seen.

—Got you!|| The man exclaimed in glee before he slapped Joan in the face, sending her unconscious.

He then dragged her into a warehouse and tied her to a pole before applying some medication on his arm.

Meanwhile, Dustin had made his way back to the beach and was looking for Joan

desperately. —Joan! Where are you?||

The night was drawing close, and the waves were rolling fiercely as the tide grew high. The

night wind bellowed at the beach while Dustin wandered around alone, still looking for

Joan.

—Excuse me, did you see a Chanaean woman here just now? She's fair and has black hair.||

—Sorry for bothering you, but I was wondering if you've seen my friend?||

Dustin walked to all the surrounding shops to ask if anyone had seen Joan, but his search was fruitless.

—Joan!|| he shouted in agony.

When Joan finally regained her senses, she realized she was in a rugged warehouse. The

foreign man who had abducted her was seated next to her, eyeing her like a hawk.

—You're finally awake. Look at what you did to me!|| He walked over and squatted down

before slapping her in the face twice.

—Who are you?|| Joan asked coldly.

No incident of her offending anyone came to her mind, but judging from the man's outfit,

he did not seem like a thug.

—You don't need to know who I am. The only thing you need to know is that you're gonna

become mine soon,|| the man teased as he played with a strand of her hair. He had a sly smile on his face.

—I'll give you money if you let me go. I can give you whatever you want. Just let me out of here.|| Joan's voice was shaky as she tried dissuading him.

—Do you have a million you'll like to offer me? I'll consider it if you can give me that much,|| the man said with a wry smile on his face.

Her eyes widened in alarm at his reply.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1811

She might not be the brightest human out there, but Joan was smart enough to know what

the man meant. Someone had paid him one million to kidnap her.

She did not have the luxury of time to think about who the mastermind behind this was.

Time was of the essence. She needed to get out.

—Sure, I'll give you one million,|| Joan agreed.

Greed glimmered in the man's eyes when he heard her statement. To him, if she could easily

promise him one million, it meant she was worth much more than that.

—Let me make a call. I'll ask my friend to bring you the money,|| Joan hastened him up.

She had to try all possible means to connect with the outside world. The longer she waited,

the more dangerous things were going to be for her.

The warehouse was an awful place. It was poorly lit and filled with damp old clothes. She

figured this place must be far away from where Dustin was.

—Let me make just one call. I'll ask my friend to bring you the cash.||

Hope surged within her

when she saw the man contemplating her words.

Gabriella had only promised to pay the man after he completed the job, but Joan seemed to

be able to give him cash immediately. The latter's deal was surely more tempting.

—Alright, but you'd better make sure your friend is not bringing anyone else, or I'll kill both

of you tonight,|| the man warned coldheartedly.

His sharp words sent a chill down Joan's spine and made her even more nervous.

She was securely bound by ropes, so there was no way she could move.

The man made the

call and held the phone beside her, putting it on the loudspeaker.

—Hey, Dustin, could you bring me one million in cash? I need it

urgently,|| Joan said the

moment the call got connected.

Dustin immediately knew that something must have happened to her.

She had never asked

for so much money from him, and she sounded helpless and

disconcerted as she did so.

—Where are you right now? I'll send the money over myself,|| Dustin

answered tactfully.

He knew he could not say much over the phone. The kidnapper had to

be listening to their

conversation.

Joan looked at the foreigner out of the corner of her eyes; he was

shaking his head sternly.

Dustin sensed her hesitation, and this further convinced him that she

was in grave danger.

—I'll send you the address later. Be quick.||

The man hung up after Joan finished speaking.

Upon seeing the man smiling in satisfaction, Joan heaved a sigh of relief.

She just needed to wait for Dustin to come now.

—Are you thirsty?|| the man suddenly asked.

Her heart skipped a beat at his question, and she shook her head

skittishly.

She knew better than to eat or drink anything this man offered her.

The man was exceptionally nice to Joan all of a sudden. It was probably

because he was

anticipating a large sum of money from her.

The man checked his phone from time to time before making a decision

to drag Joan

outside.

—Where are we going? Aren't we waiting for my friend?|| Joan looked at

the man in

suspicion. She was afraid he might have changed his mind.

—Yes, we're waiting for him, but not here. God knows if your friend

contacted the police. But

don't worry. I'll let you go once I get the one million,|| he said, gripping her arm tightly.

This is definitely not his first time during such a thing...

Joan knew the only way she could keep herself safe was to obey his demands.

She could only rely on Dustin now.

Her heart thumped faster as the clock ticked by.

Ring! Ring!

The phone screen lit up again. It was Dustin.

—Talk to him,|| the man commanded.

—Hello, Dustin,|| Joan said softly.

—Where are you now? There's no one here.|| Dustin's voice showed that he was obviously distressed.

—I'm not there right now. Could you wait for me for a bit? I'll call you in a sec.|| At that, the man ended the call.

Although Joan had no idea what the man was trying to do, she could tell that he was being extra cautious.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1812

—Has he arrived?|| the man asked.

Joan softly replied, —Yes.||

To her surprise, the man silently walked aside and turned on his laptop. From his well-coordinated actions, she knew he must be an experienced criminal.

After looking at the screen for some time, the man switched his laptop off. He had a satisfied expression on his face.

—Good. Your friend didn't call the police. He's here alone with the luggage,|| the foreigner noted, stroking his beard.

It turned out that he had installed surveillance cameras at the warehouse. He had moved to another place because he wanted to see if Dustin would really come alone with the money. What a cunning man!

Joan looked at the man warily. —What happens next? Are you really gonna let me go?||

—Don't worry; I will keep my word as long as I get the money. You're pretty, but I prefer the money,|| the man remarked pensively as though he was thinking about something.

—Call him and ask him to leave the money in the safe in a small hut along Tank Road,|| the man said, lifting Joan's chin.

The woman did as she was told and informed Dustin of the location change.

Ring!

This time, the man's phone rang instead of Joan's. —Speaking,|| the man said sparingly.

—Is it done?||

—Yes. Everything went as planned,|| the foreigner replied.

Judging from the man's tone, Joan guessed he must be talking to the mastermind of her kidnap.

Although she could not hear the voice from the other end, she conjectured that the culprit must be a woman since the man sounded less brutish when talking over the phone.

After some time, the man hung up. His gaze was merciless and icy-cold as he stalked over to her.

—What is it?|| Joan asked fearfully when she spotted his change in expression.

The person who engineered this must have changed the plan.

—What do you want? I've already agreed to give you the money,|| Joan quickly added as she backed away from the man, who now was charging toward her in large strides.

Her statement did not seem to affect her kidnapper, unlike before.

—I'm sorry, but one million no longer suffices. I'm getting one and a half million after I'm

done with you.|| The man's eyes shone with glints of thrill. Joan shuddered in fear.

The person who hired him wants me dead.

—Wait! What about two million? I'll give you two million!|| she cried out.

The foreigner was growing annoyed by her desperate attempts to negotiate.

—You're not even worth two million. That man over there is not even your boyfriend, so stop faking it. Do you think I'm stupid?|| The man glared at her, clearly enraged.

—I might have really believed you if I had not received the call just now. I bet your friend over there is a cop. You came to the beach all on your own, so he's not even your friend!||

The man bellowed, pulling Joan's hair before thrusting her toward the wall.

—Ahhh!|| A shriek followed.

—I didn't lie to you! That's my friend. He's not a cop... He didn't call the police...|| Joan's voice trembled as she broke into sobs.

Her pleas fell on deaf ears as the man had already gone berserk.

He booted her three times until she could no longer stand on her feet.

Blood began flowing

from the side of Joan's mouth. Although her forehead and arms were stained red, the man

continued to attack her ceaselessly.

—How dare you trick me! I'll show you just how I treat people who try to lie to me!||

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1813

Slap!

Joan's face turned swollen and red under the man's battering.

Her body grew numb as her suffering prolonged. After a painful period of time, she passed

out on the cold hard ground.

—Get up!|| the man roared as he kicked her, —Get up, you b*tch!||

Her body remained motionless.

—Stop acting!||

The man picked up a bucket of cold water and splashed it on her.

The cold shocked her awake, and she shook her head slightly, struggling to open her eyes.

She had thought that she was already dead, but to her dismay, she woke up to an endless nightmare.

—Please... Let me go...|| she begged.

She suddenly thought of Larry and how badly she wanted to see him one last time.

—I'm so sorry, Larry. I might not get to see you again. You have to live on...||

—What did you say?|| The man sat on top of her and grabbed her hair. To his surprise, Joan burst out in a sarcastic laugh beneath him. Her laughter infuriated the man, and he smashed her head against the wall until blood stained the ground once more.

—Why are you laughing?|| He seethed in anger. A weak smirk curved on Joan's lips as she said calmly, —I'm laughing at your stupidity. Your parents must be embarrassed to see you like this. You're a disgrace to your family.|| She then mocked, —You're no different from beggars. You'll do anything for money. Are you even afraid of karma?|| She went all out as she thought she was going to die anyway. Bang!

Just as the man was about to deal her a fatal punch, the door swung open, and a blinding ray of light flashed before their eyes. Am I in heaven?

Joan squinted her eyes at the dazzling light. Am I dead?

This question spun in her mind right before she blacked out. By the time she woke up again, her entire surrounding was white. The curtains around her were white, the bedsheet of the bed she was on was white, the blanket that was draped over her was white—even the people peering down at her were dressed in white.

This must be heaven. I definitely died.

What about Larry? How will he react to this piece of news? I didn't get to see him one last time.

Tears rolled down her eyes as she thought about the man she loved.

—Joan, are you okay? Why are you crying?|| A familiar voice rang in her ears.

Dustin? She turned her head and saw her friend at the door. What's happening? Is Dustin dead, too?

She rubbed her eyes in disbelief and took a harder look at the man at the door. It was really

Dustin.

—Are you dead too, Dustin? What happened? Did the man hit you? Or was there an

accident?|| She showered him with questions as she looked at the man standing in front of

her.

Dustin took a thorough look at her as he moved closer.

—Are you okay? Did something happen to your brain?|| he asked, caressing her forehead

lightly. Worry shone in his eyes as he did so.

—My brain is still functioning, thank you very much. I'm asking why you're in heaven with

me...||

Dustin was taken aback by her odd remark, but he quickly resumed his calm.

—I like you, so I followed you all the way to heaven,|| he said cheekily with a smile on his face.

She doesn't even know if she's alive or dead. How dumb can she get?

She's such an easy target.

—A friend in need is a friend indeed,|| Joan said, patting him on the shoulder.

—Joan Watts? It's time to take your IV drip,|| a nurse called out as she made her way over.

Huh? Aren't all forms of sickness absent in heaven? Why's there a nurse here?

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1814

Hmm, they're probably checking I'm fit for heaven.

With that in mind, Joan lay on the bed quietly and allowed the nurse to put her on an IV

drip. What a pretty nurse. This truly is heaven.

Upon noticing Joan's scrutiny, the nurse asked, bewildered, —What are you staring at?||

—Well, I just think everyone in heaven is pretty,|| Joan complimented her with a smile.

The nurse darted her confused gaze at her, silently wondering if the patient before her was

mentally stable.

—What heaven are you blabbering about? Life on earth is too short. What's the hurry to go to heaven?|| the nurse replied.

Dustin could not stand watching the ridiculous scene play out before him any longer.

—You aren't dead, Joan,|| he said, trying his best not to laugh out loud at how silly his friend was behaving.

Wait... I'm alive?

Joan's face flushed red at the realization. Geez, how embarrassing! The pretty nurse must think I'm crazy.

—Why did you lie to me? You even said you'll follow me wherever I go! You jerk!|| She threw a pillow at Dustin as she yelled.

Little did the two know, their every move was being filmed on camera. Larry clenched his fists as he looked at the photos on the screen. This is already the third time I've received such images. You guys better stop testing my patience. Especially you, Dustin Silverman. You need to stay away from my woman.

Larry's murderous gaze hardened as he glared at the photos. —Book me a ticket tomorrow. I'm flying to...||

—Larry!|| Caspian barged in just as Larry was about to finish his sentence.

—What is it?|| the latter asked without shifting his gaze. His anger radiated off his body in waves, clearly indicating that he was in no mood to have a civil conversation.

—I saw on Twitter that Joan is with Dustin,|| Caspian began softly, carefully stealing a quick glance at Larry.

—I know. That's why I'm leaving tomorrow,|| Larry replied dismissively. Caspian knew Larry would take care of the matter; the latter would even face Dustin head-on if need be.

As that went on, Gabriella was restlessly waiting for updates. —How's everything?||

—We've been tailing them and snapping photos all the while. As for the other man who was

supposed to kidnap Joan, he was caught by the police.|| A man's voice rang mechanically over the phone.

A wave of rage flooded her heart, but Gabriella willed herself to calm down.

—That's fine. We'll focus on taking photos for now. I'll pay you more if you get more shots.||

There was no turning back for her. She was a heartless woman, and she would live up to who she was.

She banged her fists against the table in a fit of anger, causing everyone around her to jump at the sudden sound. Joan Watts! After everything I plotted against you, how can you still be alive?

Larry hopped on a flight and arrived early the next morning.

Although he was overtaken by fury when he saw pictures of Dustin and Joan together, he

was now more eager to see the woman he loved. It had been days since he last saw Joan.

He missed her dearly.

He immediately called her number. —Hello? Joan, where are you now?|| —I'm at...||

—Joan! Get the ball!|| Dustin's loud voice pierced through Larry's phone. She's still with Dustin?

Larry's face turned gloomy.

—I have something going on, Larry. I'll call you in a bit.|| Joan hung up right after speaking.

A forbidding glint appeared in Larry's already chilly eyes. This how you treat me after I've come all the way here?

With growing fury in his heart, Larry hailed a cab and made his way to the beach. Joan had told him where she was staying when they video called last time.

—Come on, Joan! You're gonna lose at this rate!|| Dustin cried out.

—You're the one losing, not me!|| Joan shouted back as she sent the ball flying over.

Soon, their intense match finally ended.

—Joan's group won!|| the referee exclaimed at the end of the volleyball match.

—Yay! We won!|| Joan cheered as she ran around the beach, elated.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1815

Joan jumped up and down in excitement, celebrating her victory like a child. Dustin had

originally been disappointed with his loss, but his mood lightened up the moment he saw

Joan looking all electrified.

—Your team played decently, I guess. I can't believe you just won a volleyball match.|| Dustin

patted her shoulder approvingly.

—That's Joan Watts for you!|| the woman exclaimed, tilting her chin proudly.

Dustin lifted her off the ground, happy and content to see her happy.

—What are you doing! Put me down!|| Joan shrieked in panic.

Larry, who had just arrived at that moment, caught sight of them from afar.

—Let's have a barbecue to celebrate,|| Dustin suggested, ruffling her hair affectionately.

As soon as they turned, they bumped right into Larry.

—Larry! What are you doing you here?|| Joan asked, startled.

—Why can't I be here? Am I interrupting something between you guys?||

Larry asked back

coldly.

Is he angry? Joan looked at his face searchingly, trying to figure out why he was pissed.

—So glad you graced us with your presence, Mr. Norton. Is everything well taken care of at

your company yet?|| Dustin asked sarcastically.

Larry spared him a cursory glance before he turned to look back at Joan sternly.

The woman knew that look on his face far too well.

She quickly made her way over to him and wrapped her arms around his hand. —Why not we

go out for a meal together?|| she questioned.

Instead of replying to her question, Larry growled, —You're leaving with me.|| He grabbed her

arm as he turned to leave.

Dustin quickly interjected, —Larry, she hasn't eaten anything. She's worn out.||

At that remark, Larry turned and looked at the other man, exuding a patronizing air.

He badly wanted to throw Dustin into the sea and let the fish eat him up.

—I get to decide what I'm doing with my woman, so get out of my way.||

He spelled out every

word authoritatively, shooting daggers at Dustin as he did so.

—Did something happen, Larry?|| Joan asked cluelessly, pulling on his sleeve.

She really had no idea why Larry looked so disturbed.

—Are you seriously asking me that question? Come with me. Now!||

Larry bellowed.

He dragged her to his room and stared her down as soon as she was inside.

—So, tell me. Have you been happily spending time with Dustin these few days?|| he

interrogated as he cornered her against the wall.

—What are you trying to get at? You're the one who asked me to leave the country,|| Joan

answered quietly.

She could not believe how Larry had changed his mind in just a split moment.

—I asked you to relax and unwind abroad. I didn't say you could come here with Dustin!||

Larry retaliated.

His blood boiled violently as he recalled the pictures he saw. He could not believe they had

the audacity to go hiking and go to the beach together.

—There must be some misunderstanding, Larry. I didn't know Dustin would be here,|| Joan

explained.

He must be jealous now.

While men were generally more forgiving than women, this was clearly not the case when

they got jealous.

—A misunderstanding? You were with him all the time! Were you happy when you two went

hiking? Were you having an amazing time playing volleyball together?

Do you want him to

stay with you instead?|| Larry grabbed her shoulders as he lambasted her with angry

questions.

Joan's brows furrowed when she felt a pang of pain shoot through her body.

—I told you that I'll come looking for you once I've settled everything at the company. What are you doing here? You didn't draw a clear line with that man. Is this the way you plan to treat me?||

Disappointment and anger were written all over Larry's face.

—Do you even know what you're going on about, Larry Norton?|| Joan lashed out.

Since when was he so impulsive? Anger rose in her heart as she looked back at him dead in the eyes.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1816

—What is it? Are you saying I wronged you?|| Larry's eyes burned in wrath.

His remark caused Joan to fall into silence. It was true that she had been with Dustin for the past few days. But nothing had happened between them.

—It's not what you think it is, Larry,|| she began anxiously, wanting to explain herself.

The man smirked when he noticed her anxious state and nodded condescendingly. —Fine.

Tell me what's going on then.||

Joan did not know where to start now that he had suddenly asked her to speak her mind.

—What's the matter? You don't have anything to say? I'll speak for you then. You guys went hiking together and even stayed in the same room after that. Both of you had loads of fun at the beach while playing volleyball together.||

Larry turned his back toward Joan as he delineated every single thing they did together.

Joan's expression turned grim as she listened to him speak with such wrath in his tone.

There was no way he could recount everything in great detail.

—You had me followed?|| she asked.

Larry looked back at her, disheartened.

He had believed her all this while. He had not sent anyone to tail her this time, but all the photos on Twitter said it all. The pictures Gabriella showed him were enough to fill him in on everything the woman he loved had been doing.

—Yeah, I did. I sent someone to stalk you. I wouldn't have known you guys had a thing if I

hadn't sent someone to spy on you!|| Larry blustered out of control. Joan's face shows a look of equal disappointment.

What about you? What about the photos of you and Gabriella? She showed up at our house in her pajamas, and she was even clinging to you. How do you explain that?

—I've never done anything to betray your trust. Dustin and I are friends. You're the one who needs a check on your relationship with Gabriella.|| With that said, Joan stalked out of the room, slamming the door behind her.

—Joan!|| Larry shouted after her, but she did not turn back. Larry was left all alone in the room.

He could not understand why she had brought up Gabriella all of a sudden.

Joan made her way back to the beach on her own. She spread her gaze across the dark blue sea as a sense of helplessness and loneliness overwhelmed her.

She had thought that Larry would be happy to spend time with her on a vacation. However, it seemed as if he was only here to create trouble.

—Hey, are you feeling okay?|| Dustin made his way over when he saw her.

—I'm sorry about what happened earlier on...|| Joan began slowly, an awkward smile on her face.

Dustin shook his head indifferently.

—Why's he here all of a sudden?|| he asked.

—He actually planned to come over a long time ago,|| she replied quietly.

The wind was getting stronger, driving the waves against the shore fiercely as time passed.

Noting the time, Dustin suggested Joan head back to rest, but the latter wanted to stay out a little longer.

—Take this,|| Dustin said, putting on his coat on her.

Joan thanked him with a genuine smile. —Thanks.||

She felt lucky to have a friend like him, especially when she just had a fight with Larry.

—So, what's next? A kiss?|| A familiar voice came from behind.

—What on earth are you talking about, Larry?|| Joan shot him a glare.

Larry ignored her and walked over to Dustin. —What about you? Do you think it's

appropriate to stay with my woman till this late at night?||

—She's your woman, but you let her sit here all alone for such a long time?|| Dustin stood up

and stared at Larry dead in the eyes.

The latter sneered at that question.

—Who are you to say anything about our relationship?||

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1817

Joan quickly got on her feet when she saw the two men about to fling their fists at each

other.

—Stop it, both of you. It's late. Why not you head back first, Dustin?

Thanks for your coat,||

she said, giving it back to him.

Dustin looked at her hesitantly. He was afraid Larry would do something to her.

—It's still early. Why not all of us have a talk?|| Larry said with a snicker on his face.

Joan looked at the man in confusion. What's wrong with him? Does he have to speak like

that?

—I'll see you tomorrow, Dustin,|| Joan said, waving her hand at him in a dismissing manner.

Dustin turned to leave, but Larry refused to let him go in peace.

The latter sneered, —Do you guys want me to go to another room so you guys can have

some personal space?||

That comment made Dustin lose all his cool.

Pow!

Before Dustin could heave Larry a punch, the latter had already beat him to it.

—Larry! Stop it!|| Joan shouted desperately for him to stop, but her efforts were futile. Larry's anger was not appeased.

—You're the one who failed to protect her, so don't take it out on me!|| Dustin snarled back and got on his feet, ready for a fight.

The two men charged at each other, and a ferocious fight ensued.

—Stop it, you two! Stop!|| Joan cried out anxiously, but none of them paid any attention to her.

As the fight intensified, Joan felt that she had to do something. When she saw Larry raising his fist again, she dashed in between the two, causing a blow to land right on her nose.

—Joan! Are you okay?|| Dustin asked distraughtly, rushing closer to her.

—Did you just take my punch for this man?|| Larry's eyes turned red as he glared at her.

Joan glowered back at him with undiluted anger shining in her eyes.

—That's enough, Larry!|| she yelled.

Larry stared at her, hurt and rage in his eyes before he left without another word.

—Are you okay?|| Joan looked at her friend remorsefully.

Dustin was injured all over. There were bruises on his arm, his face, and his legs. Larry had learned to fight, so Dustin had clearly been no match for him.

—I'm fine,|| he said, wiping away the blood at the corner of his lips.

As Larry made his way to his room, his mind swirled with thoughts. She's even willing to get hurt because of that man? Bang! The man ran his fist right into the wall once he got back to

his room. Blood streamed down his knuckles at the impact.

He walked over to the window and looked down at Joan and Dustin on the beach.

—I'll put on a bandage for you,|| Joan offered, pulling Dustin back to the hotel.

She caught a glimpse of the man looking down at her from the window as she walked into the hotel with her injured friend.

—What happened between you and him?|| Dustin asked.
The woman did not answer. Upon seeing her emotionless face, Dustin knew better than to probe further into the topic.
Suddenly, he let out a scream of pain.
—Can you please be gentle! It's painful!|| he groaned, touching a wound of his beside his lips.
—I'm really sorry,|| Joan hastily apologized profusely as she looked at him.
The man's gaze softened when he beheld the dispirited woman. It did not take an observant person to know that Joan had a lot going on in her mind. It seemed like she and Larry were not on good terms. Although this was good news to Dustin, he still wanted her to be happy.
—You should head back to your room already. I can take care of everything on my own,|| Dustin said, snatching the cotton buds from her hands.
—Why?||
—I know your heart and mind are not here,|| Dustin muttered.
Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1818
What he uttered was true. Joan knew Larry had also gotten hurt during the fight. She was wondering if he had his wounds treated and if he was okay. A pang of sadness rose in her heart as she thought of Larry.
—Go and take a look at him if you're worried,|| Dustin urged.
—I'm not worried about him,|| she answered immediately.
She and her ego. She's exactly the same as Larry. Dustin really had no idea why the two could not just sit down and have a candid conversation.
—Did you guys get into an argument?|| he asked carefully.
—I'm too lazy to fight with him,|| Joan uttered quietly, sitting down. From her looks, Dustin was sure something had happened between them. Larry was the only person capable of putting such an expression on Joan's face.
—Off you go. Sleep is calling my name,|| Dustin joked.
—Why are you chasing me away?||
Joan let out a soft sigh. I thought we were friends?
—Hey, although it's true that I like you and dislike Larry, I want to compete with him on level

ground. I'll respect whatever decision you make. Yes, I'm happy because your relationship is on rocky ground, but it breaks my heart to see you sad too," Dustin explained.

His words warmed Joan's heart.

She suddenly felt lucky to have met someone like Dustin and was glad he was in her life.

—Alright, you should get going now. Larry would come at me with a knife tomorrow morning

if you stay any longer," Dustin said, pushing Joan out of the room.

Dustin knew he wouldn't be able to easily get over her, but he did not want Larry to

misunderstand the situation.

Joan was a kind and pure soul who deserved to be treated with love.

A sad smile curved on Dustin's lips as he shoed her out.

Joan paced around in the lobby after Dustin shut the door, not knowing what to do.

She did not want to go back to the room Larry was in. She did not want to see him.

However, there was no other room she could go to.

She sat on the couch in the lobby and looked at the ceiling, lost in thought.

After a moment of contemplation, she decided to stay there for the night. There was no way

she was going back to that room.

Over in the room, Larry tossed and turned on the bed, unable to catch a wink of sleep. He

looked at the vacant space beside him and instantly felt regret for what he did.

Did I act too rashly just now? I should've given her a chance to explain.

He looked at the pitch dark sky outside, and his face hardened.

But... what I said was true!

She was with Dustin all this time, and she didn't tell me what she was up to. She even took

my punch on that prick's behalf! Anger surged in Larry's heart as he recalled everything that

had happened.

What's taking her so long? It's already late. He began to grow more and more worried.

He figured she must be at Dustin's room since she saw her tugging him back to the hotel.

What are they doing? At the thought of her sleeping in the same room as another man,

Larry leapt out of bed and barged out of the room.

Dustin had just fallen asleep when someone loudly banged on his door.

—Who's there?|| Dustin asked impatiently. Who can it be? It's already midnight!

—It's me!|| Larry shouted. His voice shook Dustin awake.

What on earth does he want? He can't sleep? Is that why he wants to continue our fight?

—What do you want?|| Dustin asked through the small crack after opening the door slightly.

—Are you seriously asking me what I want?|| Larry exclaimed angrily, pushing his way in.

Dustin almost fell as Larry made his way in.

—Larry Norton, who do you think you are? You can't storm into my room like this!|| Dustin

howled in anger as he steadied his steps.

She's... She's not here. Where on earth is she? Larry shot a scrutinizing glare at Dustin,

waiting for the man to give him an answer.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1819

—What do you want? Spit it out and leave!|| Dustin looked exasperatedly at Larry, who was behaving so inconsiderately.

It was clear that he had no trust in Joan. —Where is she?|| Larry demanded.

Are you asking me? Isn't she your woman?

—She's not here. She left,|| Dustin replied.

Where on earth is she? Larry's brows furrowed in frustration.

—Get out. I need to rest,|| Dustin growled as he pushed the other man out.

From Larry's clueless look, Dustin had a rough idea of what was happening. He grabbed his

phone and dialed Joan's number after he got Larry was out of the room.

—Hey, what are you doing? Larry came looking for you,|| he said with a yawn.

—Don't worry; I'm in the lobby. Just let him be,|| Joan replied, trying to keep her voice low.

—Joan Watts!|| A roar echoed in the lobby.
The receptionist jerked at the shout and looked up angrily, but her rage simmered almost immediately at the sight of Larry. Her eyes sparkled when she took note of the attractive man.

—How may I help you, sir?|| the receptionist asked in a friendly manner. Despite her effort, Larry disregarded her and walked right over to Joan. Gosh, not again. The woman was not ready to have another fight. She sat back on the couch, trying to distance herself from the man. But Larry went over and scooped her up in his arms.

—What are you doing? Let me go!||
—We're going back to the room to sleep!||
Larry brought her back to their room, unaware of the receptionist's adoring stare.

—Put me down!|| Joan yelled.
—That's what I'm doing!|| Larry placed her on the bed cautiously, making sure she didn't knock her head against the headboard as he did so. After letting her go, he turned to leave the room.

—Where are you going?|| Joan asked.
—You don't want to see me, right? I'll be sleeping outside.||
Joan was at a loss for words.
It went without saying that she was angry with Larry. He had misunderstood her and even hit Dustin. Not only did her friend not do anything to her, but he had also even saved her. But Larry came in and behaved as if he knew everything, when in fact he knew nothing. Yet, she could not bring herself to punish him. —It's okay. Just sleep here tonight,|| she said with a low voice.

Larry turned around slowly and looked at her attentively. It had just been days, but he felt as if he had not seen her for a century. He wanted this trip to be a good getaway for the both of them, but when he found out she was with Dustin, rage had blinded him.

In hindsight, he knew he should have given her a chance to explain. Things might not be as simple as they seemed.

Larry had indeed behaved recklessly.

—I'm sorry for what happened earlier. It's my fault. I shouldn't have acted in that manner,|| he said, bowing his head apologetically.

Joan suppressed the smile on her face as she looked at him.

I shouldn't give him an easy way out. After all, he did beat Dustin to a pulp.

—You should apologize to Dustin, not me,|| she stated, looking at her fingers in an absentminded manner.

Guilt budded in Larry's heart, but he still hoped she could give him an explanation.

—Do you have anything to say to me? It's just the two of us now.||

Joan knew what he meant. Since there were just the two of them, they should sort out their

own argument tonight and apologize to Dustin tomorrow.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1820

I'll decide if I should apologize based on the explanation I plan to give tonight.

Joan grinned. Since when did I become so smart?

—All those tweets you saw earlier are not true. We went hiking, and I sprained my ankle,||

Joan explained to Larry, —That's why Dustin had to carry me. Nothing is going on between us.||

The former then continued explaining, —It was too late for us to head home, so we had no

choice but to stay in a hotel.—There was only one available room. Dustin and I didn't have a

choice but to share a room that night.||

Larry paid close attention to her explanation as he did not want to miss out on the details. —I

see. I guess I misunderstood him.||

—You also beat him up,|| Joan said coldly as her eyes shot daggers at him. —How could you

do that to someone who saved my life?||

—What did you say? He saved your life?|| Larry shot her a confused look.

Joan lowered her voice down to a whisper as if she was afraid to mention the situation out loud. —I don't want to talk about it anymore. Long story short, I almost got kidnapped.||

The thought of the danger she had been in sent chills down her spine.

—You're telling me Dustin saved you?|| Larry asked softly.

—Yeah. He even got all the cash ready as a bribe,|| she replied.

Larry's face turned grim. She only left the country for a couple of days, yet all these

happened so coincidentally? Who was the man who kidnapped her, though?

Suddenly, Gabriella's smug face popped up in his mind.

He truly believed Gabriella would go to the ends of the earth to get rid of a person she

despised.

Yes. Gabriella sure is one scary, persistent woman. A hard glint flashed across his eyes at the

thought.

—Hey.|| Joan gently patted his shoulder. —What's wrong?||

—Hm? Oh, it's nothing. Don't worry about it.|| Larry immediately changed the subject after,

asking Joan concernedly, —How are you feeling? Are you hurt?||

—I'm fine. Don't worry. Look!|| The woman tapped her chest repeatedly.

She would not want him to know if she was injured because she knew he would worry. Even

if she was hurt, she would have recovered by now.

—Stop worrying about me. It's getting late. Go to bed! You should find a way to apologize to

Dustin,|| Joan said, intentionally reminding Larry of an apology that was due.

—Joan.|| The man inched closer and embraced her.

—It's all my fault. You wouldn't have gone through all these had I agreed to go with you.||

Larry buried his head in her collarbone.

Joan took a deep sniff of the familiar scent emitted from his body.

She gave his back a gentle pat, hoping to provide him an indication that she's forgiven

him. Things that are destined to happen will still happen. Even if there's no Gabriella in this

world, there will always be a Gisella, Granella, or even Gerdanella, who will try to torture me.

I can't expect people to always be there for me. I can't expect people to rescue me

whenever I'm in trouble. I must face such things on my own.

Larry held Joan tightly in his embrace as the two of them closed their eyes and enjoyed the comfortable silence.

The morning sun that rose the next day permeated through the window, filling the room with warmth.

Joan stretched before she gradually opened her eyes.

She turned around to face Larry, who was lying in the bed next to her.

The events that had

happened last night felt like a dream.

Anger had been written all over Larry's face when he arrived, but the man had instantly

turned a total gentleman last night after she explained her side of the story.

Perhaps he was angry out of jealousy. Joan stroked the man's brows tenderly, lost in thought.

—Why are you up so early?|| Larry suddenly grabbed her and pulled her into his arms.

She was so close to his chest that she could clearly hear his heartbeat thumping at a steady rhythm.

—I can't sleep any longer,|| she answered softly.

—But I'm still tired.|| Larry ran his finger down her cheek.

—Okay. I'll go for a morning jog while you catch some more z's,|| Joan stated decisively

before she got out of bed.

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1821

“No. Stay.” Larry pulled her back and pinned her to the bed.

His rapid breathing and palpitations made her blush almost instantly.

“Stop...”

Before she could continue, he planted a kiss on her thin lips.

He continued to pry her lips open, shoving his tongue into her mouth as he explored every inch of her mouth with his tongue. After some time, the couple fell asleep once more.

The sun continued to rise, and a colony of seagulls flew past the window. "Dustin!" Joan called out when she caught sight of her friend from afar. Upon seeing the expression on her face, Dustin knew she had made up with Larry.

Well, I should be glad she's no longer upset. It pained my heart to see how disheartened she was.

Dustin finally came to a realization.

He used to be obsessed with Joan and would always want to protect her and give her

everything at all costs. But he had finally learned to let go. At this point, he desired nothing

more than to see a genuine smile on her face.

"Someone seems to be in a good mood today." Dustin chuckled.

Joan gave Larry a nudge.

The latter awkwardly looked at the man in front of him.

It was uncommon for Larry to apologize to anyone. Yet today, he had to seek his love rival's

forgiveness. He was not ready to bite the bullet just yet.

"What are you waiting for?" Joan patted his shoulder gently.

Is he going back on his word?

A line formed between her brows at the thought. She glared at Larry, hoping he could keep

his promise.

"I... I... Erm..." Larry walked up to Dustin hesitantly.

"I..."

Before he could say anything, however, Dustin said sharply, "Hey!"

Even Joan was taken aback by the man's reaction.

"If you haven't thought of what to say to me, or if you're not willing to say something that's

against your will, you might as well not say it," Dustin grumbled.

What? Does that mean he doesn't want my apology? Larry grew a little offended upon

hearing such a remark. "Hey. I'm trying to apologize to you. Watch your..."

"Larry!" Joan jumped in, quickly shooting the man a disdainful look.

“You should be sincere with your apology.” She squeezed his shoulder gently with her hand, encouraging him to try once more.

Her gesture made Larry’s heart soften. He just wanted to make her happy.

Deep in his heart, he knew he was at fault, but his ego got in the way; it stopped him from genuinely apologizing to Dustin.

“I’m sorry, Dustin. And thank you.” Larry pulled himself together and continued, “I’m sorry for the misunderstanding between you and Joan, and I’m sorry for attacking you before I

knew the full truth. And I also want to thank you for saving Joan.”

Dustin could tell the man actually meant every word he uttered.

“Thank you for the apology. We’re all good now. Come, let’s go and grab a bite together,”

Dustin suggested.

Larry was struck dumb for a moment and did not know how to react to that invitation.

That’s how he reacts to my sincere apology?

“All right, all right. Since Dustin has forgiven you, let’s go and grab something to eat.” Joan

held onto Larry’s arm and dragged him along in a rush.

“Have you solved that problem in your company?” Dustin looked at Larry and questioned curiously.

The latter responded in a calm voice, “All matters have been settled.”

The tension he had with Dustin seemed to have eased a little after the meal to a point

where Larry wondered if he was dreaming.

Day after day soon flew by. Larry and Joan took the remaining time they had together

overseas before they got on a flight to return to their country.

Larry had needed to fly back soon as there were some urgent matters he had to look into.

“Where are you going?” Joan asked.

“I’ll be back before you know it. Don’t worry.” Larry turned around and shot her a small

smile before he headed out.

Gabriella was excited to meet Larry after the latter asked her out to a café. "I'm so happy to see you, Larry. What's the occasion you called me out here for?"

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1822

Gabriella had been slightly annoyed when she found out about how Larry headed overseas to look for Joan, but at the same time, she was glad that the man had still thought of her when he returned.

She had no clue what Larry wanted to tell her.

"Can you please stop all your nonsense?" All of a sudden, Larry shot an angry glance at her.

What's he talking about?

Gabriella knitted her brows and looked at him in confusion.

"Have you forgotten all about what you did? Fine. Let me do the honors of reminding you

then." The man took a sip of his coffee before continuing, "Someone kidnapped Joan."

Oh. So he knew? Gabriella would never admit she had been the mastermind of the incident. He doesn't have any evidence against me anyway.

"What?" She gasped aloud, acting as if she had not been aware of it.

Larry's expression turned grim. Still trying to act innocent, I see. "You should know what

happened. You were the one who orchestrated the kidnap after all!"

"What are you talking about? What makes you think I knew where she was or what she was

doing?" The woman was adamant about continuing to feign ignorance.

It was difficult for Larry to trust in her again; she had a horrible track record with him now.

Besides Gabriella, Larry could not think of anyone who would use such extreme measures to harm Joan.

"I'm really innocent, Larry." Gabriella continued to defend herself. "I've been in the country this whole time."

Larry snorted. Does she think I'm an idiot?

"Stop acting. I know you did everything," Larry sneered, "You can deny it all you want, but

I'm here to warn you not to cross the line. If anything bad happens to Joan again, you better watch it!" He grabbed his coat and stormed out of the café. He's still on her side! A hard glint flashed through Gabriella's eyes. Joan, oh, Joan. Did you cast a spell on Larry? Why does he care so much for you? I should have gotten rid of you when I had the chance. I guess I have to wait for another opportunity to arise to finish you off once and for all! She clenched her fists tightly. "Hey, what's wrong with you? You seem to be in a bad mood," Joan took over his briefcase and asked. "We need to talk," Larry looked into her eyes and said in a serious voice, "I want you to listen to me very carefully." "From now on, you will need to be more alert of your surroundings. Someone wanted to harm you. That's why the person orchestrated the kidnapping." Larry grabbed Joan's shoulders tightly as he spoke, hoping the woman would be aware of the potential danger she could be in. Joan wasn't a fool. She knew who the person behind the vicious act was. She simply did not want to confront the mastermind. "I know," she uttered softly. Larry's eyes widened upon hearing her confession. He was surprised that Joan knew about it. She patted his shoulder gently and reassured, "Don't worry. I'll keep an eye on Gabriella." Suddenly, her phone rang. It was Dustin. "Why is he calling again? Does he not know you have a husband now?" Larry teased. Someone's getting jealous again. Joan shot a glance at him and shook her head. "Hey, there's something I want to show you. Come meet me right now," Dustin voiced as

soon as Joan answered the call.

What now?

After bidding Larry goodbye, Joan left the house to meet Dustin.

“Look.” A stack of photos that had been laid out by Dustin was on the table.

They were all Larry’s and Gabriella’s intimate photos.

“Is everything all right between you and Larry?” Dustin asked, worried about her.

The man did not think of Larry as a scumbag, but he believed it was not impossible for men

to make mistakes in the absence of their loved ones.

“I’ve seen these photos before,” Joan stated.

“Larry has explained everything to me. Someone took these photos on purpose,” Joan

elaborated.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1823

Dustin squinted in surprise and looked out of the window.

Besides Gabriella, I can’t think of anyone else who would do such a thing.

She hasn’t learned to go, I suppose.

“Keep an eye on Gabriella,” Dustin warned.

Joan’s eyes dimmed upon hearing his warning.

The two women used to be close friends who would look out for each other. Joan had even

viewed Gabriella as the most important person in her life at one point in time. But ever since

Gabriella framed her and humiliated her, Joan had given up on their friendship.

To Gabriella, loving someone was essentially selfish. She would not allow anyone —

especially Joan, whom she hated the most — to snatch Larry away from her.

“Don’t worry. I’ll be fine.” Joan shrugged her shoulders casually.

Little did Joan know that Gabriella was already planning her next move to take her down.

A familiar voice rang out of the blue. “Joan! Is that you?”

“When did you come back?” Nancy rushed up to Joan and cushioned the woman in a hug.

“I just returned. How have you been?” Joan patted her back, excitedly returning the woman

with a question.

She sure looks happy.

I'm not sure if Caspian is as happy as she is, though...

"Yup! I feel great. How about you? Being all lovey-dovey with Larry now, I guess?" Nancy teased.

Lovey-dovey? Oh, please. I should be thankful we've finally patched things up.

"So you two have started dating officially, huh?" Dustin tapped on Jory's shoulder and laughed.

Jory responded with a grin but kept mum.

Seeing the smiles on their faces, Joan knew what the two shared was love. Jory's affectionate

gazes and Nancy's blushing red cheeks were a dead giveaway that the two were in love.

After catching up for a short while, the two groups went their separate ways.

Joan seemed to be high-spirited all the time ever since she reconciled with Larry.

She had been feeling bored the last couple of days. Instead of sitting idly at home, she set

out on a quest to search for delicious dessert recipes on the Internet.

She planned to make Larry something special as a surprise.

Since she had no experience in making desserts, the kitchen soon became a battlefield. Not

only flour and sugar were strewn all over the floor, but there were also puddles of water

here and there. Yet, she was not ready to throw in the towel.

Despite the mess she made, she was not ready to give in since she had poured her heart

and soul into this baking project.

While she was making a mess in the kitchen, she heard someone opening the door.

Joan was taken aback by the sound.

She took a quick glance at her phone. Larry would have probably reached home by now.

Oh, no! But I'm not ready!

"Larry!" She ran to the living hall, positioning herself in front of him.

"Yes?" The man gave her a confused look.

“Erm... head up to your room and get some rest first. Go, go, go!” Joan pushed him to the bedroom, far away from the kitchen.

What’s going on?

Larry opened the door by a fraction and peeped through the gap, wanting to know what

Joan had up her sleeve.

Joan did not seem to notice what he was doing, too busy tending to tasks in the kitchen to pay much attention.

A corner of Larry’s lips quirked up as he watched her wipe tears off her face.

So, she’s making dessert.

At that moment, he could not help but feel fortunate to have Joan in his life.

Gratitude was written all over his face as he watched her bustle about.

“Oh, God, I’m exhausted!” Joan exclaimed.

Soon after, she was finally ready to serve her dessert.

The only problem was that her creation looked hideous.

Joan knitted her brows in frustration, not at all pleased with how it turned out appearance-wise.

I worked so hard, yet this is what I made? Larry would be shocked to see how horrendous this is!

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1824

To say she was a little upset with the outcome would be an understatement.

“Wow, what did you make? It smells good.” Larry walked downstairs unexpectedly as she was wailing internally.

“Let me try some.” The man headed straight into the kitchen.

“Don’t. It looks horrendous and tastes bad. I’ll make better ones in the future.” Joan lowered

her head in shame before muttering, “I thought of giving you a surprise, yet...”

Larry grinned and inched closer to her. “Silly girl. You’ve given me the best surprise ever.

Come, show me what you’ve got.” He then picked up a piece of the dessert and put it into his mouth.

"It's delicious! Did you intend to hide it from me so you could finish it yourself?" Larry squinted his eyes playfully as he teased her. Joan was struck dumb by his comment for a moment. Upon seeing how hideous the dessert was, she had not bothered to try it. Yet, Larry shoved a piece into his mouth without any hesitation. "Really?" She was thrilled to see how much he enjoyed it. "I'm going to finish this by myself if you don't want to eat any." Larry took the entire dessert away in an attempt to tease her. "Hey, stop right there! Let me try some!" Joan ran after him. Just as she was about to reach his side, he placed the plate on the table and turned around to give her a big bear hug. "Everything you make tastes good," Larry beamed, giving her a light peck on the forehead. Joan kept her head down and blushed like a teenage girl who had just fallen in love. He always knows how to touch my heart and make me the happiest girl in the world. "Thank you." She leaned forward into his embrace, snuggling up to him. How she wished she could enjoy the moment and forget about reality for a moment. The two of them really felt as though they could live happily ever after during that moment. But they seemed to have forgotten the existence of one particular woman. "Are you ready?" Gabriella was alone in a dimly lit room when she posed that question to someone who was on the line with her. "I really can't do this, Miss. It's against the law!" The man refused to be in cahoots with her. "You have nothing to worry about. Just do as I told you to," Gabriella instructed in a deep voice. The man, who was on the other end of the phone, hesitated. "I'll send you overseas once you've completed this task," she promised. After a moment, she

added, "And I'll give you more money to help you to start your life elsewhere."

That sounded like a fantastic deal.

"Fine. But I'll need time to plan this out."

"Go right ahead. I don't care how long you take, but make sure you deliver the outcome!"

Gabriella squinted her eyes in excitement and exclaimed.

Larry and Joan had been enjoying the time of their lives for quite some time now. Even

Caspian occasionally grew envious of them when he saw the two lovebirds.

"So, how do you plan on celebrating your birthday?" Caspian asked.

Larry's birthday parties in the past used to be grand and luxurious, but this time, he wanted

to have a more private and quiet one.

"A simple one will do," Larry replied.

Caspian's mind turned blank for a moment. Simple? How simple? What does that even mean?

With his company on the right track and Joan by his side, Larry did not want a grand

celebration to disrupt his peaceful life.

In fact, he would not trade anything in the world for the tranquil life he was living now.

A few moments later, Larry received a call from Joan.

"Hey, so where will you be celebrating your birthday tomorrow?" the woman wasted no time, cutting straight to the chase.

She wanted to know about the arrangement so that she could be fully prepared.

"I just want to celebrate my birthday with a few friends this year," Larry replied nonchalantly.

That answer rendered the woman speechless for a moment.

He used to have grand birthday parties in the past, but now, he wants to celebrate his big day with a few friends?

"I want to have a quiet celebration. No outsiders, no disturbance," Larry explained.

Since the man had made up his mind, Joan decided to do what made him happy.

The birthday party was set to occur the next day.

As Larry wished, it was a simple but cozy celebration with a few of his close friends.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1825

Larry's parents did not intervene upon knowing what he wanted for his birthday. They had

learned to respect his decisions after acknowledging that he was no longer a child.

"Caspian. Have some of this..." Joan excitedly spoke up.

"Here's a slice for you too." She placed a slice of meat on Nancy's plate as well.

Though Caspian and Nancy were divorced, they were mature enough to set aside their

differences. After all, they were all there to celebrate Larry's birthday.

Caspian decided to break the awkward silence by asking his ex-wife,

"How have you been?"

"I've been good. How about you?" Nancy asked sheepishly, feeling a strange sense of guilt

rising within her.

Luckily, a short round of small talk seemed to resolve the tension between the two

divorcees.

"Honestly, Caspian, I can't believe how you used to tolerate my temper in the past!" Nancy

burst out laughing at the memory.

"You made my life miserable! It's all your fault! Let's drink to that.

Cheers!" Caspian took a

sip of his red wine, smiling as well.

Both Larry and Joan were pleased to see the reconciliation between the two.

Caspian might not be the most suitable husband for Nancy, but he could still be a good

friend to her. When they were married, the way they interacted with each other made them

seem more like siblings than lovers anyways.

"Cheers!" Nancy tapped the table lightly and raised her glass before Caspian.

After gobbling down several glasses of wine, the two divorcees had gotten really drunk.

"Let's play a game!" Caspian stood up drunkenly, swaying on his feet.

Nancy, too, stood up and started gesturing with her fingers.
They were having so much fun with each other that they seemed to have forgotten about
Larry and Joan beside them.
Larry and Joan were glad to see the both of them learn to let go of their past and embrace a blooming friendship.
Dustin, who had been observing them for some time from afar, could not help but smile while shaking his head.
Who would have thought a divorced couple could maintain a friendship like this!
Dustin sighed softly to himself.
If I were in Caspian's shoes, I would have pulled myself away and talked to someone else.
All of a sudden, a knock on the door sounded.
Joan looked at Larry in confusion, asking, "Who else did you invite?"
The latter went deep in thought for a while before he shook his head. "I don't remember inviting anyone else."
Wanting to see who had arrived, Joan stood up and walked to the door.
"Happy birthday, Larry!" Gabriella emerged once the door was opened.
A heavy silence instantly fell upon the room. Everyone turned their attention to the unwelcomed guest.
"What are you doing here?" Larry stalked to the door in a huff, shooting the woman a disdainful look as he did so.
I didn't invite her to my party. How did she even know I was celebrating my birthday today?
"I'm here because I want to celebrate your birthday with you, Larry," Gabriella replied in an overly sweet voice.
The drunk Caspian shot a sullen glare at the woman upon remembering what she had once done to him.
He was waiting for the right time to teach Gabriella a lesson!
"You aren't welcomed here. Please leave," Larry ordered without hesitation.

Gabriella was dumbfounded by how aloof the man was. She thought he would have invited him in to at least have a slice of cake. Feeling utterly awkward under the eyes of everyone in the room, she took a sidelong glance at all the guests who were unashamedly staring at her.

“Are you mad at me? Please don’t be mad at me, okay? Tell me what I did wrong. I’ll not repeat the same mistake, I promise!” Gabriella inched closer to Larry as she continued,

“More importantly, I want you to be happy.”

“Here’s my birthday gift for you.” Gabriella then presented Larry with an exquisite gift box.

To her dismay, the man tilted his head and looked away. “You should leave now.”

How dare he humiliate me like this?

A vortex of anger swirled inside Gabriella.

He treats me like shit all the time because of that scheming bitch!

She decided to play the sympathy card, hoping to stir some sense of guilt into Larry and

everyone there. “I only came here to celebrate your birthday, Larry. But since I’m not

welcomed, I guess I’ll see myself out.”

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1826

The woman turned around and dragged her feet to the door. Just when she was about to

open the door and leave, a voice suddenly rang out.

“Wait!” Larry shouted.

All at once, Gabriella’s face lit up in delight.

Has he finally relented and is willing to allow me to stay?

Nervously rubbing both her hands, she slowly pivoted and stared at the man a near distance

away as she anticipated his next remark.

“Take your gift with you!” Larry threw the gift box right at her.

At that, Gabriella’s face instantly flushed bright red.

It was the first time someone had ever refused a gift from her, and it was the man whom she

loved to boot.

“You’re going too far, Larry! I’m just here to celebrate your birthday!”

Finally, the reins on

her emotions snapped.

Well, well... What a stupid woman! Doesn't she know what she has done?

Yet, she has the

temerity to come and claim that she's here to celebrate my birthday,

huh?

"As I said, I don't need that!" Larry retorted coldly.

As Joan gazed at his wintry expression, she felt that he had gone a bit

overboard. Just when

she was about to intervene, Dustin interrupted her.

"Gabriella Ward, you should just leave if there's nothing else," he

suggested softly.

He was merely reminding her that Larry loved Joan wholeheartedly, so

she didn't stand the

slightest chance.

However, Gabriella would never give up so easily.

Damn you, Dustin Silverman! How dare you side with him? Her gaze

turned a tad vicious,

and the atmosphere became so tense that one could cut it with a knife.

Gabriella's presence here was abhorred by all, including Nancy.

While she hadn't had much interaction with her, she knew about how

she had once set

Caspian up back then.

She's definitely a cunning woman, Nancy reckoned as she stared at

Gabriella some distance

away.

"Larry, I'll just leave if you don't want me to attend your birthday party.

There's no need for

your friends to insult me here, no?" Gabriella declared resentfully.

Upon hearing that, Dustin sneered.

Hah! I haven't even exposed her, yet she's now taking me down a peg

first. She's really a

character all right.

"Hey, hey, what's happening here? It's a joyous occasion today, so why

is everyone pulling a

long face? Also, irrelevant individuals should just buzz off instead of

spoilng people's

moods here," Nancy drawled, deliberately snubbing Gabriella.

Bang!

All of a sudden, Gabriella viciously threw the gift onto the ground,

shocking everyone

around her.

“Fine! You win!” Then, she left without a backward glance.

Phew! She has finally left! Joan breathed a sigh of relief. If she were to stay, who knows what

other problems she might cause!

“Okay, okay, she has left, so let’s continue eating,” she urged.

Subsequently, the atmosphere reverted to back before Gabriella turned up. Caspian and

Nancy went back to their game while Dustin and Larry drank together.

Meanwhile, Joan

slowly picked up the gift box on the ground.

In the box was a necktie.

Ah, this must have cost a fortune!

Joan scrutinized the necktie, only to notice that it was branded.

But Gabriella probably doesn’t have it easy, no? She had been kicked out some time ago,

and she doesn’t have much savings.

At that thought, her gaze dimmed as she stared at the necktie.

“Joan!” Larry suddenly called out.

“Huh? What’s the matter?” Joan promptly glanced back at him.

“Just throw it away!” Larry asserted as he pointed at the necktie in her hands.

I have no interest in Gabriella Ward’s gift! I only want to keep my distance from her, and

ideally, to never see her again!

“Larry, this necktie must have burned a hole in her pocket,” Joan remarked in a whisper.

“I don’t need it,” Larry countered placidly. Well, I’ve got enough neckties.

“I mean, we can give it back to her so that she can get a refund,” Joan explained.

Looking on, Dustin gaped at her in surprise.

Is she for real? Why is she so foolish? Gabriella Ward purposely put her in a difficult

position, yet she’s actually speaking up on her behalf!

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1827

After the simple birthday party had gone on for a long while, everyone dispersed. Caspian

and Nancy’s relationship was obviously much better than before.

They were no longer husband and wife, yet they both gained a friend in each other.

“Joan Watts... Joan Watts...” Larry muttered.

When Caspian and Nancy were playing a drinking game earlier, he joined in with Dustin.

Although it was rather childish, they enjoyed themselves greatly.

Surprisingly, both Larry and Dustin were then sloshed.

“Okay, that’s enough. Don’t drink anymore.” Joan helped Larry into the bedroom.

“I miss you, Joan,” Larry blurted out of the blue as he clutched her arm tightly.

That was his drunk personality; he loved to act coquettish.

Meanwhile, Dustin was sprawled on the sofa, snoring.

At the sight of the two men’s sorry states, Joan shook her head. Then, she snagged her bag and left.

After all, she had to check on Nancy since the latter had drunk quite a bit.

As for Caspian, he

was undoubtedly fine since he had always been able to hold his liquor.

Sometime later, Dustin flipped over on the sofa. However, he simply couldn’t get

comfortable, so he staggered up with his eyes closed and stumbled to the bedroom.

Ah, this is heavenly!

He then stripped down to his birthday suit.

The sky gradually grew dark. Joan, on the other hand, was still taking care of Nancy at her

house. Probably having overindulged, Nancy hurled many times. Joan couldn’t bring herself

to leave her alone in that state, so she stayed.

However, she had no inkling about the commotion at her house right then.

“Ahh!” Dustin shrieked at the top of his lungs.

“Stop making such a racket!” Larry patted him lightly on the shoulder.

“Let go of me, Larry Norton!” As Dustin said that, he started struggling wildly.

At that very moment, Larry was clutching Dustin tightly and hugging his head in an X-rated scene.

All at once, Larry froze.

"What happened here?" The two men shot up in the next moment.

"What did you do to me, Larry Norton? Well? Speak up!" Dustin appeared a touch aggrieved.

My sexual orientation has never been in doubt throughout the years, but today, my

innocence and reputation have been ruined at the hands of this scoundrel, Larry Norton!

Ironically, he's even my love rival!

"I didn't do anything, so don't get the wrong idea," Larry murmured.

But when both men flipped open the covers, they screamed in concert.

Beyond a shadow of a doubt, they were both naked.

"Oh, God! Larry Norton, you've got to take responsibility for me!" Dustin gave Larry a hard kick.

Good heavens! He must have lost his mind! At that, Larry shot him a glare. We're both men,

so what's all this talk about taking responsibility?

"Forget it! You're not a woman," Larry muttered as he turned his face away.

"You've ruined my reputation!" Dustin screeched loudly.

"I'm not a sicko like you. I don't like men, okay?" Larry tugged the covers higher.

Having just returned home from Nancy's place, Joan thought that Dustin had left when she

saw no signs of him on the sofa. But the moment she opened the bedroom door, she was stupefied.

"What are you two doing?" Joan squawked.

"Listen to me, Joan. It's not what you think! Nothing happened between me and Larry

Norton! I swear!" Dustin hastily explained.

Beside him, Larry said nary a word.

She knows my sexual orientation best, so I don't need to explain anything.

"But if this gets out, it'll be mortifying! People will think that you're..."

Joan trailed off,

hesitant to finish her utterance.

People will think that you're gay!

In the end, she still couldn't bring herself to utter that word.

"Okay, that's enough. Get out of bed and leave!" Larry kicked Dustin forcefully.

"You've hugged and groped me, yet you're now treating me like this, Larry Norton?" Dustin

pinned a solemn gaze on the man in front of him.

If not? How's he expecting me to treat him? Larry sneered.

"I'm already being merciful now, so hurry up and leave. I didn't feel any desire at all when I

hugged you," Larry retorted disdainfully.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1828

What the hell? You're such a scoundrel, Larry Norton! You've taken advantage of me, yet

you're now trying to shirk responsibility! I really can't fathom why on earth Joan likes him!

"Dustin, you should take a shower and leave." The lid on her emotions finally sprang open,

and Joan burst into laughter.

Ever since Larry and Dustin shared the same bed, their relationship became significantly

ambiguous yet seemingly much better than before.

"Hey, Dustin, you seem to be rather close with Larry Norton recently."

Jory studied the man

before him suspiciously.

He was rather bewildered at their amicable relationship at present since it was Dustin who

asked him to acquire Norton Corporation's branch companies to make life difficult for Larry

back then.

"Of course. Why wouldn't we be close when we've even slept together?" Dustin replied

placidly.

In the next moment, water spurted out of Jory, who was having a drink.

"What? You slept with Larry Norton?" He gaped at Dustin incredulously.

Oh God, this is shocking news! He has actually slept with someone else, and it was a man!

Most importantly, that man is his love rival to boot! Such mind-blowing news almost had

Jory falling off the sofa.

“Ah, don’t get so worked up! Nothing happened between the two of us. We merely slept.”

Dustin hastily waved a dismissive hand at him.

Out of the blue, Jory hooted with laughter.

What has on earth happened? When did he have such kinky predilections?

“Alright, that’s enough, Jory. Stop laughing. Let me tell you, I only told you that because I

truly regard you as a friend. Don’t repeat it to anyone else, okay?”

Dustin asserted sternly.

At that, Jory’s chortles abruptly stopped short.

I, Jory Synder, never do anything that ruins someone else’s reputation!

Furthermore, he’s my

buddy!

“Okay, I got it. But I think even if I keep it a secret, someone has already known about it!”

Jory deliberately drawled as he flashed a smile at the door.

“Haha... Dustin, you’ve actually slept with Larry, your love rival! This is a ludicrous joke! Oh

gosh!” Nancy suddenly appeared in the office.

Dustin glanced over his shoulder at her, looking extremely awkward.

“Hey, that’s on you! If it weren’t for you, we wouldn’t have ended up in bed together!”

Dustin groused.

“Ah, that’s unconscionable of you, Dustin! If it weren’t for you, the two of you wouldn’t have

had so much fun...” Nancy didn’t give him any quarter.

Indeed, it was because she drank too much with Caspian that day while dragging Larry and

Dustin along for the ride that resulted in the scene of them sleeping in the same bed.

However, after that incident, Dustin and Larry seemed to have regarded each other as

friends.

“Okay, that’s enough. Stop talking about it! I’m leaving!” Dustin embarrassingly made

himself scarce, slamming the door behind him.

Thus, it was only Jory and Nancy in the office, being all lovey-dovey.

“Oh yes, Jory, I’m thinking about bringing you to meet my father tomorrow.” Nancy hooked

her arms around Jory's neck.

Upon hearing that, Jory hesitated for a moment. It wasn't that he didn't want to meet

Simon, but he wasn't certain whether he would accept him. After all, he was partly the

reason for Nancy's shift of affections back then.

"What's the matter? Do you not want to do so?" Nancy eyed the man in front of her

dubiously.

She had thought that her relationship with him was already at the stage where they could

discuss marriage, and she didn't want to drag things out. Thus, she couldn't understand why

he hesitated when she proposed bringing him to meet her father.

Could it be that he doesn't want to marry me? In a flash, her gaze dimmed.

"Jory Synder, you never thought about marrying me, yes?" Nancy pushed at him.

"Hey, what are you saying, Nancy? How could I possibly not want to marry you? I love you!

But I'm not sure whether your father will accept me." Jory ducked his head.

In truth, he had really fallen in love with her. It was for that reason that he resolutely

abandoned some of his plans and acted on his father's advice, returning all the branch

offices of Norton Corporation he had acquired when she told him that Larry and Joan were

her best friends. Actually, he didn't have to return them, but he didn't want her to be caught

in a difficult position.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1829

"Don't worry, Jory. Everything will be fine as long as we love one another.

My father is a

reasonable man, so I believe that he'll give our relationship his blessings," Nancy murmured

as she grasped the man's arm tightly.

Hearing that, Jory kissed her on the forehead affectionately before nodding resolutely.

Meanwhile, Larry was engrossed in perusing documents in the office, everyone busy with their own tasks.

Ring, ring, ring... He cast a glance at the caller ID, but he didn't answer the call.

Nonetheless, his cell phone kept ringing incessantly at the side as though it was going to ring forever if he didn't pick it up.

"Hello. What is it?" Larry demanded, cutting right to the chase.

It was currently working hours, so he loathed receiving nuisance phone calls.

"Treat me to lunch, Larry," Dustin ordered.

Huh? Has he gone crazy? No one takes the initiative to ask someone else to treat him to lunch!

"I've got no time for that. I'm very busy." As Larry said that, he wanted to hang up right after.

"That's not a valid reason! Let me tell you, Larry Norton, you've got to take responsibility for me since you slept with me! I want to have lunch!" Dustin insisted. What kind of twisted logic is this? At that, Larry was rendered speechless.

"God, you're unreasonable, Dustin Silverman! Who exactly climbed into whose bed here?

Logically speaking, you're the one who should take responsibility for me!" Larry retorted loudly.

"Alright, then, I'll take responsibility for you. I'll treat you to lunch instead!" Dustin offered with a chuckle.

All at once, Larry was at a loss for word.

Damn it! He must have too much time on his hands, so he's messing around with me!

"Well, let's end this conversation here. If you're really that bored, go and get yourself a girlfriend," he suggested mildly.

"Okay, then, you get busy. I'll go and look for Joan!" As Dustin said that, he made to hang up the phone.

“Hey, hey, don’t do that! I’ll treat you to lunch, okay? It’ll be my treat!”

Larry promptly
blurted.

Dustin, on the other hand, naturally knew that Joan was his only
weakness.

This is more like it! He then hung up the phone after having gotten his
way. How could I
possibly let him off the hook so easily when he had taken advantage of
me? I’ve got to
make him pay for a bit.

His lips curved into a smirk.

At the Western restaurant...

“Uh... Dustin, how about you give Larry some space henceforth? You’ve
been seeking him
out too often lately, either demanding that he treat you to lunch or tea.
He’s my man, not
yours,” Joan groused in a lowered voice.

Meanwhile, Dustin had never expected Larry to bring Joan along on their
“lunch date.”

“So what? Your man slept with me, so can’t I make him pay for a bit?”
Dustin deliberately
taunted.

Argh! Here he goes again! Every time he mentioned that incident, Joan
felt like blowing her
top. They merely slept, yet he’s now making it sound so indecent! If it
weren’t for the fact
that I went to Larry’s office to visit him, they probably would’ve had a
“lunch date” alone
again!

“Why don’t you get your facts right, Dustin? Larry is my husband. Look,
everyone is staring
at the two of you with contempt in their eyes!” Joan gestured at the
diners around them.

In a flash, the people around them hurriedly turned away and buried
their heads in their
food.

Ring, ring, ring...

In the office, two words flashed across Simon’s cell phone.

As he stared at the two words that kept blinking, he massaged his
temples. “Hello?”

“What are you doing, Dad?” Nancy’s voice was filled with mischief.

“I’m busy, so just spit it out.”

Simon was well aware of his daughter’s temperament; she only sought him out when she

wanted something. Otherwise, he wouldn’t even see her.

“Er... Dad, I’d like you to meet Jory,” Nancy murmured shyly.

It’s been a while now, so I should be bringing Jory to meet him.

“What? So you want me to meet Jory Synder? Don’t tell me the two of you want to get

married? I’m swamped, so I’m not meeting him,” Simon declined right away.

Back when her marriage was on the rocks, it was already merciful of me that I didn’t seek

him out to settle the score! And now, she wants me to meet him? No way!

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1830

“Listen to me, Dad. Jory and I truly love each other. So, I think we should talk about settling

down,” Nancy continued persuading Simon.

Settle down? No way! She has just gotten divorced, and now, she wants to get married

again? She isn’t considering Caspian’s feelings at all! What on earth has gotten into her?

“I said no, so there’s no room for discussion. At least for this year, don’t even think about it.

Nancy, you’ve just gotten divorced, and it was you who proposed it.

Caspian didn’t even say

anything, yet you’re now thinking of getting married again. What do you want others to

say? Do you want them to say that you’ve long since cheated on

Caspian?” Simon snapped

without holding back his punches.

At that, Nancy instantly went silent. She didn’t expect her father to put things so bluntly.

Well, he probably dislikes Jory a lot. But I really love him!

“Dad, I’m going to marry Jory no matter what. I’ve decided on him.

Regardless of what

others say, we love each other. Also, I’m going to bring him to meet you tomorrow. I’m just

informing you now.” After saying that, she hung up the phone.

“How dare you...” Before Simon had even finished speaking, the disconnect tone sounded.

Good heavens! How could she be so willful?

He heaved a sigh.

Back when Nancy and Caspian got divorced, he planned to transfer all the family assets to

Caspian to make it up to him. To his surprise, Caspian declined firmly.

Thus, he felt a tad

guilt toward him.

Presently, Nancy was sulking, and her eyes brimmed with sorrow.

“Hey, what’s wrong?” Joan hurriedly plopped down.

“A cup of coffee, please.” She then beckoned at the server a near distance away.

“What else could it be? I really don’t understand my father,” Nancy huffed.

From her morose expression, I’m sure it has to have something to do with Jory. Otherwise,

no one would be able to influence her mood, considering her mettle.

“What’s the problem now? The divorce is now finalized, so what else do you want?” Joan

deliberately baited her after taking a sip of coffee.

“Ugh! Why are you picking on me as well, Joan?” Nancy glowered at the woman before her

in chagrin.

“Well, what else should I be doing? You’re not telling me what happened.

How would I

know what to say when you didn’t tell me anything?” Joan countered candidly.

“I want to bring Jory to meet my father, but he rebuffed me. He didn’t want to see him, but

what father-in-law refuses to meet his son-in-law?” Nancy groused in a low voice.

Upon hearing that, Joan instantly burst into giggles.

That’s ridiculous! They haven’t even gotten engaged, yet she’s already labeling them as son-in-law and father-in-law? This is overly eager of her!

“Ah, so you’re worried about this. But well, I do understand your father’s feelings,” Joan

commented softly.

When Nancy heard that, she grew even more incensed.

Ugh! I asked her out so that she can give me some suggestions! Why is she siding with Dad instead?

“Stop messing with me, Joan. I’m in a dither, so hurry up and give me some suggestions!”

“Why are you in a dither?” All of a sudden, Dustin appeared before the two women.

Joan stared at him in puzzlement.

“Why are you here instead of at work, Dustin?” she snarked as she threw him a glare.

Hmph! I haven’t even settled the score with him about him pestering Larry! For some reason, he simply has tons of free time on his hands now like a rich heir,

either going to Norton Corporation to visit Larry or endlessly pestering him to treat him to lunch!

“Uh... The two of you seem...” Nancy wanted to say something, yet she hesitated time and again.

“We’re not acquainted!” the two of them blurted simultaneously as they turned away, their expressions surprisingly alike.

Hmm? Could this be the so-called interaction between male and female best friends?

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1831

Nancy stared at Joan and Dustin skeptically.

“Uh... I’ve got something to do, so see you guys next time!” She quickly snagged her handbag to leave.

“No!” Joan and Dustin swung their gazes at her in concert.

“Nancy, didn’t you ask me out to give you some suggestions? Sit down, and we’ll talk about

it. Just ignore others, for irrelevant people are simply annoying!” Joan asserted in a deliberate bid to snub Dustin.

At that, Nancy looked at her in confliction.

Dustin has never offended me in any way, so isn’t it rather unreasonable to ignore him at this time?

“Don’t worry, Nancy. Just tell me whatever problem you’re facing, and I’ll resolve it for you.”

Dustin patted his chest confidently.

Oh God, what’s going on here? Nancy clutched her head with both hands, a tortured

expression on her face. I can’t afford to alienate either of them, what with Joan being my

best friend and Dustin being Jory’s best friend!

“Well, this matter has nothing to do with you, Dustin. So, just go about your business,” Joan

growled without sparing his feelings.

Good God, she’s actually throwing a tantrum just because I asked Larry to treat me to a few

lunches! Is this necessary? When did she become so petty?

“Of course, it has something to do with me! Jory is my best friend, so his problem is also

mine.” Dustin showed no signs of backing off.

As Joan stared at the man before her, she was gripped by the urge to punch him in the face.

But in the next second, reason had her stifling that desire.

“Fine. Since you’re so smart, you come up with suggestions. I’m not going to say a single

word further.” Joan turned to gaze out the window with fury written all over her face.

“Fine by me! Listen here, Nancy...”

Subsequently, Dustin started speaking eloquently at length, from her relationship with Jory,

their married life, and Jory’s personality, to how they could curry favor with Simon, and so

on.

At the side, Joan was taken aback.

Hmm... never had I expected him to actually know that much.

“Dad!” Nancy hollered before she had even stepped into the house.

Simon had heard her ages ago, but upon recalling that she wanted to bring Jory to meet

him, his blood immediately boiled.

“Dad, look who’s here!” Nancy promptly rushed over to him and acted coquettishly.

This was Simon’s weakness, so he couldn’t help relenting every time she acted coyly with

him.

“Can’t you be more ladylike? You’re all grown up now.” He gazed at his daughter indulgently.

“Look, Dad! I brought Jory here to visit you, and he bought lots of gifts for you!” Nancy hurriedly exclaimed ingratiatingly.

“Mr. Barrymore,” Jory swiftly greeted as he stepped forward.

But the moment Simon spotted him, he instantly whirled around and strode into the living room without saying anything.

Seeing that, Jory knew that he had hit a brick wall, for Simon’s action made it clear as day

that he wasn’t welcomed. All at once, his gaze dimmed.

Beside him, Nancy wore a mortified expression.

“It’s okay, so don’t worry. I’ll go and talk to him,” she murmured in consolation.

In response, Jory nodded slightly.

“What’s wrong with you, Dad? Why did you do that when I brought Jory home to meet you?” Nancy whined in a whisper.

“Nancy, I’ve told you that I don’t want to see that man. You should both leave. I still have some things to handle,” Simon stated coldly.

At the sight of his indifferent expression, Nancy knew that her father was truly furious.

In the past, he’d always indulged me no matter my shenanigans and willfulness. What was

more, he’d even help me out. Even when it came to my divorce from Caspian, he merely

turned a blind eye to it. So why is his reaction so intense today?

Disappointment swamped her.

“Nancy, you should grow up. In the past, I indulged and spoiled you because you were

young and ignorant. But now, you should learn to consider other people’s feelings. What

would people think when you brought Jory Synder here? If you were to get married right

after getting divorced, even an idiot would be able to tell that you cheated on your

husband,” Simon rebuked bluntly.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1832

Nancy looked at her father in shock. When did Dad become so concerned about what other people think?

“Dad, we are the ones who live our lives. Why do you care so much about what the others

think?” Nancy asked, baffled by her father’s behavior.

Dad is not acting like his usual self.

Indeed, Simon had always been a straightforward, decisive man who had never faltered in

his belief and actions. But things are different now.

The whole matter could affect Caspian’s reputation as well.

It’s already a shame for Caspian after his divorce from Nancy. If any rumors saying he got

cheated on by his wife starts...

Simon was a sensible man. He certainly understood how Caspian would feel if other people

knew that his wife dumped him for another man. Therefore, he would not allow his

daughter to do anything reckless during this sensitive period of time.

Furthermore, he would not accept Jory to be Nancy’s boyfriend for now.

“Leave. I don’t want to see that guy, Jory, in front of me. Take him away immediately. Also, if

you have nothing else important to say, don’t come finding me again.”

Simon sighed.

After all, he knew that Nancy would come again to pester him to accept Jory next time.

“Dad, why don’t you like Jory?” Nancy shook Simon’s arm fawningly.

Frowning at her childish behavior, he could not help but raise his voice at her, “Nancy, stop.

You’re the one at fault. Do you think that you can settle this matter on your own? Don’t you

realize how serious this is? Even if you’re clueless, how could Jory not know about it?”

Nancy was taken aback instantly.

Seeing how cold and unrelenting her father was, she turned away in dismay and went to

Jory.

“Come, let’s go. We can come again next time.” Nancy looked hesitantly at the man in front of her.

Jory peeked inside, trying to see Simon, and remained silent.

Later that night, at a restaurant, Joan was happily having her dinner with Larry.

Today, we’ve finally got to spend some quality time with each other without the annoying third wheel—Dustin.

As they were chitter-chattering about trivial matters, Joan’s phone rang all of a sudden.

Seeing that it was Nancy calling, she answered the call promptly.

“Hi, Joan. Where are you? Can you come and drink with me? I feel like sh*t right now.”

Nancy sobbed.

Is she crying? Joan was shocked.

“Nancy, are you okay? What happened?” she asked worriedly.

“Joan, I’m really sad.” Nancy sniffled.

Hearing her heart-rending voice, Joan could not bring herself to reject her, so she told Larry about it and went out hurriedly.

When she reached the pub, she immediately found Nancy downing her shots alone at the

bar. She rushed towards her and took away the drink in her hand.

“Nancy, why are you drinking so much?”

Judging by her red face, she knew that Nancy was as drunk as a skunk.

Nancy threw her arm around Joan’s neck and asked in a low voice, “Joan, why? Why does my dad hate Jory?”

Joan shook her head and sighed. Is this about Jory again?

“Okay. Listen to me. Stop drinking and head back home. It’s getting late now,” Joan said,

holding Nancy up to prevent her from toppling over.

However, Nancy pushed her hand away and protested, “No, I don’t want to go home. I’m sad. I want to drink!”

She then continued to drink bottle after bottle and was finally knocked out after the third bottle.

Okay, we can go now. Joan dragged her down from the bar chair and piggybacked her out of the pub.

Ugh, why is this woman so heavy?

“Hey, Nancy. You should lose some weight,” Joan said, shaking Nancy deliberately.

“Huh? What? Cheers!” Nancy muttered and then buried her face in Joan’s hair.

You win, woman. I surrender.

Joan shook her head amusedly and continued to carry Nancy on her back as she waited for a cab at the roadside.

However, before she could hail a ride, a few shady-looking men appeared on the empty road.

One of them—a bald man—sauntered to Joan. “Yo, pretty lady. Do you need any help? I’d

be more than happy to carry her for you.”

“No, thanks,” she rejected politely.

“Hey, don’t reject my help. Look at you. You’re straining yourself to carry your friend! Come,

let me help you.” He squatted down with his back facing her.

Joan clenched her fists and sighed inwardly. It seems like we’re going to have big trouble tonight.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1833

“It’s okay. We’re heading somewhere else. Bye.” Joan took a few steps back, ready to leave.

The rest of the men who were standing behind them just now immediately blocked her path.

“Miss, it’s getting pretty late. I’ll help you.” With that, the bald man pulled Nancy down from her back.

“Hey! What are you doing? Nancy, wake up!” Joan yelled as loud as she could.

But Nancy still had her eyes closed, lying quietly in the arms of that bald man.

“Ah, what a good girl. She’s so well-behaved.” He looked at Joan and ordered his men,

“Take her away now!”

As his subordinates held her down and tied her wrists with a rope, Joan used all of her

strength to struggle against them. “Let me go! What do you guys want from us? Help!

Somebody help!”

Scared that she might attract other people’s attention, the man rebuked, “Shut up, b*tch!

We’ve been watching both of you for so long.”

Sh*t, looks like we’ve become their targets. If Nancy was sober, it would be as easy as pie for

her to overpower these men. But this girl is still sleeping!

“Nancy, wake up! Wake up!” Joan called at the top of her lungs.

Just then, Nancy raised her head and said loudly with her eyes closed,

“Huh, what? Let’s

drink! Come! One more!”

Joan was livid. What kind of friend would doze off when we’re about to be abducted?

“Stop yelling, woman. I know that she drank a lot just now, so she won’t be waking up any

time soon. You should be concerned about yourself instead,” the bald guy said, walking

toward Joan.

A shiver ran down her spine instantly.

“W-what do you think you’re doing? Don’t come near me!” Joan shouted helplessly, looking

around frantically to find a way to escape from him.

However, she could not move anywhere because the other men had a firm grasp on her

shoulders. The bald man smirked and caressed her face. “We’re going to play some games,

of course.”

Revolted, she turned her face away from his hand.

Disgusting man with a nauseating breath!

Suddenly, her phone rang. He glanced at it and hesitated for a moment.

Then, he stepped closer and could not help but gape when he saw the caller ID.

Needless to say, Joan noticed the obvious change of his expression.

Judging from his widened eyes when he saw Larry’s name, he should be afraid of Larry.

With such thought in mind, she tried her best to wriggle her wrists out of the tie, but it was too tight. “Oi, let us go and I’ll pretend as if nothing has happened tonight. If not, when Larry comes and finds me here, all of you are done for.” Now that she had no way out, she had no choice but to try her luck. The bald man’s eyes grew cold. Who wouldn’t know who Larry Norton is? He is such a prominent figure in this city. If she’s really someone he knows, then we definitely can’t let her go. A young man came forward and whispered in his ear, “Boss, what should we do now? She knows Larry Norton!” “It’s okay. We can kill her after we do the deed,” the bald guy gave a straightforward answer. The boy was stunned. He had never thought of killing anyone, and he did not dare to do it either. “Boss, no. If we do this, we’d be imprisoned for life!” He tugged on the man’s arm anxiously. “What shall we do then? If Larry Norton knows about this, we’d be dead either!” the balding man yelled. They’re indeed afraid of Larry. Joan heaved a sigh of relief secretly. Then, she said, “Hey. Listen to me. If you guys let us go now, I promise everyone here will be safe, okay? I’ll just pretend nothing has happened between us.” Hearing her words, the leader hesitated. “Have you hear her, boss? She said if we released them, she’d let it slide,” the young guy exclaimed. Meanwhile, Joan’s phone was still ringing. It was as if Larry would keep calling if she did not answer his call. “Look, boss! The phone keeps ringing, so it means that this woman is someone really important to him. We must never offend Larry Norton, boss.” There was a trace of fear in the young man’s eyes.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1834

Their leader glanced at the phone for a second before staring at Joan, troubled.

After a long while, he finally walked over to her and squatted down.

“Were you serious when you said that you’d let us go? If we release you, you swear you’d not tell Larry about us?” He stared at her intensely, looking for telltale signs of her lying.

Joan nodded. “Yes, I meant what I said. I won’t say a single word about you guys, I swear.”

Even though they kidnap us, we’re unharmed. So, there’s no need to tell Larry about this.

Suddenly, a long-haired man chimed in, “Boss, we can’t release them. All women are liars.

Have you forgotten about the woman who betrayed you?”

What the heck? Joan’s once hopeful heart sank instantly.

Upon hearing his subordinate mentioning the woman who hurt him, he clenched his fists

tightly, and his gaze turned menacing. “How can I forget that?”

“Boss, we must not let these two women go,” the man with long hair protested.

Looking at the long-haired man, Joan had an urge to punch him and shut him up. Why does

he have to butt in right when we’re about to be freed?

“I’m not lying. Everything I’ve said is true. If you let us go, I will not tell this to anyone!” Joan repeated.

The leader turned his back to her and pondered for a while, tilting his head in concentration.

“Drink. I want to drink more...” Nancy muttered all of a sudden.

Joan looked at her friend and sighed dejectedly.

It’d be great if Nancy is sober now; she is normally the one smarter in this kind of situation.

Exasperated, Joan affirmed, “If I don’t keep my promise, may God punish me and let me burn in hell!”

He immediately turned around with his gaze softening.

Is he finally going to let us go?

Joan waited for his answer expectantly.

After a few seconds, he replied, “Okay. I’ll let both of you go, but keep in mind that it’s not

because I believe you, but because I want to keep my fellow friends safe.
I'm sorry for what

we've done. Hopefully, you won't tell Larry Norton about this."

The men standing at the side was shocked.

Everyone thought that their boss would take things to extremes after
the woman who

betrayed him was mentioned.

"Boss, have you forgotten what the woman did? She said she would
come back to meet you,

but in the end, she had ran away with another man."

"Shut up!" the bald-headed man yelled.

He certainly remembered the lesson of not trusting the words of a
woman. If it wasn't for

that wicked woman, I wouldn't be still single now.

"Let them go," he muttered.

He knew perfectly well that they should not offend Larry Norton,
especially if the woman in

front of them was his lover.

If I continue to keep these women, I'm sure he would kill every single
one of us on the day

he finds us out.

Since the bald man had given his command, Joan was set free
immediately.

He came over and said, "Miss, please remember what you've promised
today and keep your
word."

Joan nodded solemnly. "Don't worry. I'll stand by my promise."

He put on a sad smile in return.

In fact, he did not care if Joan would stick to her word or not.

How could a man who was hurt by his lover's broken promise trust the
words of a woman

so easily?

The only thing he believed was that even if Larry found them, he would
not do anything

drastic because they had left both the women.

"But!" As Joan walked away from him, she whipped around abruptly and
looked at the bald

man. "Please believe that there are still good women out there who are
worth your trust."

Then, she continued her way to her sleeping friend and shook her shoulders. "Nancy, wake up!"

Nevertheless, Nancy had no response at all.

Gosh, this woman. Why does she have to be drunk when I need her the most? Does she

have to be so devastated for Jory? It's not a big deal at all. When there's life, there's hope.

Even if her father doesn't accept Jory now, it doesn't mean that he won't accept him in the future.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1835

After that, Joan took out her phone and called Larry. Once he answered the call, she said,

"Hi, Larry. Where are you now? Can you come to pick us up? Nancy is drunk."

Suddenly, she heard Dustin's voice from the other side of the line. "Huh, who's that?"

Stupid Dustin! Why is he with Larry again? This is outrageous!

Joan clenched her fists in a jealous fit.

"Where are you? I'll go pick both of you right away," Larry hurriedly replied.

"No," she rejected. "Let Dustin come to fetch us."

Larry was puzzled for a second, but the moment he glanced towards Dustin who was sitting

on the sofa, he understood why she did so.

Recently, Dustin had always come to visit him, and Joan was rather unhappy with it. Is she jealous?

Larry smiled at the thought.

He was suddenly curious about how Joan would look when she was jealous. She would probably look adorable.

After he hung up the call, Larry walked over to Dustin and said monotonously, "Dustin, Joan asked you to fetch her."

Dustin scrunched up his face in confusion. What? Why is this guy asking me to pick up his

wife? Isn't he scared that I might take her away from him? I don't think he is so open-minded. Hmm, something is not right. Let me test him.

“Okay, I’ll go,” Dustin replied without any hesitation.

Larry looked at him and flashed him a smile before going back to his work.

Before Dustin left, he observed Larry once again, but he still looked unperturbed, making Dustin even more baffled.

“Hey, Larry. Are you sure you’re okay with me fetching her? Won’t you be worried about us being together?” Dustin asked in a low voice, squinting at him.

“Nope. Joan is the one who’s afraid that you might take me away from her,” Larry answered casually.

Speechless, he went out of his place quietly.

After some time, a car finally came to a stop in front of Joan and Nancy.

“Why did she drink so much?” Dustin asked, helping Joan to get Nancy into the car.

Joan patted him on his shoulder, thanking him, and heaved a sigh of relief. “What else could I do? She wouldn’t listen to me.”

“Wait, Joan. What happened to you? Why is your face so dirty?” Dustin asked, staring at her face.

She was stunned for a moment before taking out a piece of tissue paper from the glove compartment to wipe her face.

“Ah, it’s nothing. I accidentally fell just now while I was carrying Nancy. She’s too heavy.

Haha,” she made up an excuse hurriedly.

All of a sudden, Nancy shouted, “What? You’re the one who loses. Joan, you must drink this round. Drink!”

Dustin immediately drew back in surprise. Seeing how drunk Nancy was, he realized that it must have been difficult for Joan to carry her alone.

Despite that, he still felt something was off with them.

Nancy was alright as she was just drunk. However, Joan did not look like herself at all.

As Dustin pondered on it, Joan stared blankly outside the window, thinking about the men who abducted her and Nancy just now.

The bald guy was probably hurt by the woman he loved, so he doesn't believe in any woman now.

A flicker of sorrow gleamed in Joan's eyes.

She had seen plenty of people who had similar experiences as the bald man.

It's normal to be dumped during the course of a relationship these days.

Although breakups

are saddening, heartbreaks are crucial to making a person stronger.

"Joan. Joan?" Dustin called, looking suspiciously at the woman sitting in the backseat.

However, he did not get any response from her at all.

He then took a deep breath and shouted out loud, "Joan Watts!"

She flinched at the loudness of his voice and snapped, "What?"

Even Nancy was startled, too.

Worried that their conversation might disturb Nancy's slumber, she then lowered her voice

and asked, "What is it?"

"Did anything happened to both of you just now?" Dustin asked tentatively.

No, I can't let him know about it. I've promised the bald guy to keep it to myself.

Joan smiled awkwardly, rubbing her neck. "Nope. What could happen to us? Haha. It's just

that Nancy drank too much and caused a slight stir at the pub."

She had no choice but to use Nancy as an excuse. With the high intelligence of Larry and

Dustin, they would definitely not believe me if I tell them that it was nothing.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1836

I see. Dustin heaved a sigh of relief.

Given that Nancy was dead drunk, Joan had no choice but to bring Nancy back to her

house.

After carrying Nancy into the room, Dustin sat on the couch in the living room. Then, he

stared at the ceiling and panted for air.

How much alcohol did Nancy have? Why did she become so heavy?

"Well, you can go now. Everything's fine," Joan said to Dustin straightforwardly.

Are you abandoning me after using me?

Dustin glanced at Joan.

“Shouldn’t you treat me to some food as a token of appreciation?”

Dustin whined.

After all, I was the one who picked you guys up!

“It’s fine. I think you should go home because it’s getting late,” Joan

asked him to leave

directly.

Actually, Joan knew what Dustin had on his mind: he wanted to wait for Larry so that he

could claim credit and asked for some rewards from Larry.

Ever since Dustin slept in the same room with Larry, he went to Larry’s company nearly every

day. The colleagues would probably doubt Larry’s sexual orientation if they didn’t know

Joan.

“I’m not leaving. I’ve to wait for Larry,” Dustin murmured.

This jerk dares speak his mind!

“Dustin, I think we have to talk.” Joan gazed at Dustin, who was sitting on the couch.

“Sure,” Dustin replied nonchalantly.

“Well, you and Larry are always together lately. Given that both of you are men, I’m afraid

the colleagues would have misunderstandings if they always see you guys together,” Joan

said cautiously.

What’s wrong with it? That only proves that Larry and I are good friends.

That’s all!

Besides, I only want to joke around with Larry. He definitely doesn’t have a different sexual

orientation.

“Joan, what nonsense are you talking about? The friendship between Larry and I is pure, and

the innocent have nothing to fear!” Dustin yelled.

How pure is it? Joan continued sizing Dustin up with a suspicious look.

“I only want to joke around with Larry, given that he took away the woman I love,” Dustin

added deliberately.

Joan was rendered speechless.

She certainly knew that Dustin was referring to her.

“Anyway, I guess you’re jealous, aren’t you?” Dustin gazed at Joan and asked like a busybody.

“Who’s jealous? I’m not jealous.” As Joan blushed, she hastily turned around to avoid his gaze.

Dustin, you’re a jerk! Why must you state the obvious if you know the answer?

“She’s jealous!” Larry happened to have come home and interrupted them.

Ding... Nancy’s phone was ringing.

Nonetheless, her eyes were still closed as she was in a dream on the bed.

After a while, she finally opened her eyes.

Snapped out of the dream, she stretched her body and looked around.

She was apparently

not shocked even though she was in an unfamiliar environment.

“You’re awake. Since you had a lot of alcohol yesterday, come and have some food,” Joan said blandly.

“How did I come back? I don’t remember anything about it.” Nancy rubbed her eyes.

“Someone carried you back,” Joan glanced at Nancy as she replied.

My god, you’re not even aware that you were kidnapped. If I didn’t come to your rescue,

you would have been bullied already.

“Joan, I had a peculiar dream just now,” Nancy said to Joan casually.

“I dreamed that I was kidnapped by a few people. Besides, their boss was a bald man.”

Nancy tilted her head as she began describing her dream.

Some water spurted out from Joan’s mouth upon hearing it.

“Hey, Joan, what’s wrong with you?” Larry immediately handed over a piece of tissue to her.

“I’m sorry for being overly emotional,” Joan explained.

Come on, that’s not a dream but the truth!

Does she remember it? But she was sleeping all the time! Joan couldn’t help but stared at

Nancy bewilderedly.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1837

“That’s weird. Why would I have such a dream?” As Nancy was speaking, she grabbed a slice of bread and began eating.

“You can have more.” Joan immediately gave Nancy a few more slices of bread, hoping that food could divert her attention. After all, having delicious food often made women forget about everything else.

“Joan, the bread is yummy! Your baking skills are getting better!” Nancy said with surprise.

Joan was right to use a few slices of bread to change the subject of the conversation effortlessly.

Ding, ding, ding...

Nancy’s phone rang once again.

“Hey, your phone is ringing,” Joan reminded her.

“Wait, let me finish this first. It’s not urgent anyway,” Nancy replied while eating the bread.

After a while, she finally picked up the call.

“Nancy, where are you!”

Nancy was shocked to hear Jory’s cold voice.

“I was with Joan yesterday.” Nancy dared not tell him that she was in a bar last night.

“Do you know how many times I had called you? I almost went crazy because you didn’t answer my calls!” Jory said irritably.

In fact, he had never felt so tormented before.

Nancy knew that she made Jory worried about her. As she felt guilty, she didn’t rebut nor stop him from berating her.

For Jory, silence wasn’t the best policy. Instead, he wished to hear the truth from Nancy:

Where did she go yesterday?

“Nancy, tell me where you were yesterday,” Jory continued to ask.

“I... went to a bar yesterday,” Nancy answered softly.

Upon hearing it, Jory was boiling with rage. He spent the whole night looking for her all

over the city, yet it turned out that she went to a bar!

Besides, she didn’t even answered his calls.

“I see.” With that, he hung up the phone.

Is that all? Staring at the words on her phone screen, Nancy felt dejected.

Jory must be pissed off!

“Nancy, what’s wrong? Come and get some food,” Joan urged her to come over.

What should I do? I would have a hard time coaxing Jory once he’s angry.

Suddenly, Nancy felt frustrated as she didn’t know what she ought to do.

Let it be. I’ll eat first and apologize to him sincerely afterward!

With that, she came up to the dining table and enjoyed eating the delicacies.

“Are you alright?” Joan asked worriedly as Nancy looked different after answering the call.

“I’m fine. Let’s eat,” Nancy put on an awkward smile as she said.

Even a fool could tell that it was definitely Jory who called her.

After all, who else could ever make Nancy feel sad or dejected apart from Jory?

After Larry left the villa, Nancy went to Alpire Group. She wanted to explain everything that

happened yesterday to Jory.

However, she was stunned the moment she arrived at the office.

Gabriella put both of her arms on Jory’s back. Besides, they looked intimate while their

bodies seemed to be close to each other.

“Jory!” Nancy yelled.

Shocked to hear the high-pitched voice, Gabriella immediately withdrew her hands.

“Why are you here?” Jory asked gently.

What’s the matter? Did I disturb their intimate moment?

Nancy stood in front of Gabriella, staring ferociously at her.

“What were you two doing?” Nancy asked coldly. At this moment, the sense of chillness

exuded from her eyes could seemingly kill anyone.

“Nothing.” Gabriella shrugged in response. What a b*tch! Does she think that I’m blind?

“Jory, what were you two doing?” Nancy then asked him seriously with a hint of

disappointment.

She was willing to divorce Caspian to be with Jory, yet he had the cheek to have an intimate

relationship with another woman. As such, she couldn't help but feel betrayed by Jory.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1838

"As she said, we weren't doing anything," Jory answered nonchalantly and continued

reading some documents.

At that instant, disappointment swamped her.

She saw it clearly that Gabriella put her arms on Jory's back, and they seemed to be rather

intimate. How could they have the cheek to deny it! Jory, you're indeed cruel!

"I'm leaving." With that, Nancy expressed her disappointment and turned around to leave.

"Wait," Jory suddenly stopped her.

"Were you really with Joan only last night?" Jory eyed her curiously.

Instead of questioning her, he only wanted to make sure about it. After all, he was worried

that something would happen to her.

"I've said it." With that, Nancy banged the door and left.

Now, only Gabriella and Jory were left in the office.

"Mr. Synder, aren't you worry that she'll misunderstand?" Gabriella asked deliberately.

"Why would she misunderstand? You're not my cup of tea anyway," Jory answered

straightforwardly.

At this moment, Gabriella felt that he was a boring man.

"But luckily, you were beside me. Otherwise, I would have fallen to the floor," Gabriella

added smilingly.

Due to anemia, Gabriella felt dizzy when she was picking up some documents on the floor.

Hence, she put her hands on Jory's back to support herself and stay conscious.

"Alright, Mr. Synder. If there is nothing else, I've to get going," Gabriella said deliberately

again as though she was hinting at something.

Have I ever needed anything from her? I mean, it has always been her who come and see

me!

Jory smirked silently and didn't give her any response.

“By the way, Mr. Synder, I would suggest that you should talk to your beloved Nancy

because she was jealous,” Gabriella teased.

Suddenly, Jory stopped writing and looked out the window.

Meanwhile, Nancy was eating frantically in a restaurant as though she was famished.

“Hey, Nancy. What’s wrong with you?” Joan looked at her worriedly, feeling that something wasn’t right.

“I’m hungry!” Nancy said while she was eating. I don’t believe it! Joan took a peek at Nancy.

She believed that Nancy had an argument with Jory.

“Is everything okay between you and Jory?” Joan took a sip of her coffee as she gazed at

Nancy, who sat in front of her.

Suddenly, Nancy stopped her frantic movements and began to sob.

“Joan, why did he do that to me? I disappeared for only a night. To be exact, I went to the

bar to vent my emotions. However, it turned out that he has another woman. I can’t accept

it!” Nancy complained while wiping away her tears.

I knew it! It was Jory again! At that moment, Joan’s eyes dimmed.

“What happened?”

After quite some time, Joan finally understood what really transpired.

“What should I do, Joan? Jory doesn’t want me anymore. We went through a lot before we

are finally together...” Nancy asked sobbingly.

Meanwhile, Joan took a deep breath. She had never imagined that Jory would do such

things to Nancy.

However, Joan thought that she had to verify the matter instead of listening to Nancy’s

words.

Maybe it was only some misunderstanding.

Joan understood Nancy very well and knew that she often acted impulsively when it came to

relationships. For instance, Nancy decided to divorce Caspian the moment she reunited with

Jory.

As such, Joan took out her phone and made a call.

“Oh? Isn’t it Ms. Watts? Aren’t you still jealous of me? Why are you calling me all of a sudden?” Dustin deliberately provoked her.

“Dustin, I’m giving you a task. Please find out what’s wrong with your good friend, Jory. Does he still want to be with Nancy?” Joan said furiously.

Apart from her anger toward Jory, she actually had unpleasant feelings toward Dustin to a certain extent.

“They are doing great. Why are you worried about them? Jory looked for her the entire night last night,” Dustin replied nonchalantly.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1839

“I don’t think so. Nancy is crying here, saying that she saw Jory behaved intimately with another woman when she went to the office,” Joan rebutted.

This is the truth!

Dustin was lost for words.

Since when did Jory have an intimate relationship with other women except for Nancy?

Impossible! Jory has always been a self-disciplined man. Of course, it only happens after he met Nancy.

“Don’t talk nonsense. I know Jory very well. He has no other woman besides Nancy,” Dustin explained after giving it some thought.

Although Jory looked cold and even cruel to a certain extent, Dustin knew that he really loved Nancy.

Moreover, Jory had changed a lot for Nancy.

For instance, Jory wasn’t as cold as before after being with Nancy.

“Joan, please comfort Nancy for now. I’ll meet Jory to find out what happened.”

They hang up the phone after having the short conversation.

Dustin believed that Jory would face a lot of trouble in business if he really hurt Nancy this time. After all, Simon loved Nancy and was protective of her even though he seemed to be strict toward her.

“Alright, Nancy. Please don’t cry. I’ll go shopping with you, is it okay?”

Joan comforted

Nancy carefully.

Suddenly, Nancy’s eyes shone.

“Joan, let’s go!” The next moment, Nancy stood up and dragged Joan to leave the restaurant.

“Wait, I’ve to take my handbag!” Joan yelled.

She was shocked to see that Nancy looked impatient and frantic.

Wasn’t she crying just now? Why does she suddenly look composed?

“Joan, look at this. Is this beautiful?” Nancy asked when she was pointing at a snowy white dress.

“It’s beautiful,” Joan replied.

However, before she could finish, Nancy had grabbed the dress and entered the fitting room.

When Nancy walked out of the fitting room, she looked like a noble princess.

Apparently, she touched up her makeup in the fitting room.

As Nancy looked at herself in the mirror, her lips curved up in a satisfied smile.

“Joan, how do I look now?” Nancy turned around.

“This suits you,” Joan replied smilingly.

“Please wrap this up for me. Besides, I want this, this, this, and that!”

Nancy pointed at several other dresses.

Joan was stupefied. Has she gone mad? Why is she buying so many clothes?

“Joan, let’s go and take a look at some shoes.” With that, Nancy dragged her into a branded footwear store.

As soon as they entered, Joan gaped at the price tags in surprise.

A pair of shoes in this store was worth nearly double the monthly salary of an ordinary white-collar worker.

“Please get a pair of the shoes on the left side for me to try,” Nancy yelled.

The salesgirl served Nancy enthusiastically because she was their loyal customer. Besides,

she kept complimenting Nancy for having good taste in fashion while taking the shoes.

“Ms. Barrymore, this pair of shoes suits you perfectly! It matches your skin tone so well,

making you look even more noble and graceful...” The salesgirl praised Nancy

exaggeratedly with all smiles.

Nancy seemed to be satisfied with the compliment. She waved her hand, gesturing at the

salesgirl to wrap it up.

“Also, wrap up this pair of shoes and that high-heels for me!” The salesgirl did as Nancy said

once she waved her hand.

Meanwhile, Joan stared at Nancy in surprise.

Is this how she vent her feelings? How extravagant!

She just spent more than ten thousand at one go. Oh wait, I think more than a hundred

thousand was gone in the spending spree.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1840

“Nancy, you’ve bought a lot of things. Are you sure you can wear all these?” Grabbing

Nancy’s arms, Joan reminded her.

I’ve to buy them even if I’m not wearing them!

A wry smile crossed Nancy’s face.

I’ve to max out Jory’s credit card!

“Why should I worry? I’m not spending my own money anyway!” Nancy patted Joan’s

shoulder gently.

Could it be...

Joan suddenly understood what was on Nancy’s mind.

In that case, you can go ahead! After all, the money that men have earned is meant for

women to spend!

Meanwhile, Jory was reading some documents in his office.

A moment later, his phone buzzed from time to time, indicating that he received text

messages.

Jory was curious but initially thought that those were some marketing messages. Shortly

afterward, he was shocked as he began reading the messages.

Jory's lips curled into a wry smile when he realized that they were about his credit card transactions.

This woman is really naughty. She always wishes to max out my card every time she's upset. Despite knowing that Nancy was on a spending spree, Jory was happy to spend the money for her.

Thump!

Suddenly, Dustin opened the office and stood before Jory, panting.

"What's up?" Jory looked at Dustin worriedly.

Dustin always remains calm and composed, yet why does he look so nervous this time?

Besides, he didn't even knock on the door before coming in. I mean, this is not how he usually behaves.

"Hey, Jory, what did you do today?" Dustin asked.

Jory looked at Dustin bewilderedly.

Since when did he begin to be mindful of what I did every day?

"I'm working and happen to be reading some documents now," Jory shrugged his shoulder and replied blandly.

Is that all? It can't be!

Dustin came up to Jory slowly while glaring at him with blazing eyes.

"Hey, just shoot if you want to say something. And what is that look on your face?" Jory shot a disgruntled gaze at him.

"Okay, I'll get to the point then. Nancy said you've another woman and left her," Dustin said softly.

When did Nancy see it?

Jory's eyes dimmed in the next instance.

I haven't settled a score with her for not coming home and answering my calls yesterday, yet she is accusing me of wrongdoing now?

All women are preposterous creatures!

"What do you think?" Jory looked at Dustin.

"I think it's impossible. There's no way you would do that," Dustin said as though he trusted Jory.

Deep in Dustin's heart, he actually had some doubts. He thought that men could make mistakes, particularly when their loved ones weren't around. As he was deep in thought, he also observed the changes in Jory's facial expressions. Fortunately, Jory's reactions told him that he didn't do such a thing. Hence, Dustin believed there was certainly some misunderstanding between them. "That's enough. Stop messing with me. Besides, I'm busy and have a lot more documents to read." Jory waved his hand. "Alright. I'll take my leave now," Dustin replied smilingly. "Oh, wait a minute," Jory suddenly stopped Dustin. What's up? Dustin turned around and eyed the man not far from him curiously. "Well, tell Nancy to call me if she has maxed out her credit card. I can give her a few more cards." With that, Jory handed over two credit cards to Dustin. Dustin was stunned as though he was struck by lightning. He's the dream man of every woman! Free free to swipe the cards! Nancy's an idiot! She should have cherished him! "Mr. Synder, I want to swipe your cards too," Dustin deliberately said coquettishly. "Damn it, that's gross. Get on with your work now," Jory rejected him straightforwardly. Humph! He values romance over friendship! Dustin then turned and made himself scarce. Suddenly, an idea flashed through his mind when he was leaving. "Hello, Joan, where are you guys now?" Dustin whispered over the phone. "We're in the mall," Joan answered softly. "I see. Send your location to me, and I'll be there as soon as possible." "Why do you want to come here?" Joan asked cautiously. "Jory asked me to send two more credit cards to you guys, for he was worried that Nancy would max out her credit card," Dustin replied.

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1841

Chapter 1841 Dustin Joins The Shopping Spree

Joan's body stiffened, and she couldn't move an inch upon hearing it.

"Hey, Joan, why are you standing still? Come on!" Nancy urged her to move quickly.

"Ah? Okay." Joan immediately hung up the phone and sent a message to Dustin.

"Joan, did something happen?" Nancy hoped that she wouldn't be leaving so soon.

Given that Joan seldom went shopping with her, she was excited to have Joan's company

now.

"Nothing. Dustin will be here soon," Joan said softly.

"Why is he coming here?" Nancy asked disgruntledly.

Considering the close friendship between Dustin and Jory, she certainly didn't have a good

impression of Dustin.

"Well, he's here to help you carry the bags." Joan patted Nancy's shoulder gently.

As Nancy glanced at the bags, her lips curled into a wry smile.

Soon, Dustin appeared before the two women.

"Hey, Dustin, carry these for me," Nancy deliberately said.

Dustin gazed at Nancy and pursed his lips in dissatisfaction.

How could Nancy ask me to carry the bags for her the moment I arrived?

She's too

snobbish.

Besides, does she want the two credit cards?

"Ahem. Before I came here, Jory gave me two credit cards. He told me that you can swipe

the cards whenever you want," Dustin purposely said loudly so that Nancy could hear it.

"Dustin, thank you for coming. Please take some rest," Nancy replied smilingly.

Dustin couldn't help but chuckle quietly upon hearing it As expected, money comes first.

Shortly afterward, Nancy came up to Dustin and acted cutely.

"Dustin, I've maxed out my card. Please give me the two cards," Nancy said gently.

Good god, now she thinks I'm important and didn't ask me to carry her bags anymore?

“Hey, Nancy, do you think you should thank me for bringing the two cards for you?” Dustin said.

What is the jerk thinking?

Nancy held in her emotions and pretended to act like a simple-minded girl.

“Of course, Dustin. Buy anything you want, and I’ll pay for it!” Nancy announced loudly.

Humph! I’m sure he’s trying to take advantage of me! Well, I’ll let him buy using the cards! After all, he has to be responsible for it if the two cards max out! This is the best way.

“Well, you said it, not me. Let’s go and swipe the cards!” The next moment, Dustin walked into a luxury goods store without hesitation.

“Boss, I want this and this.”

“Oh, I want that too!”

As the two began their spending spree, Joan doubted if Dustin was here to keep Nancy company or the other way round. Besides, Dustin didn’t seem to be worried about using Jory’s credit cards!

“Hey, don’t go too far,” Joan reminded them and pointed at the bags behind them.

“Hey, Joan, get some credit cards from Larry if you envy us. Don’t worry about Nancy because Jory is damn rich. Am I right, Nancy?” Dustin said while patting Nancy’s shoulder.

“Indeed. It’s fine, Joan. He is wealthy and doesn’t need the money anyway.” After that, she continued to shop with Dustin.

Joan suddenly felt like escape.

Actually, Larry did give some credit cards to Joan as well. Nonetheless, Joan rarely used the cards, for she thought she didn’t lack anything so far.

“Joan, where are you? Come here quickly!” Nancy yelled.

“Joan, come and carry the bags for me!” Dustin also screamed at her.

At this moment, Joan suddenly felt that she wanted to strangle Dustin to death. How dare

he instructs me to carry his bags? "Joan, be quick. Why are you dilly dallying?"

The shopping spree finally ended after they shopped for almost a day.

Joan felt exhausted,

while Nancy and Dustin looked satisfied and delighted.

Ding, ding, ding...

Joan heaved a sigh of relief after gazing at the words on her screen.

"What happened? Why are you panting?" Larry asked worriedly over the phone.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1842

Chapter 1842 It Felt Great To Be Loved

Larry felt a strong urge to get in touch with Joan because it had been a day since he last

heard from her. Little did he know the things she had to go through

when that particular

thought crossed his mind.

If it was possible, she would rather spend a life without having

encountered Dustin and

Nancy, ever.

Joan, who was relatively exhausted, replied in a hushed voice, "I'm still shopping."

Larry was thrilled because he thought she had learned to indulge and started utilizing the

wealth he had bestowed upon her.

"What have you bought? Do you have enough quota?" Larry asked.

"Huh? I'm just here to carry the things they have bought."

After a short while, Larry hung up the call the moment he figured out the truth.

He called Dustin and yelled the moment the phone got through, "Dustin, do you consider

yourself a man? How dare you ask a woman to carry your things on your behalf?"

Although they were friends, Larry couldn't hold back his frustration anymore because the

woman he loved wholeheartedly had to serve someone else.

On the other hand, Dustin, who was reprimanded out of the blue,

noticed there was another

woman behind them.

"O-Oh! I-I'm so sorry!"

Although Dustin had apologized, Larry went on and yelled at him to vent his frustration

before hanging up the call.

Oh, God! I'm doomed!

Staring at Joan with an awkward expression, Dustin was utterly speechless because he had

offended Larry when he planned to get the better of him.

"Ms. Watts, allow me to carry those myself! Thank you so much for taking care of these on

our behalf!" Dustin tried to flatter Joan.

On the other hand, Joan was on her guard against the suspicious man.

She felt as though he

was up to no good because his attitude drastically changed within a few seconds. What

does he want from me? I'm pretty sure something's going on behind the scenes! Joan

continued sizing Dustin up with a suspicious look in silence.

He nudged her and said, "I have something to tell you!"

"What is it?" Joan asked and took a peek at him.

"When you're home, can you please tell Larry we never meant to mistreat you? I mean,

some of the things I have bought are for him as well." Dustin stared at the things he bought,

behaving as though he couldn't bear to send them away.

Some of these belong to Larry? Are you sure you're not lying just because you want to

flatter him? I'm pretty sure you have bought these for yourself!

Staring at the things he had bought, Joan responded with a vicious smirk and assured, "No

problem!"

Since they are gifts, why not?

As she thought to herself, she continued smirking because a call from Larry was all it would

take to do the trick. She knew Larry would call Dustin, yet it was beyond her expectation for

Dustin to behave like a different person within a few seconds.

Since Dustin had learned his lesson, Joan honored her promise and refrained from bringing

the incident up in front of Larry once she was home.

Larry sized Joan up and asked concernedly, “How are you? Are you tired?”

“Don’t worry. Apart from having a pair of sore legs, everything else is fine.”

Joan reassured him with a bright grin because she was overwhelmed by the feelings of being loved.

“You’re such a fool!” Larry wrapped his arms around her waist.

Meanwhile, Nancy, who had fully utilized the limits of Jory’s credit cards, showed no signs of guilt at all.

Dustin announced, “Alright, you’re home.”

“Thanks!” Once Nancy expressed her gratitude, she alighted from the car.

She pointed at the back of the car and instructed, “Hey, Dustin! The trunk please!”

Staring at the woman in front of him with a confused look, he couldn’t comprehend her

words because there was nothing else apart from his clothes in the trunk.

Nancy kicked the door and repeated herself, “I need to get my clothes! Hurry up!”

Since Dustin couldn’t afford to offend the woman, he immediately did as instructed and opened his trunk.

The moment he did, he started regretting his decision.

“H-Hey! Nancy, what are you doing? Those belong to me!” Dustin raised his volume and directed his query at her.

“What do you mean those are yours? I have bought all of these for Jory using his card!

You’re allowed to tag along because I needed someone to try out the outfits.” Once Nancy

made herself clear, she brought everything away with her.

Has she always been such a domineering woman?

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1843

Chapter 1843 What Is Going On

It was undeniable Dustin and Jory had one thing in mutual—their figure.

Although Jory and Nancy were in the middle of a fight, they still held their better half dear

in their mind.

Jory, who was on the couch, was heartbroken because Nancy seemed to be completely worn out, throwing everything to the ground the moment she entered the house.

“Why have you bought so many things? Aren’t you tired?” Jory asked. Is he upset when it has barely caused any dent in his account?

“Am I not allowed to buy the things I like?” Nancy asked rhetorically with her lips pursed.

Glancing at the woman in front of him, he stated, “You can get everything you desire without holding back, okay? If these aren’t enough, feel free to go for another round of shopping spree tomorrow.”

“Stop being such a busybody!” Nancy brought herself into her room once she answered him in a petulant manner.

Jory responded with a self-deprecating smirk because he might have to spend a fortune to please her whenever she was irked in the future.

Nonetheless, he was determined to do whatever it would take to please her.

When Jory caught his phone buzzing, he noticed it was a call from Dustin.

“What’s wrong?” He picked up the call immediately he had been anticipating it.

“Don’t you think it’s too much? Your woman had bought all my favorite shirts for you when I was the one keeping her company throughout the entire day! I deserve some credit as well, okay?” Dustin complained.

When Jory heard him, he was thrilled and offered, “All right, all right. I’ll get you something to compensate you for the time you have spent in the near future.”

“No! I want you to get it for me tomorrow! Otherwise, return everything she has purchased to me!” Dustin named his condition because he couldn’t wait to figure out Jory’s next best course of action.

Should Jory return the clothes to him, Nancy would be irked. On the other hand, should he refuse to return it, it would make him seem like a stingy man. "Alright, I'll get you whatever you want tomorrow." Jory hung up the call after he answered Dustin's query.

Meanwhile, Nancy, who had shut herself in her room, has no intention to go back downstairs. Neither does she have any intention of telling Jory that those clothes are the ones she brought for him.

After some time, Nancy fell into a deep slumber because the pent-up fatigue had caught up to her.

"Nancy, it's time for dinner."

When Jory knocked on the door, no one answered him because she was in the middle of a sweet dream.

Jory knocked on the door and instructed, "Nancy, it's time to wake up. Hurry up and get yourself ready."

On top of that, he needed her to deal with the piled-up things in the living room because she had bought those.

Nancy, who was relatively haggard, opened her eyes after she was roused from her sleep.

Yawning, she walked in the direction of the living room and said, "Jory, I have bought those for you."

I think she's still half asleep. Otherwise, she wouldn't have initiated a conversation with me.

He felt a heartwarming sensation deep down when he figured out she had bought those for him.

When he wrapped his arm around her from behind, Nancy returned to her senses and became wide awake.

Jory placed his head on her shoulder and said, "Nancy, thanks!"

"Why don't you explain the things going on between you and Gabriella before expressing

your gratitude?" Nancy deadpan said a rhetorical question in return. Jory was conscious the woman in between his arm was jealous. He had always wanted to explain the things going on between them, yet he was frustrated and refused to explain it because she had spent a night elsewhere. He carried on with the conversation, holding her face in an intimate manner. "Actually, nothing's going on between us. I merely gave her a hand to help her up." Halfway through his speech, he paused and added in an aggrieved front, "Can you promise to refrain from spending the night away from home? I searched everywhere for you when you weren't home!"

Nancy chuckled because of the man's serious look. She finally got over her nightmare because they had patched things up and sorted out the misunderstanding. After things returned to the way they were supposed to be, everyone moved on with their respective life.

Larry and Joan were as lovey dovey as always. Occasionally, they would show the affection they had for one another through their social media accounts. Dustin would roll his eyes because he was the only single man amongst his peers.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1844

Chapter 1844 You Are Unreliable

Upon a simple glance at her phone, Joan noticed she had received a call from Larry.

"Joan, can you head into the room and see if there's a document on the table?" Larry asked.

She rushed into the room without further ado and saw a document on the table.

Joan asked, "Yes! Do you need me to bring it over to you?"

"Yes! Please send it over as soon as possible!" Larry answered in a hurry.

Hearing his reply, she dare not delay because the man seemed to be in a desperate need of the document.

"Alright, I'm on my way!" Joan assured him once she made her way out.

Unfortunately, she was caught in traffic when she was on her way there. Larry made another call and asked, "Hello? Joan? Where are you? Are you reaching yet?"

What's your estimated time of arrival?"

"Calm down, Larry. I'm caught in traffic."

"Hurry up! I need it for an important conference!" He hung up the call after he delivered his instruction.

Perhaps he was in a hurry—he couldn't be bothered to mind his choices of words at all.

"Sir, please hurry up! I'm in the middle of something!" Joan requested in a quivering voice

because she was afraid the board of directors would give Larry a hard time.

The driver answered, "Miss, I'm afraid that's impossible because of the current situation."

They were caught in heavy congestion when it was just another weekday. In fact, it wasn't

even the peak hours of the day.

Staring at her watch as time went by, Joan got increasingly anxious.

As she was about to cry, she asked, "Sir, do you know any nearby shortcut? I'm really in a hurry!"

The driver glanced at Joan with an innocent look and answered, "Miss, you need to stop yelling at me because there's nothing I can do."

Soon, she received another call.

Larry could barely suppress his frustration. He asked, "Joan, what on earth is wrong with

you? It has been half an hour! Have you made your way over with a bike? Even if it's a bike,

you should have long reached! Where the heck are you?"

"Larry, I'm still on my way! I'm just a few corners away! Please calm down and wait for me!"

Joan explained.

Suddenly, the driver announced, "Miss, I'm afraid it's going to take at least another twenty

minutes before we can get out of this heavily congested road."

She glared at the driver and wondered if he had deliberately announced it to irk her when it

was evident she was in a hurry.

“What? Twenty minutes? Joan, are you sure you’re not messing around with me? If you can’t reach here in time, just be frank and stop wasting my time! The shareholders are going to pick on me for being unreliable again! You don’t have to bring those over anymore! I should have dealt with it because you’re not reliable at all.” Larry hung up the call immediately after he finished his orated speech.

Joan was stupefied because Larry had never been so harsh with his words.

She knew it must be an important conference. Otherwise, he wouldn’t have been so harsh with his words and raised his volume against her.

When the driver saw Joan’s disappointed look, he asked, “Miss, are we still heading over or not?”

He asked in a hushed voice because he had heard the content of the duo’s conversation since Larry was at the top of his lungs.

“Yes!” She looked out the window in an attempt to divert her attention from the harsh remarks.

In the end, a single drop of tear streamed down her cheek.

The driver tried to console the dejected woman. “Miss, are you okay? You shouldn’t take his words personally because he seemed to be in a hurry.”

He started being a nice guy when he was the one behind the duo’s conflict a few minutes ago.

Joan enunciated her reply, “I’m fine.”

As the congested traffic finally cleared up, the driver added, “Miss, it’s perfectly fine for a man to be ambitious. In fact, you should consider yourself lucky because of his ambition.

Otherwise, he couldn’t support the family. On top of that—”

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1845

Chapter 1845 A Bad Feeling About It

“Sir, why don’t you focus on driving? I’m well aware of the things you have in mind,” Joan muttered her reply.

“I consider myself an ambitious man as well. In fact, I—”

“Hey, Sir! Hit the brakes!” Joan yelled because a truck was about to bump into them.

Unfortunately, the driver failed to respond in time because he had his focus on something else.

Bam! As a result, the car was sent flying.

The driver ended up on the pole that was a few feet away, whereas Joan ended up in the

river that was next to the bridge. Since it was a river with strong currents and a seemingly

bottomless pit, the onlookers deemed it impossible for Joan to be alive.

After the onlookers surrounded the scene, the police officers and the paramedics showed

up at the scene.

Meanwhile, the driver of the truck had disappeared into thin air.

In the meantime, Larry was in the meeting room, sharing his tentative plan for the upcoming

quarter with the shareholders.

One of the shareholders said, “Mr. Norton, I think it’s better to put the plan on hold for the time being.”

Someone added, “He’s right because we can’t pinpoint the strength of your proposal.

Although we’re not against the idea of implementing changes, it’s different from the way

things have worked over the years. I’m afraid only a mere few can adapt accordingly if we

implement such a drastic change over such a short time.”

Larry glanced at the shareholders in the meeting room. He knew they wouldn’t take his

proposal into consideration, let alone executing it.

“Mr. Norton, don’t you think it’s too much of a risk?”

Larry sneered because of the cunning bunch’s response. He announced,

“Since everyone has

a different opinion, let’s keep the rest of the discussion for another day.”

He needed the document Joan had with her to prove himself.

Unfortunately, he had left

both copies at home.

“Dustin? Why are you here?” Nancy asked the moment she saw him.

Although she was on good terms with him, ever since he spent a night with Larry and

started scamming him, she was constantly on her guard against this suspicious man. She

couldn't help but wonder if he had a different sexual orientation in spite of the fact he used

to be head over heels with Joan.

“What? Am I not allowed to be here?” Dustin glanced at her in return.

He knew he wasn't supposed to offend the wealthy heiress in front of him. Nonetheless,

after the last two trips they had made together, their relationship had drastically improved.

Thus, he stopped holding back his words.

“Why don't you head over and pay Larry a visit?” Nancy brought up the suggestion in an

attempt to chase him away.

Unfortunately, it would take something more than that to send him away.

“Why would I want to pay him a visit when I'm here for Mr. Synder?”

Dustin wrapped his

arm around Jory's neck and announced while staring at Nancy in the eyes.

“Dustin, stop being such a shameless man! I'll get Joan over to teach you a lesson!”

Immediately after she warned him, she reached for her phone and made a call.

She frowned because no one picked up the call in spite of the numerous attempts made.

Usually, Joan would pick up the phone within a few seconds after the call was made.

However, it had already been a few minutes since Nancy's first attempt to reach her, yet no

one picked up the call.

Nancy had a bad feeling about it, but she couldn't be sure if it was just her gut feeling

messing with her brain.

After a short while, she asked, “Hey, why isn’t Joan picking up the phone? She might be in the middle of something, but it has been such a long time since my last attempt to reach her. Why hasn’t she returned the call?”

Previously, Joan would revert back to Nancy’s call as soon as possible should she notice she had missed a few incoming calls.

Dustin reprimanded, “Nancy, what sort of nonsense are you talking about? You need to stop overthinking things.”

She shook her head in an attempt to get a grip on herself because nothing could possibly go wrong since she had Larry with her.

Mmm! I must be overthinking things again!

When Jory opened the television, the news anchor announced, “A serious accident has occurred at the construction site of the bridge. The driver of the cab was rushed to the hospital, yet the passenger was nowhere to be found. On the other hand, the driver behind the accident had fled the scene. According to the police, the passenger was a female, her current identity unknown.”

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1846

Chapter 1846 Where Is She

Dustin exclaimed, “Oh, God! It’s such a serious accident!”

“The driver had fled the scene, and it occurred at the construction site of the bridge? It feels like something fishy is going on behind the seemingly coincidental accident,” Jory added.

Nancy had no idea what was wrong with her—her eyes started brimming with tears as she listened to the news.

“Nancy, what’s wrong with you? Why are you weeping when the accident has nothing to do with you?” Dustin tried to pull the woman’s leg once again.

She couldn’t comprehend the rationale behind her seemingly absurd response either. All

along, she deemed those involved the ones at fault. Whenever she came across such news in the past, she would consider it just another one of the news. She thought it was karma because no one would be run over by a truck for no apparent reason. The accidents were nothing more than the consequences of their own actions. In contrast, she stopped having such irresponsible thoughts when she heard the particular news—she found the victim pitiable for passing on at such a young age. Nancy sniffled and said, “Don’t you guys find the victim pitiable? She’s so young, yet she ends up in such a serious accident. They can’t even locate her.” Indeed, no one could make it through such a serious accident unscathed. Jory wrapped his arms around the woman’s waist and consoled, “It’s fine as long as we’re fine. You need to stop overthinking things, okay?”

Meanwhile, Larry, who had returned home, noticed Joan was nowhere to be seen. When he got overly worked up and said she wouldn’t have to bring the document over anymore, it was an instruction to get her to return home. Similarly, Joan was conscious of the meaning behind the infuriated man’s double innuendo, yet she insisted on bringing the document over. “Joan?” Larry was at the top of his lungs, yet he failed to acquire any response. He repeated himself for one more time, “Joan?” Since he failed to acquire any response, he reached for his phone and made a call, yet his effort was to no avail. Where could she be? Larry’s face puckered in confusion because he had a bad feeling about it. It felt as though something serious was about to occur soon, but he couldn’t be sure if it was a mere feeling. Larry tried to reach Joan through the phone over and over again, yet no one picked up the call.

Anxious, he called Dustin and asked, "Is Joan with you?"

Dustin answered Larry's query, "Huh? No? It has been a day since our last encounter."

Yelling, he asked, "Are you sure you're not lying? Tell me the truth, Dustin!"

On the other end of the call, Dustin was utterly dumbfounded because Larry had gotten worked up out of the blue.

Dustin asked in return, "No! I have never seen her! Why? What's wrong?"

Judging by Larry's question and anxious tone, Dustin knew something was wrong and thought Joan had gone missing again.

"Larry, have you gotten into another fight with Joan? Can't you tolerate her as a fellow man?"

"Shut up and get going to locate her already!" Larry wrapped up their conversation and hung up the call.

Dustin was dumbfounded by Larry's yelling.

Has something happened to Joan? "What's wrong?" Jory asked.

"Joan has gone missing," Dustin gasped out his reply with his eyes glinting.

"Has she headed somewhere else without informing us?" Jory asked.

Is that possible? It's perfectly fine for her to keep us in the dark, but it's odd for Larry to be unaware of his agenda!

"Larry can't get his hands on her whereabouts either," Dustin added.

Nancy jolted up from her seat and yelled, "See! I knew something was wrong! Hurry up and dispatch our men to locate her!"

As a result, everyone went berserk and started searching high and low for the missing Joan.

"Hey, Larry! Do you remember the time of your last conversation with Joan?" Dustin asked.

That might serve as a clue for them to get their hands on Joan's whereabouts.

Larry shared everything with Dustin. "I asked her to bring my document to my office

because I needed it for something urgent. In anticipation of her arrival, I was on pins and needles and made a few calls. She told me she was caught in heavily congested traffic...”

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1847

Chapter 1847 I Need Your Help

“It has been such a long time! Where could she be?” Jory looked at Dustin in the eyes with a serious expression.

Nancy broke the silence, asking in a quivering voice, “Jory, could something bad happen to Joan?”

He asserted, “Joan has always been a kindhearted woman. I’m sure she’s fine.”

All of a sudden, Dustin yelled, “Larry, you’re such a jerk! What the heck is wrong with you?

How could you take things out on her when it was your fault for leaving the document behind?”

When everyone heard the conversation, they figured out the timeline of the entire incident.

With that being said, they knew it would take more than such a trivial thing to get Joan to

run away from home. She had always been an understanding woman.

On top of that, Larry

was the man she loved wholeheartedly. As he had always been an ambitious man, she

would understand he was merely overwhelmed by emotions.

Jory reminded the frustrated man, “Dustin, it’s not time for us to blame one another. We

need to get our hands on Joan’s whereabouts as soon as possible.”

Meanwhile, Nancy was taken aback because it was the first time Dustin lost his cool in front

of her. She was surprised to find out the man she had always considered a gentleman could

morph into such an intimidating figure.

Dustin screamed, “Stop standing around and get going already!”

When they were about to leave, a police officer approached them and asked, “Hello, are you

guys acquainted with Ms. Watts?”

The bunch simultaneously answered, "Yes!"

The police officer carried on in a hushed voice, "She was involved in a major accident when

she was in a cab. Up until now, we still couldn't locate her."

Suddenly, Larry's mind went completely blank as fear took him by surprise.

No! It can't be! How could Joan be involved in an accident when she was merely on her way

to deliver the document? He took a few steps back and supported himself against the wall

to prevent himself from collapsing.

"Sir, are you sure you have the right person? It couldn't be Joan. She's still—" Dustin

couldn't finish his sentence because his voice started quivering unwittingly.

"I'm here to verify if she's the victim because the passenger goes by the name of Joan. I

need your help because I can't be certain if we're talking about the same person."

"Here's the photo of the victim."

When the police officer handed over a photo to Dustin, Larry looked elsewhere because he

dared not look at the photo.

The moment Dustin took over the photo, he was petrified because they had been talking

about the same woman all along.

"Where is she? Have you guys found her? Please bring us to her at once!" Dustin begged.

Judging by his response, the rest of the party knew the one involved in the accident was

none other than the Joan they knew.

Suddenly, Larry sprinted out while yelling, "J-Joan! Joan!"

"Jory, please go after Larry and stop him from trying anything silly!"

Nancy begged Jory to

do her a favor because she was afraid Larry couldn't handle the truth.

Jory went after Larry and yelled, "Larry, we'll head over to the scene together."

Immediately, Larry brought himself to a halt and looked at the police officer, hoping it

wouldn't be as bad as he thought.

The police officer replied, "Alright, I'll bring you over, but please refrain from damaging the scene."

The police officer was aware the party might have a hard time embracing the truth. Thus, he offered to drive them to the scene.

After the police officer pulled over in front of a severely ruined guardrail, he announced,

"We have reached the scene of the accident."

When they saw the puddle of blood that was nearby, the police officer explained, "That belongs to the driver. As for Joan, she's nowhere to be seen, but there's a huge probability she has ended up in the river. According to the gathered data, no one has ever made it out unscathed."

Staring at the strong current of the bottomless pit, Nancy was overwhelmed by a retching urge.

Not even a veteran swimmer could swim his way back to the shore under such circumstances, let alone Joan who couldn't swim.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1848

Chapter 1848 She Will Return To Us

"Arghh!" Suddenly, Larry got down on his knees and started wailing hysterically, "Joan, where are you?"

Dustin rushed over and threw a punch at Larry in the face.

"It's all because of you, Larry! If it weren't because of you and your document, she wouldn't have to make the trip! You have brought upon her demise!" He yelled and threw another few punches at him to vent his anger.

Larry, who was down on his knees, couldn't be bothered at all. He allowed Dustin to punch him in the face without defending himself.

"Dustin, calm down! No one wants any of this!" Jory rushed over and held Dustin in between his arms to stop his friend from going berserk.

“What kind of a joke is this? He’s the almighty Larry! As Joan’s man, he’s supposed to take good care of her, yet he has taken things out on her! Joan is dead because of him!” Dustin

tried to kick Larry who was on the ground.

Nancy sprinted over to Larry’s side and tried to help the dejected man up. However, he

refused to bring himself up and insisted on kneeling.

Sniffling, Nancy urged, “Larry, stop behaving as such when we have yet to find Joan! You

can’t give up just yet! What if she’s really fine? Pull yourself together and start searching for her already!”

Holding Nancy’s arms, Larry asked with his eyes flickering in fear, “Nancy, can you please be

frank with me? Do you think Joan is dead as well?”

Nancy asserted with a determined look, “No! She’s going to be just fine since she has always

been such a kindhearted woman! I’m sure she’ll return to us!”

“If that’s the case, why are you crying? Joan is fine! She will be fine and return to us! Soon,

we’ll start a family together!” Larry buried his face in his hands and muttered to himself.

Pointing at Larry in the face, Dustin warned the dejected man, “Family? To hell you go! Stop

behaving like you’re the victim when she’s not around! Larry, you better pray Joan is safe

and sound! Otherwise, I won’t forgive you!”

Jory wasn’t about to give up just yet. He asked, “Sir, have you guys searched the river?”

“We had dispatched a search and rescue team, yet luck wasn’t on our side. With that being

said, we’re going to continue with the search and rescue mission tomorrow.”

Larry, who started groveling himself at the mercy of God, clasped his fingers together and

prayed while Dustin surveyed the surroundings in an attempt to get his hands on the things

that could lead them to her.

Suddenly, Larry opened his eyes because he knew it was about time for him to stop sulking

and start getting to the bottom of the accident.

He brought himself up all of a sudden and asked, "Sir, where's the driver behind the accident?"

"The driver had fled the scene immediately after the accident. However, we're currently on a mission to track him down and take him into custody."

Does that mean this is a part of a bigger plan?

"Is this a mere accident?" Larry queried with his brows furrowed in confusion because he

deemed it more than just an accident when he heard the police officer's reply.

"According to the evidence we have gathered, it's safe to assume everything has been plotted beforehand."

Apart from Larry, that took the rest of the party by surprise because they couldn't recall Joan offending anyone before.

...

A mysterious man announced in a callous tone, "Hello? Everything's done."

A woman in a deadpan tone replied, "Alright, I'll transfer the balance to your account immediately."

Joan, you should have seen this coming! Please don't blame me for bringing your demise upon you!

Gabriella's eyes gleamed in excitement because she was the mastermind behind Joan's demise.

Larry's eyes started brimming with tears as he stared at the starry sky because he recalled the myth of a person's loved one morphing into the brightest star after deceased.

He raised his head in an attempt to stop the torrents of grief from streaming down his cheeks because Joan might still be alive.

Larry tried to convince himself Joan might still be alive. Perhaps she had merely disappeared for the time being.

Suddenly, Caspian took a seat by his side and greeted, "Larry."

Larry resisted the prickling sensation behind his eyes and denoted,

"Caspian, you know

what? Joan once told me she would morph into the brightest star to keep an eye on me

through the rest of my life should she leave the world ahead of me."

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1849

Chapter 1849 A Challenging Situation

Caspian looked up, yet he couldn't see anything shining stars at all.

Larry explained, "See? There isn't any particularly bright star! Perhaps Joan isn't dead yet."

Aware of the things his friend had to go through, Caspian knew it might be one of Larry's

attempts to deceive himself.

After all, it was a bottomless pit with such a strong current. The chances of Joan making her

way out of it unscathed were close to none.

Since Joan was the only woman Larry had in mind, her sudden disappearance was a fatal

blow capable of turning his life upside down. As a man of few words, Caspian was at a loss

for better words to console the dejected man. He was merely there to prevent him from

trying anything silly.

He tapped on his friend's shoulder and urged, "Larry, since the police officers are still

working on it, you need to stop overthinking things until the results state otherwise."

When Larry received a call, he picked it up without looking at the screen.

Dustin yelled at him the moment the call got through, "Larry, you're a jerk who has brought

upon Joan's demise! If it weren't because of you, others wouldn't have picked on her! Most

importantly, she wouldn't have been involved in the accident!"

Although his relationship with Larry had improved over time, Dustin was frustrated for real

because Joan had always been the one he had in mind.

Occasionally, he would pretend to be a goofy man to please the woman. To be precise, she

had always been the sole reason behind his goofiness.

Lowering his gaze, Larry stuttered, “D-Dustin, it’s my fault for not protecting her and taking good care of her! I have failed her!”

Caspian had never seen such an emotional Larry before. Perhaps Joan was the only weakness of his.

Actually, Larry thought of searching for Joan as well. However, when he saw the strong current, his heart sank to the bottom of his stomach. He was conscious no one who had drowned could possibly make it out alive, yet he refused to accept the truth just yet.

As a result, he spent the entire night in the courtyard, having his eyes glued to the sky until dawn break.

“Larry!”

When Caspian nudged the man next to him, he returned to his senses and rushed into the washroom to wash his face before rushing out.

...

Larry grasped the police officer’s arm and begged, “Sir, you have to find her!”

The police officer tapped on the dejected man’s shoulder. “We’re trying our best as we speak. You don’t have to worry.”

Truth be told, the police officer couldn’t do much. He was equally helpless as well.

When Dustin rushed over, he queried, “How’s everything going? Have you found her?”

“You need to stay calm because the police officers have just commenced their operation,” Nancy answered on the police officer’s behalf.

Dustin, who was on the verge of losing his mind, growled, “Please do your best to find her!”

Soon, the police officers got themselves ready and jumped into the river with a strong current.

The yacht and the boat, that were involved in the search and rescue mission, wouldn't stop swaying due to the strong current. It had been a long time, yet there wasn't any positive feedback from the search and rescue team.

Staring at the police in the river, Larry's mind was all over the place. For the first time in his life, he felt as though he was about to pass out due to suffocation.

Out of the blue, a police officer in the river yelled, "We found something!"

If Jory hadn't got in Dustin's way, he would have rushed over to the police officer because he couldn't contain his emotions anymore.

"Dustin, calm down! How are you supposed to reach her?" Jory yelled at his friend to snap him out of confusion.

Larry yelled and inquired, "Have you guys found Joan?"

"No! We couldn't find her, but we found a shoe!"

After a few minutes, they returned and showed Larry the retrieved shoe.

"Mr. Norton, can you verify if this belongs to Ms. Watts?"

When Larry heard the police officer's question, he went dead silent because it belonged to the woman he loved wholeheartedly.

That was none other than Joan's shoes.

When everyone fell silent, Nancy yelled, "Yes! It's Joan's shoe! We bought this together!"

"No!" Larry started wailing hysterically because he could no longer deny the fact Joan had drowned.

Since they had retrieved the shoes, there was a huge probability Joan had passed on.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1850

Chapter 1850 Brace Yourself For The Harsh Truth

"Sir, can you please head out and bring her back to us?" Jory muttered his request.

Dustin yelled at his friend, "What are you talking about, Jory? Joan isn't dead!"

None of them could embrace the fact the stubborn woman they had known was dead.

“Joan can’t be dead! She’s a strong woman! I’m sure she’s going to make it through by hook or by crook!”

Dustin insisted Joan was still alive.

Jory rebuked, “Dustin, you’re a man. No matter what happens, please stop lying to yourself because there’s no use trying to run away from the truth. I’m sure Joan doesn’t want you to live a life full of despair.”

Dustin fell into silence because the affection he had for Joan had always been his one and only soft spot.

The police officer asked in a serious tone, “Mr. Norton, are you sure this belongs to Ms. Watts?”

Larry stuttered his reply with his eyes glued to the shoe, “Y-Yes, it belongs to her.”

He was afraid of embracing the cruel and harsh truth awaiting him.

“Mr. Norton, I believe you’re well aware that it’s impossible for someone to make it out of the river alive. Perhaps it’s time to carry on with the next agenda and bid farewell to Ms. Watts.”

Larry rebuked and insisted, “No! She’s not dead! I can’t see the brightest star even after staring at the sky throughout the entire night!”

The police officer stared at him with his brows arched in confusion. He couldn’t comprehend

Larry’s words and thought the man had lost his mind after losing his beloved woman.

“Mr. Norton, don’t you think it’s about time for you to return home and take a break?”

The wrathful Larry yelled, “Nonsense! How am I supposed to leave when she needs me?

Continue searching for her until she’s found!”

In spite of the police officers spending another few hours searching for Joan in the river, she was nowhere to be seen.

Larry was left with Joan’s bag and shoe in front of him.

Nancy couldn't stop herself from weeping because she refused to believe the kindhearted and strong Joan would disappear overnight. In the meantime, Gabriella had the best time of her life in a restaurant, enjoying the steak she had ordered after achieving her goal. Pleased, Gabriella's lips curved upwards because she knew Joan couldn't possibly make it out alive.

Therefore, it was only a matter of time before Larry would return to her. It had always been part of her goal to get rid of Joan once and for all. Hence, nothing could bring joy to her more than the news of Joan being dead and missing. Out of nowhere, Larry showed up in front of her with an intimidating presence and yelled, "Gabriella!"

She had long gotten herself ready for any potential confrontation that might be in store for her.

"Larry, why are you here? Do you want to join me for a meal?" Gabriella asked in a pretentious manner.

Glaring at the woman in front of him, Larry could barely suppress the urge to kill her.

"Gabriella, it's you, isn't it? You're the mastermind behind the accident!" he repeated himself in a stern manner.

Well, I guess I shouldn't be surprised by the fact he could get to me that soon. After all, he has always been the capable and almighty Larry I know. Smirking, Gabriella's eyes gleamed because the man in front of her would soon become hers.

Gabriella put on an innocent front and rebuked, "Larry, what are you talking about? What sort of accident is it? I have not done anything!"

Larry sneered because he knew Gabriella better than others—she would destroy the things she couldn't get her hands on to prevent others from owning them. In other words, she had

been picking on Joan and trying to bring upon her demise for the same reason.

Gritting his teeth, Larry asked, "Don't you even have the guts to admit the things you have done when Joan is no longer around?"

Gabriella couldn't take it anymore because Larry had rarely lost his cool in front of others.

Ironically, he had gotten overly worked up countless times because of Joan.

She continued playing the role of an innocent woman and asked, "Larry, what's going on?"

Why are you infuriated?"

Larry took a deep breath because he was conscious she was never an easy target—it would

be challenging to get her to admit the things she had done.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1851

Chapter 1851 Retribution

"Gabriella, if you still consider yourself human, you should go and visit Joan. You used to be

best friends. How can you be so heartless?" Larry looked at the woman in front of him with a

stern expression.

Gabriella sneered at his words.

She never once regarded Joan as her best friend. All that time they spent in college as best

friends were nothing but a facade.

I'm Gabriella Ward. How could I possibly befriend someone like Joan?

She was the one who

was stupid enough to be deceived over and over again.

But of course, how could Joan not notice anything before? It was just that she had

constantly been in denial. Thus, even though Gabriella treated her badly all of a sudden, she

didn't think much about it.

"Larry, what's wrong with Joan? Where should I visit her?" Gabriella feigned cluelessness.

"Gabriella, you're still pretending at a time like this? What? Do you get off on acting? I'm

telling you. The day when the truth comes to light, I hope you'll start living an honest life!"

Larry growled.

He had already guessed the outcome before coming here.

Gabriella would never easily admit that she was behind this or the fact that she had hired someone to do it.

“A person’s life is at stake, Gabriella. Retribution will come knocking on your door in due time!” Larry spun around and stormed away.

Despite that, she didn’t regret her actions. For Larry, she was willing to suffer through any retribution, including losing her life. She just couldn’t accept reality.

What did Joan do to

deserve Larry’s love? What does she have that I don’t?

Gabriella’s eyes dulled as she watched Larry’s retreating figure.

She didn’t wish for much; only to be able to sit down and have a decent meal with that man.

However, this seemed to have become a dream that would never come true.

Once upon a time, she and Larry had done almost everything together.

But ever since Joan

appeared, all of this changed. She felt like she was taken for granted, whereas Joan had

become the center of his life. This was what Gabriella couldn’t accept the most.

People said that kind women would always be favored by God, just like how a man would

never push away an innocent and cute girl.

...

Joan slowly opened her eyes on the bed.

“Miss, you’re awake?” an old woman asked in a soft voice.

“Mm...” Joan’s mind suddenly registered the splitting headache she was having.

She immediately reached up to massage her temples, opening her eyes wide to study her surroundings.

“Where am I?” she asked in a weary voice.

“This is my house, Miss. You’ve been out for three days. Come, drink some water.” The old

woman quickly handed Joan a cup of water.

“Thank you.” Joan guzzled down the water as though she had been walking in the desert for months.

“W-What’s wrong with my legs?” After quenching her thirst, she looked at her legs in horror only to realize that she couldn’t move them at all.

“Miss, there’s nothing wrong with your legs. I was just afraid that you’d hurt them when you turned in bed, so I fixed them in place,” the woman explained with a small smile.

Thank God I wasn’t kidnapped. Joan breathed a sigh of relief.

“My child, what is your name?” the woman asked since Joan had finally woken up.

Suddenly, Joan was stunned because she found that her mind drew a complete blank.

She couldn’t remember her own name.

Seeing the embarrassed and confused look on the girl’s face, the woman came to a sudden realization.

“Have you forgotten your name?”

Yes, I can’t remember anything, including where I’m from, what I do for a living, whether or not I’m married..

Joan nodded gingerly at the woman and confirmed that she couldn’t remember a thing.

The woman surveyed Joan, then shook her head and sighed regretfully. This poor girl. She can’t even remember her name.

Her family must be worried sick.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1852

Chapter 1852 Selena Young

The woman’s eyes dimmed.

“Come, girl. Let’s not think about that for now. You must be hungry. I’ll cook something for you.” The woman immediately went into the kitchen.

Joan scanned her surroundings again before getting down from the bed. She didn’t know where this was or why she was here.

But for some reason, when she was in a coma, she seemed to have heard a voice. And that voice sounded very familiar.

Could that voice belong to this old woman?

Joan shook her head, dismissing this idea as soon as it came.

No. It was a man's voice.

"Come now, girl. Have a bowl of lentil soup." The woman placed a bowl in front of her.

When the aroma wafted into Joan's nostrils, she unhesitatingly picked up the spoon next to it and dug in.

The woman felt a pang in her heart when she saw the young lady wolfing down the food.

But at the same time, she admired her as well. It's truly a miracle that she survived after falling off a bridge into a river.

Perhaps God wasn't ready to claim her life.

This place was a small village in the mountains. It wasn't far from the city Larry was in, but

very few people from the city visited this village.

The old woman went by the name Delilah Young, but everyone in the village liked to call her

Ms. Young. She used to be a noble lady, but was framed and forced to stay in this small village.

Later on, she ended up staying because she was discontented by the outside world's

troubles, and also reluctant to part with these simple and loyal villagers.

She never married,

but took in a child named Lucius.

"Lucius, pour this lady a glass of water. She's injured and has difficulty moving around,"

Delilah said softly, caressing the boy's hair.

"Granny, would you like some water too? I'll pour another glass for you." Lucius cocked his head innocently.

The boy's kind and sweet behavior made Delilah smile with content.

Lucius was also dealt a bad card in life. Back then, his parents abandoned him by a river in

the village, and it was Delilah who took him in as her own.

"Here's your water, ma'am." Lucius carefully extended the glass toward Joan.

After lying in bed for so long, there were times when Joan thought she wouldn't be able to

rise again, but she refused to succumb to fate. Inexplicably, she felt some sort of power calling to her.

“Thank you, Lucius.” Joan gently pinched the boy’s cheek.

Joan was very fond of this boy. There were a few times when she wanted to accept him as her godson, but she wasn’t fully recovered yet. Not to mention, she had lost all her memories. Hence, she didn’t have the courage to bring this matter up to Delilah.

As the days flew by, Joan’s situation gradually improved.

However, her name still remained a mystery to her. Hence, she was no longer Joan Watts,

but instead, took Delilah’s surname and went by Selena Young.

“How are you feeling, Selena?” Delilah looked worriedly at the woman in front of her.

“All is well, Ms. Young. Look, I’m completely fine.” Selena spun on the spot several times.

Seeing Selena recover so quickly, a joyful smile tugged at Delilah’s lips.

After recuperating at home for so long, Selena felt that it was time to look for a job. Ms.

Young must’ve spent a lot of money to take care of my daily needs all this time.

“Ms. Young, I want to look for a job,” Selena blurted out, staring at Delilah with an earnest expression.

The older woman wasn’t all that surprised by Selena’s statement.

“Alright. I’ll keep an eye out for any job openings, but where do you want to work? Here or

somewhere else? There’s a bustling city not far from our village which would, of course,

have more job opportunities, but I suggest that you stay here for the time being. After all,

you’ve only just recovered,” Delilah proposed.

She was right. That bustling city was a foreign place to her, even more so with her memories

gone. Even surviving would be a problem there, so it was better to familiarize herself by

working here first.

“Alright.”

The two of them came to an agreement. Soon, Selena got a job as a cashier in a supermarket.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1853

Chapter 1853 Rotten Apple

“Mom!” Lucius yelled across the distance.

Looking up, Selena saw Delilah and Lucius standing by the entrance of the supermarket.

“Hey, you’re both here,” Selena yelled back excitedly.

Before, Selena wanted to take Lucius as her godson. In the beginning, he had also called her

his godmother, but later on, they realized that he didn’t have a biological mother anyway.

Hence, he switched to calling her “mom” instead.

Delilah was initially worried that it would affect Selena’s future, especially her marriage.

However, Selena didn’t seem to mind at all.

“Whoa, Selena. You already have a son at such a young age?” A newly appointed supervisor,

Freya Brooks, gave her the side-eye and deliberately passed a remark.

Freya had disliked Selena since the first day she started working here. It wasn’t because

Selena had offended her, but because she was jealous of the latter for being too

outstanding.

“Yes. This is my son.” Selena smiled awkwardly.

“Then what does your husband do for a living?” probed Freya.

Why have I never heard about Selena being married?

“Uhm, I’m not married.” Selena maintained the smile on her face.

As though she had just received great news, Freya strutted away with a gleeful smile.

“Mom, who was that? Did she bully you?” Lucius stared after the other woman with a

solemn expression.

“No. I’m fine. How was school today, Lucius? Were you a good boy?”

Selena gently caressed

the boy’s head.

That day was Lucius’ first day in school. Because of work, Selena couldn’t send him to

school.

“It was great, Mom. Don’t worry. I’m your son, after all!” Lucius patted his chest in a manly way.

“Hey, have you heard? It turns out that Selena has a son! It’s true. And she’s not even married yet. My God, how can there be such a woman working in our supermarket? She has no self-respect whatsoever. What an embarrassment...”

Freya scorned her in front of the other department leaders, making sure to add in some exaggerated comments.

Village folks were relatively more conservative and traditional-minded. Hence, they took a woman’s chastity and marriage very seriously.

Rumors and gossip would undoubtedly circulate the village when they heard that Selena was unmarried, yet had a child. However, when everyone found out that the child was

Lucius, they were humbled by Selena’s courage.

“Ahh, Lucius is Selena’s godson,” one of the department leaders clarified.

Freya was dumbfounded for a good few seconds.

Wait. But I clearly heard that boy calling her “Mom”!

Lucius used to call Selena “Aunt Selena”, but he had never once met his birth mother before,

so Selena told him to call just her “Mom” instead. Another leader explained this to Freya.

Seeing the two department leaders speaking on behalf of Selena, Freya suddenly felt rather humiliated.

It seems like the department leaders hold that woman in high regard!

A cold light flashed across Freya’s eyes.

But why? She’s just a worthless cashier. What did she do to deserve everyone’s respect and affection?

Freya emanated a biting cold aura.

Regardless of the era and location, the most outstanding woman would always evoke the jealousy of others. This was the truth that could never be altered. Even in a village where

folks led simple lives, there would always be a rotten apple that spoiled the whole barrel.

Selena Young, just how pretentious are you that you managed to fool an entire village full

of people! I'll definitely force you to show your true colors!

Freya balled her fists together in anger.

At home, Selena bent over slightly with a pained expression. "Mom, what's wrong? Are you

tired?" Seeing her having trouble walking, Lucius quickly went over to support her.

Selena wondered why she was suddenly ordered to unload the goods in the supermarket

that day, seeing as it wasn't within her job scope at all.

"It's okay. I'll be fine after I rest for a while." Selena stroked the boy's hair.

"What's wrong?" Delilah hurried over to ask.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1854

Chapter 1854 A Ray Of Hope

"Nothing, Ms. Young. I just accidentally twisted my waist a little bit. All I need is a short rest."

Delilah's eyes filled with wariness and suspicion.

She's just a cashier. How did she end up twisting her waist?

"Alright, we'll leave it at that for now. Go rest for a bit first while I cook."

With that, Delilah

went into the kitchen.

After checking that Selena was happily chatting away with Lucius, Delilah swiftly took out

her phone.

"What happened? Why is Selena injured?" There was a hint of displeasure in Delilah's tone.

"Don't worry, Ms. Young. I really had no idea about Selena's injury. Tell you what, I'll head

over tomorrow to check things out and give you a proper explanation," the supermarket

manager hurriedly reassured.

Although Delilah wasn't a local, her talent and capabilities were recognized by everyone,

and she was a highly revered person in the village.

Back at the office in Norton Corporation, Larry gazed at the photo on his desk with a wistful

and affectionate gleam in his eyes.

He still refused to believe the news of Joan's death and kept deluding himself into thinking that she had merely gone for a vacation; that she would definitely come back.

Knock, knock, knock!

Someone had been knocking on his office door for a long time, but Larry didn't seem to hear it.

Finally, the person outside couldn't take it anymore, entering the office without waiting for permission.

"Larry!" Caspian called out in a slightly exasperated voice.

"What's wrong?" Larry squinted his eyes slightly at the man before him. He hadn't slept well in a long time because every time he closed his eyes, Joan's face would plague his mind.

"Larry, the shareholders are going to hold a shareholders' meeting."

Caspian looked at Larry solemnly.

"Who said that?" Larry's head snapped up.

Finally some reaction from him.

Caspian let out a relieved sigh. He was afraid that the news about Joan's death would cause him to spiral into despair and he would stop caring about company matters altogether.

"It was the shareholders who proposed this. They said that you should take a break from managing the company because of what happened to Joan," Caspian replied seriously.

Seeing Larry's lack of reaction, he raised his voice. "Larry, Joan is gone and she wouldn't want to see you become a shell of your former self!"

He was really afraid that Larry would lose his position in the company. Caspian's words offered Larry a ray of hope.

That's right. I have to pull myself together and become stronger so that when Joan returns, I'll be able to keep her safe.

"Alright, I understand. I'll go," Larry answered in a firm voice.

The company employees had already heard about what happened to Larry and Joan.

Naturally, they felt sad and sympathetic toward their president.

“Hey, it’s been so long already. Hasn’t Mr. Norton moved on from what happened? I heard

that there’s going to be a shareholders’ meeting this afternoon.” A female employee

whispered in the ear of her female colleague.

“It looks like he still hasn’t. Just look at him. He comes to work every day with dark circles

under his eyes. It’s clear that he’s not in a good frame of mind. Every day when he comes to

the company, he heads directly to his office without even interacting with us. I hope that he

can get well soon.” The female colleague shook her head and sighed softly.

Bang! Right then, Larry emerged from the office with a frosty expression.

The shareholders’ meeting was going to be yet another bloodless battle.

These shareholders

really don’t have anything better to do every day, and are always thinking of ways to kick

me out of the company.

Larry sneered at the thought of that.

“Are all the materials ready?” he asked in a monotonous voice.

“Yes. I’ve placed them on your desk,” his assistant immediately replied.

This was the first time Larry looked so spirited since Joan’s passing.

Hence, a faint smile appeared on his assistant’s lips.

The Larry from before is finally back.

Soon, the shareholders were seated in the meeting room with similarly grim looks on their

faces, filling the atmosphere with awkward tension.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1855

Chapter 1855 Dismissal

Bang!

Larry slammed the door open and took his seat at the head of the table.

As one, the shareholders straightened in their seats and trained their gazes on Larry.

“You’re all here.” Larry cast each other shareholders a flinty stare.

“Mr. Norton, the company doesn’t seem to be doing very well lately,” an elderly shareholder

spat out viciously, waiting for Larry to make a fool out of himself. "That's right, Mr. Norton. We haven't even received the proposal you mentioned to us previously," another shareholder said bluntly.

"This is a large company with hundreds of employees to feed. It's not right to delay the company's development because of your personal matters, is it?" "I agree..."

The shareholders erupted into a heated discussion.

Larry already expected this, so of course, he came fully prepared.

"The proposal I mentioned before was rejected by every one of you in this room, but I'm sure all of you know, the companies that are implementing that model are developing very well. As for why you haven't seen the proposal, isn't it a little too late to be asking that? All of you turned it down right from the beginning, so naturally, I wouldn't act on my own,"

Larry deliberately emphasized.

There was no way he would take the blame for this.

His goal was to let these shareholders know how stupid they were.

"Mr. Norton, let's not discuss this for the time being. Right now, the main issue at the company is that the leaders are unable to lead or inspire the employees to work hard..." a shareholder said righteously.

Leaders? This is obviously meant for me alone. A sneer formed on Larry's lips.

It was beyond a doubt that Larry was heartbroken over what happened to Joan, but he never once rested on his laurels when it came to managing the company.

He often burned the midnight oil to read documents, then woke up early to check for flaws in the company's development.

But no one knew about all these things he did behind the scenes.

"Distribute the documents." Larry glanced at his assistant.

"Yes, sir." The assistant immediately handed out the documents to the shareholders around the table.

The shareholders looked at Larry suspiciously, wondering what the man was up to this time.

But all of them had agreed in advance that regardless of what trick he had up his sleeve, he would be dismissed from his position on that day itself.

“Mr. Norton, what is this? Just cut to the chase.” The elderly shareholder tossed away the document in his hand.

“This is a proposal about our collaboration with a well-known company in A Nation, W Enterprise. I just closed the deal with them yesterday...” Larry explained. All of the shareholders’ eyes had gone wide with shock.

They knew that W Enterprise was one of the top ten companies in the world. A collaboration with them could bring Norton Corporation’s future development to greater heights.

In an instant, the air in the room stilled.

Following that was the sound of them flipping through the documents. “W Enterprise has extremely strict requirements when it comes to their partner companies, so I hope that all the shareholders present will work together to propel Norton Corporation into the future...”

None of the shareholders expected Larry to actually strike up a partnership with W Enterprise. Right then, his dismissal could only be pushed back. Evidently, they cared more about their own profits.

Everyone knew that collaboration with W Enterprise would guarantee Norton Corporation a promising future.

...

Dustin’s phone rang with an incoming call. Glancing at the screen, he saw that it was Jory.

“What is it?” Dustin asked whilst looking at his tablet.

“I’m getting married,” Jory answered in a low voice.

Dustin froze for a moment before returning to normal.

They’re finally sealing the deal after going through so much. A smile tugged on Dustin’s lips.

“Dustin, you’ve been away for so long already. Now that I’m getting married, you should come back and be my best man,” Jory said cautiously. Dustin bowed his head in hesitation. Ever since the authorities confirmed that Joan had plunged into the river during the car accident, Dustin had left the country. He just couldn’t bring himself to accept the news about Joan’s death. Thus, he simply left that city which seemed to remind him of his loss.

“What’s wrong? Haven’t gotten over it yet?” Jory queried softly.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1856

Chapter 1856 Delivering Flowers

“I’ll go.”

In the end, Dustin agreed to Jory’s request.

On the day of Nancy and Jory’s wedding, the venue was very lively. Balloons decorated the venue, and the air was filled with the fragrance of roses and red wine. Meanwhile, the bride looked gorgeous and the groom exuded charm.

Everyone was anticipating the beautiful moment when they were pronounced husband and wife.

Although Nancy and Caspian were divorced, they had long since made peace with each other and were now buddies for life. Simon had also finally accepted Jory. In fact, he was never against their relationship but was actually testing them all this time.

Tucked in a corner, Larry stood in front of a window with a trace of sadness flashing across his eyes.

If Joan knew that Nancy and Jory are getting married, she’d probably be over the moon, right?

“Larry, what are you doing here?” Gabriella walked over right then.

Surprise flitted across Larry’s features, but he quickly regained his composure. He never expected Gabriella to attend this wedding. Although Jory had formed an alliance with

Gabriella before, according to the former's personality, he probably wouldn't invite the latter to his wedding.

"Mm," Larry replied tersely, having no intention to continue the conversation.

Since Joan was gone, Gabriella felt that it was time to make her move.

Thus, she started

addressing him in an intimate manner. "Lars, h-how have you been lately?" She peered at

him suspiciously, but the man showed no reaction other than indifference.

It's already been so long since Joan's death. Hasn't he moved on from his grief yet?

A trace of heartache entered Gabriella's eyes, but there was also a hint of delight.

One day, I'll definitely take Joan's place!

Gabriella clenched her fists tightly.

"Now, let's welcome the bride and groom!"

The venue reverberated with thunderous applause. This was the first time Dustin made an

appearance since he was the groom's best man.

However, when his eyes swept over a particular person in the crowd, his gaze instantly

darkened a few shades.

At that moment, Larry was swirling the wine in his glass and taking small, elegant sips.

"Jory, were you the one who invited her?" Nancy whispered into Jory's ear while discreetly

pointing in Gabriella's direction with her right hand.

Jory shook his head without saying anything.

"Lars, it's already been so long since Joan's death. Haven't you thought about finding

another girlfriend?" Gabriella asked out of the blue.

That new form of address grated on Larry's nerves. He looked at

Gabriella in front of him,

his eyes growing cold.

This woman definitely had something to do with Joan's death, but

Caspian hasn't found any

solid evidence. Not to mention, the offending driver vanished all of sudden, leaving us

without any clues.

“There’s no other woman I’d want besides Joan!” Larry growled before turning to leave.

Gabriella watched as Larry walked away, feeling slightly disheartened and bitter at the same time. I’ve done so much for him. Doesn’t he feel anything for me at all? We shall see.

A scheming smile crept onto Gabriella’s lips.

...

“Selena, are you busy? If you’re not, can you deliver these flowers for me?” Delilah said hastily.

Delilah didn’t have any special hobbies besides growing flowers in her downtime. Hence, this had gradually become her career. However, the flowers she grew were very special and generally weren’t available on the market. Thus, whenever there were events in the city nearby the village, her flowers would be their first choice.

“Will do, Ms. Young. Just send me the address,” Selena called out. It was coincidentally her off day. Since she was idle at home, she followed Delilah to the garden.

“Come on. You can still make it if you leave now. It’s for a wedding, so make sure you deliver these flowers in one piece.” Delilah pinned Selena with a serious gaze. “Also, today’s your first time in the city. Since you’re free, you can have some fun over there before coming home.” Delilah patted Selena’s shoulder gently.

I usually don’t have time to go shopping with Selena. This is the perfect time for her to go out and have fun.

“What’s so fun about the city? I’d rather spend time with the plants here.” Selena smiled before turning to leave.

The location where she was to deliver the flowers wasn’t that far from the village, but the wedding venue managed to take Selena’s breath away.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1857

Chapter 1857 Oddly Familiar

“This family must be filthy rich. Look at this extravagant wedding,” Selena muttered to herself.

“Good day, may I know who you’re looking for?” A security guard ran up to Selena and questioned.

Security was slightly taken aback because she never expected to encounter a security guard.

“Hi, someone ordered these flowers. I’m here to deliver them,” Selena answered swiftly.

“I ordered them. Hand them to me.” As if on cue, a woman walked over. At that, Selena extended the flowers to the woman.

“Jory Synder, are you willing to take Nancy Barrymore...” The priest was speaking on the stage.

Hearing his words, Selena’s brows furrowed slightly. Why do I find those two names so familiar? But I don’t recall ever meeting them. Selena shook her head in an attempt to clear her mind.

How could I possibly know those people? They’re from the city, for Pete’s sake.

Selena swiveled on her heels to leave. At that moment, Larry was coincidentally standing next to the freshly placed flowers.

“These flowers are very unique,” Larry commented in a low voice.

“Yes, they’re very rare,” the woman explained.

The wedding was still ongoing, so the venue was teeming with life.

Dustin was next to Jory,

celebrating the joyous occasion with his close friend.

Suddenly, a familiar figure appeared within his line of sight. “Joan.”

However, it vanished after a split second.

“What did you say?” Jory eyed Dustin cautiously.

But the next second, Jory shouted with alarm, “Dustin! What are you doing?”

“Joan?” Dustin called out tentatively, but there was no response.

By the time he ran to the entrance, there was no sign of anyone. Even so, he was certain that

he had seen someone walking out earlier; someone who looked very much like Joan.

“Selena, why are you back so early?” Delilah looked at the woman in surprise.

“Oh, well. I told you I prefer the plants here. The city is crowded with people. I just don’t see any fun in that,” Selena replied right away.

“So how was it? The bride and groom must’ve been a charming couple, I suppose?” Delilah continued probing.

Selena knitted her brows as she tried to recall. Hmm, I didn’t notice that much. But the bride’s and groom’s names did sound oddly familiar. Maybe I’ve heard similar names from watching all those TV series.

“Fine, I guess. But I think you’re the prettiest, Ms. Young.” Selena cheekily hugged Ms. Young from the back.

After some playful banter, both of them got back to work in the garden. The sky gradually grew dark, and the guests began filtering out of the wedding venue.

Dustin sat alone in front of the window as he stared into the dark sky outside, seemingly lost in his thoughts.

“What happened to you today, Dustin? You’re my best man. Why did you run out all of a sudden?” Jory patted Dustin’s shoulder.

“I saw Joan,” Dustin replied slowly with disappointment heavy in his tone.

Jory’s heart broke for the man beside him. He knew that Dustin had always harbored feelings for Joan, even though the man she loved was Larry.

“Stop talking nonsense. Joan is dead.” Jory didn’t mince his words. How could she have survived after falling into such a deep river?

“But Jory, I really saw Joan. There’s no way I got it wrong!” Dustin refuted with an indignant expression.

Forget it. I’ll just let him be.

Jory didn’t continue arguing with him.

Perhaps he just misses her too much. Dustin bowed his head as sorrow flickered across his eyes.

“Will you go back or stay in the country?” Jory asked in a soft voice.

Dustin hesitated for a moment, but didn’t answer.

The next day, he left the country. But he couldn’t sleep the entire night as that familiar

figure kept streaking across his mind. In the end, he came to the conclusion that he was mistaken.

...

“Good day, Mr. Norton. I’m W Enterprise’s representative. I’m happy to come forth to

discuss the collaboration with you.” A man extended his right hand.

Larry glanced at the man and reached out to shake his hand with a courteous smile.

“W Enterprise hopes that your company can come up with a unique and innovative

proposal. Recently, we heard that there’s an old lady in a village nearby who has been

planting a rare species of flower. We hope to utilize this special flower to create a perfume

formulation. Mr. Norton, you know that W Enterprise is involved in many types of

businesses, so this time, we hope that you can help with the procurement of the raw materials...”

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1858

Chapter 1858 Flat Refusal

Larry had seen that special flower at Jory and Nancy’s wedding. In addition, he had also

heard about it before. Hence, this matter was not difficult for him.

Little did he know that the owner of those flowers, Delilah, wasn’t an easy person to deal with.

“Rest assured, we’ll handle the procurement of the raw materials,” Larry replied calmly.

Then, he searched for the woman who set up the flowers that day, and successfully obtained

Delilah’s contact information.

“I’m sorry, sir. Several years’ worth of the flowers has been sold out,” Delilah hurled back, not sounding sorry whatsoever. Delilah’s flowers were sold in limited numbers every year because she never intended to make huge profits out of them. In the village, she was already satisfied with earnings that could cover her living expenses. Not to mention, she didn’t want to leave the village.

As the days went by, Selena found her job in the supermarket getting easier. Meanwhile, Larry realized that negotiating with Delilah was harder than he thought. “Selena, don’t you think it’s time to think about marriage?” Delilah said abruptly.

Selena was momentarily stunned. Marriage never crossed her mind because she felt content living with Delilah and Lucius.

“Remember Kevin from our village? He’s the one who used to help us move the flowers.

He’s always shown an interest in you. If you think he-”

“Ms. Young,” Selena interrupted Delilah, then bowed her head. “I’ve never thought about these things.”

For some reason, Selena felt revolted by this topic. Seeing the way she nervously changed the topic, an idea surfaced in Delilah’s mind.

“Mom, I’m home!” Lucius yelled upon entering the house.

Selena’s eyes lit up and she immediately went over to greet him.

“Mom, I just met Kevin,” Lucius stated casually.

Kevin again? Selena eyed the boy in front of her suspiciously.

“What did he say to you?” she prodded.

“Mr. Kevin asked me whether I’d mind it if he becomes my father,”

Lucius replied in a hushed voice.

The corners of Delilah’s lips lifted into an indiscernible smile.

As expected of Kevin. He’s always so direct.

“Mom, I actually think Mr. Kevin is a rather good person. He goes to the garden to help us

almost every day and has never once complained. I’d feel safe having a father like him,”

Lucius intentionally said.

Indeed, both Lucius and Delilah were fond of Kevin, but at the end of the day, the decision

was still in Selena's hands.

"I'm here!" Kevin called out loudly right then.

"Mr. Kevin!" Lucius dashed over to the man.

Turning to look at Kevin, Selena suddenly felt slightly embarrassed.

"Selena, I heard Ms. Young say that you like to eat fish. Here, I bought this for you." Kevin

handed a freshly bought fish to her.

Selena hesitated for a while. She didn't reciprocate Kevin's feelings, so naturally, she

wouldn't want to develop a complicated relationship with him.

Some things needed to be made clear. A person's heart wasn't

something to be messed

around with.

"Kevin, can we go outside? I need to talk to you." Selena tugged Kevin out before he could

respond.

Once out of earshot, she continued in a soft voice, "I'm sorry, Kevin.

Thank you for the fish

and for all the kindness you've shown us, but I hope we can become good friends for life."

Suddenly, Kevin's eyes dimmed.

She had already rejected him before he could even confess his feelings for her.

"It's fine. Good friends then." Kevin scratched the back of his head awkwardly.

Noting the look on his face, guilt crept into Selena's heart. In fact, she herself had no idea

why she had given him such a flat refusal.

...

"Larry, Delilah Young firmly refuses to work with us. What should we do?" Caspian was a

little anxious.

This was the first large-scale collaboration between Norton Corporation and W Enterprise,

and it was crucial to ensure its success.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1859

Chapter 1859 Finding Fault

Larry stood in front of the windows, immersed in his thoughts while he stared into the distance.

He never imagined that there would be a woman in this world who would refuse money.

"It's fine. Check the specific location of the village. I'll personally visit Ms. Young." Larry

announced with a cold glint in his eyes.

Although Kevin never received any higher education, he was a civilized man. Ever since

Selena rejected him the other time, he stopped making advances on her altogether. Despite

that, he still went to the garden to help Delilah out as per usual.

Perhaps village folks were truly simple-minded.

"Kevin, aren't you upset that Selena rejected you?" Delilah tried to sound him out.

"No. Love isn't always meant to be," Kevin answered calmly.

Delilah only smiled in response.

Kevin was a decent man. She knew that he wouldn't force Selena or put any pressure on her.

...

"Selena, what the hell is wrong with you? Did you do this?" Freya abruptly pointed a finger

at Selena and shouted.

Having no idea what Freya was referring to, Selena's face scrunched up in confusion.

"What's wrong, Ms. Brooks?" she asked worriedly.

"Look at these goods. Were you the one who placed them here?" Freya shouted angrily.

Suddenly, everyone's gazes swept toward Selena.

Selena cautiously walked closer to the shelf. Her brows knitted together into a frown. These

goods weren't placed here by me.

"No, Ms. Brooks. It wasn't me-"

"Looking for excuses after you've done something wrong? Selena Young, you're really

something, aren't you?" Freya cut her off.

Seeing Freya's aggressive behavior and her reluctance to give her a chance to explain,

Selena understood that Freya was deliberately finding fault with her.

Coincidentally, the manager wasn't here that day. And it was precisely because of this that

Freya dared to openly stir up trouble.

"Ms. Brooks, Selena really wasn't the one who placed them here," a colleague explained on Selena's behalf.

"Shut your mouth! Get lost if you don't want to work here!" Freya roared.

In an instant, everyone scurried away in fright, leaving Selena standing alone at the same spot as Freya berated her.

"What's going on here? Why is it so noisy?" Larry asked from inside his car.

Caspian handed a drink he bought from the supermarket to Larry, then returned to the driver's seat.

"The supervisor is scolding an employee for making a mistake," Caspian described briefly.

Subsequently, he put the car into drive.

It did not take long for them to arrive at the garden's entrance.

Knock, knock, knock!

Kevin and Delilah exchanged puzzled glances.

Selena is at work and Lucius is in school. Who could it be?

Delilah vigilantly opened the door, only to see a man in a suit and leather shoes, standing there expressionless.

"May I know who you're looking for?" Delilah queried with a frown.

"Hello, I'm looking for Ms. Young," Larry answered politely.

Delilah looked at the man quizzically. I don't even know this man. Why did he come here to see me? Wariness filled her eyes as she was hit with a sudden realization. Could it be for the flowers?

"Is there something you need?" She got right to the point.

"You must be Ms. Young then?" Larry maintained his courteous behavior.

Delilah, on the other hand, didn't bother with pleasantries. "Yes, I am. Whatever it is you're here for, just out with it."

Perceiving the woman's temperament, Larry could finally understand why she was so adamant about rejecting a collaboration with them.

"Ms. Young, may I go inside for a chat?" Larry asked.

Delilah looked him up and down. Sensing that he posed no danger or threat, she begrudgingly stepped aside to allow him entry.

It was indeed a magical world. Mesmerized by the entire garden, a look of awe flickered across Larry's face.

He always believed that women who liked plants and flowers were kind and innocent.

Although Delilah was slightly rude to him earlier, it was obviously because she was an old lady who wanted no part of the outside world.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1860
Chapter 1860 No Means No

"If there's anything you want to say, spill it. I'm busy," Delilah said rudely.

"Ms. Young, let me introduce myself first. I am the president of Norton Corporation," Larry said as he stretched out his right hand.

Delilah was momentarily taken aback but composed herself quickly. She had heard of Norton Corporation, and definitely of Larry. It just had not occurred to her that he would personally come to look for her.

"If you're looking to work with me, I must ask you to leave. I believe I've made myself very clear that I will not work with you," Delilah said firmly.

She left him no room for negotiation. Larry frowned.

It's the first time in my life that somebody has refused an offer to work with me.

Interesting. He looked around before his gaze fell back upon Delilah, saying nothing.

She must have a weakness somewhere. All ordinary people do.

He thought hard about what Delilah's vulnerable point could be.

"Grandma!" Just then, Lucius yelled as he pushed open the door and threw himself into Delilah's embrace.

“You’re home! Are you hungry?” Delilah gazed fondly at the boy before her.

“I’m not hungry. Mom would be home soon,” Lucius replied happily.

“Hello, Sir.” Lucius finally noticed Larry and greeted him with a bow.

Delilah hurriedly shoved the boy into his room and forbade him from coming out.

In this day and age, there are all kinds of people who would do anything to achieve their ambitions.

“Please leave. I’m not interested in working with you.” Delilah waved her hands at Larry.

Bemused, Larry obliged her request and departed.

“Larry, what are we going to do now that Ms. Young is refusing to work with us?” Caspian’s

eyes had a sliver of worry in them.

“Oh, she will,” Larry said determinedly.

Caspian gazed at Larry curiously, he had no idea what the latter meant.

“Selena, no more bonuses for you for the month. Oh, and you’re out of off days,” Freya said

viciously.

Selena knew that Freya wouldn’t let her off that easily.

Nonetheless, she said nothing. With a sense of indignation, she bore her burden alone.

“What is it, Selena? Are you dissatisfied?” Freya asked suddenly, her cold eyes fixed on

Selena.

Of course I am! She did not bother to investigate the truth and just blamed others! The

more Selena thought about it, the more incensed she became.

“No,” she answered.

Where did this woman come from? She is ill-tempered, short-sighted, and is keen on

stirring up trouble. Selena frowned and trudged over to the cashier with a heart full of

grievances.

“Selena, what is it? What did Ms. Brooks say?” Her co-workers surrounded her and enquired

concernedly.

“I’ve just lost my bonus and leaves for the month,” Selena said gloomily with a shrug. “By

the looks of it, we would have to wait until next month for me to treat you guys.”

In an instant, the women voiced their indignation.

“How could Ms. Brooks do that? It wasn’t your responsibility! How could she punish you like that?”

“That’s right! This is something that needs to be discussed with the store owner...”

Not long after that, Freya emerged from her office. The women hurriedly dispersed and pretended to be engrossed in their work.

“Ms. Young, I am out of leaves for the month,” Selena said with a pout. Delilah looked at Selena with a raised brow.

“But it’s fine, it’s a chance for me to make more money,” Selena added, for she doesn’t want Delilah to worry about her.

“Mom, didn’t you always have leaves available?” Lucius asked unhappily. Selena brushed him off with an excuse. Though Delilah was dubious at Selena’s words, she did not enquire further. She respected Selena’s choice in remaining reticent.

At the supermarket, it was business as usual. Every employee carried out their tasks in all seriousness. Selena had been working non-stop for half a month. Everybody felt sorry for her but did not dare to offend Freya.

For some reason, the manager had not been back for a long time.

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1861

Chapter 1861 Locked In

“Selena, you’re on the next shift,” Freya yelled suddenly.

Selena felt uneasy at once. I have been working for over ten hours without a break. Why did

I have to take on another shift? She was beyond exhausted by that point.

“Freya, I’m not feeling too good today. Could you put me on another shift? Maybe someone can take my place for tonight?” Selena asked, her eyes fixed on Freya, who was standing

before her. She had hoped that Freya would give her a break. For some reason, Selena's stomach had been hurting since she woke up that morning. At first, she thought it was due to something she ate. But it's been going on for an entire day, and it bothered her. She had been looking forward to getting off work and grabbing some medication on her way out, but that plan was off. Since the manager wasn't in, Freya was in charge of all matters. The department leaders had opted to stay out of her way. Freya approached Selena with a cold smile. "Selena, don't you try to wriggle your way out of this one with some fake illness," she sneered. "You will be on duty tonight, and nobody will take your place." There were times when Selena considered having a good chat with Freya to find out why she was constantly picked on. As far as she could remember, she did not do anything to offend Freya. "Freya, I really do have a stomachache. I would like to pick up some medication," Selena said with a grimace as she clutched her stomach. "Is that so? Just bear with it!" Freya retorted coldly and left. Selena felt her heart sinking as she watched Freya's retreating figure. She could not understand why she was being treated in this manner. Sure enough, her co-workers began to depart when their shift had ended. Only Selena and Freya were left in the supermarket. Selena remained outside while Freya was in her office. Usually, night shifts at the supermarket ended at ten. But that night, Freya did not allow Selena to leave despite it being eleven already. Even though there wasn't a single customer in sight, she was still forced to stay behind. Finally, at half-past eleven, Freya emerged from her office slowly, looking haggard. "Ms. Brooks, it's almost midnight..." Selena said at once. "Hold on, I'm going to the washroom," Freya said with a yawn.

Selena felt disappointed.
Soon, it was twelve and Freya was nowhere to be seen.
This isn't right. I shouldn't be working overtime this late. Selena glanced at her watch, slowly getting anxious. Why hasn't she return from the washroom?
Selena gazed forlornly at the pitch-black darkness outside.
It was almost one in the morning when she grew tired of waiting. She barged into the washroom and discovered that there was no one in there.
She checked again just to be sure and found no trace of Freya.
Immediately, Selena ran to the entrance and found that it was locked.
I got locked in the supermarket...
Selena gave a hollow laugh. After going through everything, this is what I get in the end...
She trudged to the break room and fell heavily onto the small bed. With wide eyes, she tossed and turned, unable to fall asleep.
Delilah called a little later. "Hey, Selena, what's going on? It's so late, why aren't you back yet?" she asked with concern.
"Mom, why aren't you back yet?" Lucius called out in the background.
"Ms. Young, I won't be home tonight. There's an event here and the customers are neverending..." Selena invented a lie so Delilah wouldn't worry about her.
Naturally, Delilah caught on to Selena's exhausted and panicked tone of voice.
"Lucius, go back to sleep. You still have school tomorrow," Delilah said as she patted the boy on the head.
Lucius yawned twice in a row and went into his bedroom.
"Selena, you'd better tell me what's actually going on," Delilah said in a stern voice. "Why are you so late tonight? And don't give me that story about some nonexistent event. Do you really think I wouldn't know whether or not the mall is hosting events?"
Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1862
Chapter 1862 Talk To Me

Selena knew that Delilah had always been a sharp woman. Seeing that it was no use in

hiding it anymore, she told the truth. However, she summarized her entire evening in a single sentence.

“Well, I went to the washroom before I got off work. They must have thought that I had left so they locked me in.”

In an instant, Delilah was filled with fury.

She’s just an ordinary cashier! Why is her workload even more than that of a salesperson?

“Who locked you in?” Delilah demanded.

“It’s a co-worker of mine who is friendly with me. Don’t worry, it wasn’t intentional,” Selena hurriedly said.

Though Delilah was unfamiliar with social situations like these and doesn’t like all the schemes and tricks involved in these interactions, she had experienced something similar herself and did not believe Selena.

Somebody must have done it on purpose...

Delilah’s eyes flashed with cold anger.

The sun was already high up in the sky when Selena stretched and opened her eyes slowly.

“Oh, Selena! You’re early today!” Freya said as she emerged from her office.

“I did not go home last night,” Selena replied stiffly.

Of course, Freya knew that Selena had spent the night here; it was her doing after all.

“You didn’t go home? Why?” she exclaimed with mock surprise.

Selena scoffed.

This woman is such a good actress!

“Well, I fell asleep in the break room and forgot to go home,” Selena answered blandly.

She did not mention the fact that she had been locked in.

Freya eyed the woman before her with suspicion.

I gotta admit she’s pretty slick. She didn’t even mention being locked in. But so what? I am still going to make her life miserable. And no one can stop me!

Freya clenched her fists and glared at Selena.

“Selena, you can talk to me if there’s anything bothering you. Although I’m not from a big and powerful family, I still carry some authority within this village.”

Delilah gazed at the woman before her as her heart ached for her.

She understood Selena well. She knew that even when the latter was being wronged, she would not tell anybody.

“Ms. Young, it’s nothing. Don’t worry, nobody would dare pick on me with you here.” Selena

hugged the older woman tightly from behind.

All this time, Selena had treated Delilah as her own mother. As such, she wouldn’t be the

bearer of bad news no matter how badly she was treated at the supermarket.

“By the way, Ms. Young, I’ve heard that there was a person who always came looking for you

at the garden. What’s that about?” Selena asked as she gazed curiously at Delilah.

“He just wanted to buy some flowers. But I was unwilling to sell,” Delilah answered at once.

Village people were different from city folks. They just wanted to live plainly and peacefully.

Selena knew Delilah’s reasons for not wanting to work with that man, so she did not enquire

further.

“Oh no, I’m running late!” Selena cried. “I’m heading out, Ms. Young.”

“Be careful on the road!” Delilah gazed at Selena, worry apparent in her eyes.

With a wave, Selena turned and disappeared from sight.

“Larry, we found something,” Caspian said excitedly to Larry in his office.

“Speak.” Larry gazed outside the window. His eyes were brimming with confidence.

“The boy is called Lucius,” Caspian said in a low voice. “He’s adopted by Ms. Young and he’s

studying in a school in the village. I heard that the school is very run down.”

Larry smiled with satisfaction. I’d thought so!

“Caspian, I want to speak to the headmaster immediately.” His gaze was stern as he stared

at Caspian.

Caspian found it hard to understand Larry's behavior.

However, Larry thought that Caspian did not need to understand his wishes. He just had to carry them out.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1863

Chapter 1863 Funding

Caspian turned away to make a few calls and the entire matter was arranged promptly.

"Larry, we can depart immediately," Caspian reported as he patted Larry's shoulder.

"Let's go, then." Larry strode out of his office without a backward glance.

Along the way, Larry sat in the back seat with his eyes glued to the scenery outside the

window. A smile would play occasionally on his lips. Caspian did not know what he was

smiling about. But he was sure that Larry had planned for something huge to happen.

Finally, they arrived outside the school.

When they reached the headmaster's office, Larry knocked on the door politely.

"Please come in!" came the headmaster's voice. When he caught sight of his visitors, he

scrambled to his feet to receive them.

"Greetings, Mr. Norton," the headmaster said. "There was no need for you to personally

come all this way. I could have gone over to meet with you."

"Hello, headmaster. I heard that you intend to construct a library for the school, am I right?"

Larry clarified his visit with a smile.

"That's right. The children love reading. As such, a library is most essential," the headmaster

explained.

Before Larry and Caspian met with the headmaster, they had taken a walk around the school

grounds.

It was indeed very run down. Not only was it lacking basketball hoops, but it also didn't

have the basic equipment for physical exercises.

“To tell you the truth, headmaster, I’m a businessman. I may not know as much as you do in regards to the education industry, but I think that education is essential for the growth of a child. Hence, the environment in which they receive said education is of the utmost importance. If you’re willing, I would like to provide the funding for a library and some equipment for sports...” Larry said in all seriousness as he faced the headmaster.

Caspian was stunned.

He did not, for a moment, imagine that Larry would fund a school in a tiny village. He also had no idea what the reason for Larry’s decision was.

“Mr. Norton, I am extremely grateful for your generosity. But do forgive me for asking, what makes you choose this school in particular to give the funds to?”

The headmaster was more than willing to accept Larry’s help, but he would like to ascertain Larry’s reasons for doing so.

“Because there is someone in your village whose help I need,” Larry answered simply.

Hearing that, Caspian finally understood his boss’ intentions.

“Well... Mr. Norton, the thing is, even though I am the headmaster, a decision like this would have to be discussed by all the teachers. Thus, I still need...” The headmaster trailed off with a small smile.

“I wouldn’t expect otherwise.” Larry nodded with understanding.

The headmaster was satisfied as he gazed at the man before him. He had thought that the people who would be willing to provide funding for the school would be some rough and uncouth businessmen. It was unexpected that this one turned out to be such a gentleman.

After several moments of small talk, Larry excused himself.

“Mr. Norton!” A voice rang out as Larry and Caspian were walking out.

Larry turned around and saw that it was Delilah’s grandson.

“Hello! Why are you here?” Larry asked as he knelt down to face the boy.

"I just got off school. But why are you here, Mr. Norton?" Lucius asked innocently.

Larry wasn't sure why but there was a sense of familiarity about the boy. "I'm just here on some business," Larry replied as he patted Lucius's head.

"Mr. Norton, our headmaster said that someone wants to build us a library. Could it be you?" Lucius asked in a small voice.

Larry nodded with a smile.

Caspian stood behind them, astonished as he witnessed their interaction. He had never seen

Larry being this patient with a child who he did not know well. Perhaps this is fate.

"Your name is Lucius, is it not? Do you think I'm a bad guy?" Larry asked suddenly.

Lucius scratched his head in confusion at the question.

"I don't think you are," he answered in a low voice.

Larry pinched the boy's cheek affectionately and smiled with satisfaction.

"Then, would it be alright if I worked together with your grandma?"

Larry asked deliberately.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1864

Chapter 1864 The Appointment

Larry knew that the child was completely clueless, but he was willing to chat with him with no ulterior motive.

"Sure! And my mom too. Both Grandma and Mom are very kind," Lucius said.

"And let me tell you something, my Mommy is very beautiful. She is the most beautiful

woman I've ever seen," Lucius said proudly.

Ding! Ding! Ding!

Just then, Larry's phone rang. It was from his assistant.

"Is that so? Well, if there's a chance, maybe you could introduce me to your mother. Maybe I

could even work together with her." Larry tousled Lucius's hair.

"Sounds good! You'd better get that. I'm going home now," Lucius said as he departed.

As Larry gazed at the boy's diminishing figure, he felt a sense of comfort for reasons

unknown to him.

It was the first time he had felt this at ease after Joan's accident and he did not expect it to come from interacting with a boy.

"What did you say? Mr. Norton funded your school?" Delilah gazed at Lucius, wariness in her eyes.

"That's right, Grandma," Lucius replied excitedly. "I don't think he's a bad man. He just wants to build a library for us, as well as lots of exercise equipment."

Delilah's gaze darkened at once. She had thought that a rich young man like Larry would

spend his fortune drinking or womanizing. It was a surprise to her to discover that he would be as charitable as this.

In this day and age, society has become dangerous and people have malicious intentions.

For him to do something like this just proves that he's not an ordinary person.

She was right to think that way. After all, Larry was indeed not just an ordinary person.

"Lucius, what were you guys talking about?" Selena ambled over slowly and pinched his cheeks.

"The man who always came looking for Grandma funded our school. Mommy, when would you be free? I'd like to introduce you to him. Maybe you could work together with him in the future," Lucius said innocently.

How does this child think so far ahead?

He is a president of a powerful corporation in the city, and I am but a cashier of a mall in a

rural village. Under what circumstances would we be working together? Perhaps it was this act of kindness from Larry that had changed Delilah's perception of him.

Maybe... I could work with him, Delilah thought as her resolve wavered.

No matter what kind of work they would be doing together, Delilah prioritized a person's

character. If there was nothing wrong with his character, she would be willing to give away

flowers even if he did not have any money.

The days passed. Delilah tended to her garden with care while Selena remained at her job in the supermarket.

The manager finally returned, ending Freya's tyranny over Selena. As for Lucius, he

maintained his routine of alternating between school and home.

Selena had hoped for peaceful days like this to continue, she never expected that she had a past locked deep within her.

"Larry, are you going tonight?" Caspian asked in a low voice.

"I am," Larry replied decisively.

"But it might rain tonight," Caspian said with a worried glance at the man before him.

The road that led up to the village was treacherous. With the imminent storm, Caspian was unwilling to place Larry at that kind of risk.

"Don't worry, I will be careful," Larry said irritably.

Caspian looked down but felt uneasy.

"Larry, let me go with you," he said determinedly.

"No need." Larry rejected him outright. "It has been a busy couple of weeks and you hardly had any rest. I can go by myself tonight."

Unable to dissuade Larry, Caspian reluctantly obeyed his wishes.

The storm roared all around Larry when he was ready to depart; the rain followed soon after.

"Larry, be careful on the road, okay? Call me if you need anything,"

Caspian shouted from up the stairs.

Larry said nothing but gave him a reassuring gesture.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1865

Chapter 1865 Piggyback

The rain grew heavier as the storm worsened. Flashes of lightning searing across the sky made the night even more frightening.

Larry looked determinedly out the window into the storm. He parked his car by the road

and had planned to let the rain subside before taking off.

However, when the rain did not show any sign that it was going to stop any time soon, Larry

started the car and headed toward the village.

That afternoon, Delilah took the initiative to call him and told him that she would like to talk.

With such a good opportunity, Larry wasn't going to give it up easily, regardless of the possibility of a storm.

"Grandma, what are you looking at?" Lucius asked as he threw himself onto Delilah.

"I'm waiting for someone. If he comes tonight, I will work with him no matter what he offers

me. If he doesn't, that just shows me that he does not deserve my cooperation." Delilah's

eyes flashed with coldness.

I wonder what will his choice be tonight? Delilah thought.

"Where's your mother?" she asked Lucius in a low voice.

"She still hasn't gotten off work," the boy answered as he lowered his head, his eyes full of

worry for his mother.

The road to the village was becoming increasingly rugged, as did the number of potholes

filled with water. Larry looked ahead wearily as the rain poured on.

Because of his newest

project, Larry had not slept in three days. He had planned to tuck in early that day but

Delilah's phone call had scratched that plan of his off.

"Hello, Larry? Have you arrived?" Caspian called again, anxiety in his voice.

"I'm almost there, don't worry. Go to sleep; you have a very important mission tomorrow,"

Larry replied softly.

It was a brief exchange before Larry hung up. He did not tell Caspian this but he felt that the

terrain was becoming increasingly difficult to navigate.

Thump! With a jolt, the car suddenly sank into a large pothole.

Larry pressed hard on the accelerator but it was no use; the tire was firmly lodged in.

He glanced at his watch and panicked when he saw that his appointment with Delilah was

almost time.

In the end, Larry exited the car with an umbrella and continued on.

The rain poured down harder than ever; the road was muddy and full of holes. It was impossible to differentiate where the potholes ended and where the road began.

Perhaps it was due to fatigue, but Larry suddenly felt dizzy and weak in his whole body. He shook his head vigorously in an attempt to wake himself up but he still felt very tired and sleepy as if he had taken a sleeping pill.

Finally, his eyelids drooped shut and he fell over.

“Hey, Selena, why don’t I give you a ride home? With the rain as heavy as this, you wouldn’t be safe,” Selena’s colleagues shouted.

“Don’t worry about me. My house is close by.” Selena rejected with a smile.

As she walked out of the supermarket, she saw that the sky was pitch black. With a deft

twist of her arm, she opened her umbrella and walked out into the rain.

“Why is it raining so heavily all of a sudden?” Selena muttered to herself.

Suddenly, a man appeared in front of her.

He was slumped on the road, motionless. A shiver of fear ran down Selena’s spine at the sight.

He’s not dead, is he? She walked gingerly toward him.

No... I should just mind my own business.

With that thought, Selena turned to walk away but her conscience nudged at her.

In the end, she carefully approached the man and placed a finger in front of his nose.

Oh good, he’s still alive. Selena then mustered all of her strength and lifted him up in a piggyback.

“D*mn, he’s heavy!” Selena gritted her teeth and walked forward slowly and steadily.

What is with me recently? Why do I keep running into weird situations and people?

Selena sighed.

“Ms. Young! Ms. Young!” Selena shouted as soon as she walked through the door at home.

At the sound of Selena’s voice, Delilah ran out worriedly.

She was stunned when she caught sight of the two soaked figures before her, especially of the man on Selena's back.

"What happened?" Delilah asked.

"He's passed out," Selena answered at once.

There was no hospital in the village except for a clinic. But as it was now the middle of the night, the clinic would have been long closed.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1866

"Alright. Selena, go take a hot shower right away and leave him to me,"

Delilah instructed as

she hurried forward to help support Larry.

When Selena dropped him on the bed, Delilah froze with surprise.

She did not manage to catch a glimpse of his face earlier but now that she did, she

recognized him at once.

Delilah spent the entire night waiting for Larry to wake up.

Just when she thought that he had not kept their appointment, he suddenly showed up in front of her.

"Isn't this Mr. Norton?" Lucius asked as he emerged rubbing his eyes.

"Grandma, is Mr. Norton all right?" He gazed worriedly at Larry's unconscious figure.

Delilah saw how worried the boy looked. She did not expect the child to be this fond of

Larry.

"Alright, Lucius. Go back to bed. You still have to go to school tomorrow," Delilah said as she gently stroked his head.

Lucius appeared extremely concerned for Larry.

"Don't worry. I will bring him back to health," Delilah reassured him with a smile.

Indeed, Delilah was well versed in the medical arts. Though she wasn't an expert, she was able to cure common colds and fevers.

Ding! Ding! Ding!

Larry's phone on the bedside table began to ring.

Delilah glanced at the screen and saw that it was Caspian who was calling. She did not know

who Caspian was, and naturally, she wasn't going to answer someone else's phone.

"Ms. Young, how is he?" Selena asked as she emerged from the bathroom.

"He's fine, just a slight fever. He'll be back to normal after having some medications

tomorrow, so don't you worry," Delilah replied calmly.

"But his wet clothes have to be taken off or his condition may worsen," Delilah added.

Selena hurried over and looked at the man on the bed. It was dark out there on the road so

she didn't see his face properly earlier. But now that she did, she thought that he was very

handsome.

His symmetrical features, his slight tan, and those sexy collarbones...

Selena was lovestruck.

"Selena? Selena?" Delilah patted her shoulder lightly.

"Huh? Did you call me, Ms. Young?" With a start, Selena regained her senses.

"I'll leave the changing of his clothes to you," Delilah said, her voice soft.

"It's best to change him into something dry," she added before turning around to leave.

Suddenly, Selena felt like she was struck by a bolt of lightning. Her brain felt mushy.

"What kind of situation have I gotten myself into? Why must I be the one to change his

clothes?" Selena muttered.

Actually, she was the best candidate for this task.

"Well, mister, I'm going to change your clothes now... Oh wait, I need to find you a fresh set

first," Selena said as she rummaged through her wardrobe.

As the man looked to be six feet at least; even if she were to dress him in her trousers, they

would look like shorts on him.

That's not important. Let's just remove his clothes first!

Selena reached underneath the quilt and started removing Larry's clothing slowly.

After a while, she managed to undo all of the buttons on his shirt.

This is difficult! Every time she felt his bare skin, she felt hard to breathe.

Selena shut her

eyes and took a deep breath.

After what seemed like an eternity, his clothes were finally removed and dumped into the

laundry basket to the side. At the sight of the unconscious man on the bed, Selena suddenly

felt a surge of familiarity but could not quite place her finger on where she saw him before.

“Joan, I miss you,” Larry suddenly mumbled in his sleep.

“Joan, please don’t go. I’m begging you. Don’t leave me,” he continued softly.

The name he is calling out is probably his wife’s.

Selena felt envious of his wife, whoever she was.

There were three bedrooms in Delilah’s house. They were each occupied by her, Selena, and

Lucius respectively. As Larry occupied her bedroom, Selena did not manage to sleep the

entire night.

“Ms. Young, I have to go or I’ll be late,” Selena called out when it was almost time for work.

“Please take my place in caring for him.”

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1867

Chapter 1867 Partners

“Go on, then. I got this. Don’t worry!” Delilah replied.

After all, Larry was her future business partner; she wouldn’t mistreat him.

Selena glanced at the breakfast on the dining table and hurriedly grabbed a boiled egg

before running out.

“Joan, Joan, don’t go!” Larry moaned and sat up suddenly.

Delilah watched the newly awakened Larry but said nothing.

“Ms. Young?” Larry gazed at the woman before him, feeling slightly confused.

“Hmm, you’re awake? Here, have some water along with this medication for your fever,”

Delilah said at once in a level tone of voice.

Larry felt comforted gazing at the elder woman.

“Was it you who rescued me yesterday? Thank you for that,” Larry said.

“It wasn’t me. It was Selena who rescued you,” Delilah replied quickly.

At the sound of this unfamiliar name, Larry felt curious. How did she manage to move me

here?

"It rained heavily last night. Selena was on her way home when she saw you lying on the road," Delilah answered lightly. "She carried you on her back and walked all the way home."

Larry suddenly started hacking. It seemed like the rain yesterday had made him ill.

Did Ms. Young mean to say that I was carried back here by a woman?

Larry's interest in Selena was suddenly piqued.

"Where is she now? I would like to thank her," Larry said.

"There's no need. She's currently at work, so it's best not to bother her," Delilah answered gently.

Larry's eyes dimmed. But she is my savior!

"Mr. Norton, you were late last night," Delilah suddenly changed the topic.

Larry was taken aback. Though he had an accident last night, it was still no excuse for being late.

"Ms. Young, it was my fault for failing to keep our appointment. I could have called or texted ahead, but I didn't. That was an error on my part. Please accept my apologies," Larry said sincerely.

Larry had always been an honest man. Thus, he would not attempt to worm his way out of being late with excuses.

Delilah was impressed by his candor.

"Then, let's talk business," she said briskly.

Larry was stunned but recovered quickly.

"I am willing to work with you, but on the condition that we keep our partnership a secret. I

would like to lead a quiet life." Delilah's gaze was stern as she laid out her condition.

If he can't agree to this, there would be no further need for any discussion.

"No problem. Please be rest assured that I will respect your decision," Larry said at once.

Just then, he caught sight of the dozens of missed calls on his phone and called Caspian

back.

“Larry, where are you now? What happened?” Caspian had been worried sick after not being able to contact him the entire night.

“I’m fine, don’t worry,” Larry replied quietly.

After a brief exchange, Larry hung up.

After breakfast, Larry was led by Delilah to the garden.

The sweet floral scent that had mingled in the crisp village air was emanating from flowers

of every beautiful hue imaginable. The sight of it dazzled Larry.

Delilah appeared to be in an excellent mood. She patiently introduced Larry to each type of

flower and its associated symbolism.

“You see, this one represents loss and recovery. Once upon a time, there was this loving

couple who got separated for some reason. A few years later, the man found the woman on

the side of the road. This flower was found blooming where they were,” Delilah said wistfully

as if the woman she was referring to was actually herself.

Larry’s thoughts strayed to Joan. Is she really dead? His eyes dimmed.

“Mr. Norton?” Delilah nudged him on the elbow.

“What are you thinking about? If you’re willing, we could not only be partners but also

friends,” Delilah said seriously.

She enjoyed surrounding herself with kind and passionate people.

At the sight of her affectionate and benevolent demeanor, Larry felt like pouring his heart

out to her for reasons unknown to himself.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1868

Chapter 1868 One More Pot

“It’s nothing, Ms. Young. I’m looking forward to your support in the future,” Larry said

politely.

He was lost in thought while he gazed at the reunion flower that Delilah had shown him.

“Here, these are for you,” Delilah said as she pushed a pot of reunion flowers into his hands.

Larry suddenly felt comforted for no apparent reason.

“Ms. Young, I would like to go out for a walk,” Larry suddenly said glumly.

“Turn right at the door and keep going until you see a river. It’s especially quiet there...”

Delilah knew that he was feeling grief, so she directed him to a quiet place for some

introspection with his flowers.

She shook her head as she watched Larry’s departing figure.

Men who were lovesick were the most adorable but they could also be the most stubborn. I

do hope that he will be able to be with the person he loves eventually.

Delilah’s eyes shined with anticipation on his behalf.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

Larry had just left when someone rapped on Delilah’s door. It sounded desperate.

“Selena? What are you doing back here? Aren’t you supposed to be at work?” Delilah eyed

the panting woman before her curiously.

“Ms. Young, are there any extra flowers in the garden? We need them at the supermarket,”

Selena said at once.

The potted plants sold in the supermarket were cultivated by Ms. Young, but they were few

in number in comparison to common household items and food that the supermarket

mainly stocked.

“Yes, there is. What happened?” Delilah asked as she patted Selena on the back to ease her breathing.

“There was a bunch of people today who insisted on buying reunion flowers. They were

determined to buy everything we had. The department leader was not agreeable at first but

upon consideration, he decided to accommodate the customers’ wishes, for fear that if we

don’t, they might cause trouble. That is why...” Selena explained with some embarrassment.

She knew that Delilah did not like to trade on too big of a scale.

Moreover, she detested

people who threw their weight around.

Delilah frowned in thought. At last, she decided to move everything in her garden to the supermarket.

“Tell your department leader that after this batch, I won’t be selling my goods through the supermarket anymore,” Delilah told Selena sternly.

The latter nodded determinedly.

Not long after, a couple of burly workers from the supermarket came to collect the flowers.

At the sight of her plants being sent away, Delilah’s eyes were filled with pain.

“Ms. Young, we’re short of one pot,” one of the workers called out suddenly. “The customers

were very specific about wanting a certain number of pots.”

“That’s all I have!” Delilah replied, anger evident in her tone.

I have already accommodated them and they still find things to complain about! She folded

her arms in front of her in bitterness. Seeing this, the worker did not dare to say more to

her. Instead, he nudged Selena’s elbow.

“Is it really true that you’ve run out of flowers? We won’t be asking from you anymore after

this time,” Selena asked Delilah quietly.

Selena was an employee of the supermarket, after all. Thus, Delilah did not wish to put her

in a difficult position. Her gaze softened at once.

“Go to the river. The man who you rescued yesterday has a pot,” Delilah said slowly.

Before she could say more, Selena had disappeared in her haste.

At the riverbank, Larry gazed at the pot of reunion flowers clutched in his hand with tear-filled eyes. He realized with a jolt that this was the

very same river that Joan had fallen into

from her accident that year.

“Joan!” Larry screamed at the river.

But there was not even a ripple of response.

Larry gazed at the flowers in his hand and back at the river, his heart aching with sorrow.

“Ah!” Came a yell behind him.

Selena had slipped and fallen. With time being of the essence, she jumped to her feet and

ran toward the river without even noticing that her knee was bleeding. Finally, she caught sight of the silhouette of a man.

“Hey!” Selena called out.

What a familiar voice. Larry spun around.

In the next moment, his eyes widened with shock.

“Hello, I’m Selena,” she panted as she introduced herself. “The supermarket I work at needs

these reunion flowers urgently. Could you give me this pot, please?”

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1869

Chapter 1869 Her Boyfriend

Larry had not recovered from his shock. He simply stood rooted to his spot gawping at her.

“Hello? Can you hear me?” Selena waved her hand in front of his face.

“Joan!” Larry cried tearfully. In a flash, he hugged her tightly as tears flowed freely down his

cheeks.

Selena was startled. She admitted that the man before her was very handsome, but she was

not a loose woman. With all her might, she pushed Larry away from her, glaring fiercely at

him as she did so.

“Hey, watch yourself! Are you going to give the flowers to me or not?”

Selena pointed at the

pot in his hands.

“Joan, you’re hurt!” Larry exclaimed as he pointed to her knee which was bleeding profusely.

Joan?

Something clicked in Selena’s mind. He must have mistaken me for somebody else!

“It’s none of your business,” she said impatiently. “Just tell me if you’re going to give...”

Before she could finish her sentence, Larry swept her up in his arms.

Selena was dumbfounded. She was painfully aware of her own racing heartbeat and

increasingly shallow breathing. Her head was pressed against his chest.

What a strong

heartbeat he has...

“You’re hurt. Let me take you back. Don’t worry, I’ll give you the flowers,” Larry said gently.

For reasons unbeknownst to her, Selena felt an overwhelming sense of peace being in his arms and listening to his voice.

“Mr. Norton, please put me down. I’m fine,” Selena said with an embarrassed blush.

The villagers were a conservative lot. If somebody saw them, they would misunderstand.

“Where’s the hospital?” Larry asked as he gazed tenderly at the woman in his arms.

Selena’s mind went blank at his question.

This is but a small village. What kind of hospital would we have?

“We do not have a hospital here, only a clinic,” Selena replied softly, not daring to meet his eyes.

Larry’s gaze was piercing, and it made her feel like he could see right through to her heart.

“Where is it? Tell me. I’ll take you there.”

Selena was touched by Larry’s determination. It was the first time since being in the village

that she was this close to a man. It was also the first time she was being embraced in a man’s arms.”

“Wow, Selena. Your boyfriend is really handsome!”

“That’s right! Hey Selena, why didn’t you think about mentioning him to us, hmm?”

“Hey, handsome. Treat us to lunch someday, won’t you? If you want to be with Selena, you’ll have to pass our inspection first.”

Several women approached them and started chattering inquisitively.

“What are you all talking about? He’s not...” Selena glared at them fiercely as she waved at

them to stop talking. The flush on her face had darkened into a deeper shade of red.

“Sure, I’ll treat you guys to lunch someday,” Larry said to the women, interrupting Selena.

Selena gazed at him with eyes as wide as saucers.

Is he admitting to the fact that he is my boyfriend? For some reason, she felt her heart

leaping with joy.

“Ooh, not bad, Selena!”

“So, should we call you our brother-in-law now?”

“Brother-in-law has a nice ring to it. Do keep in touch with us! We’re leaving now.”

With winks and nudges, the women departed like scuttering hens. They did not want to

intrude on the couple’s alone time.

Soon after, only Selena and Larry were left. Their surroundings fell into silence once more.

The atmosphere was so thick that the air felt solid.

Selena glanced at Larry nervously as she was momentarily struck dumb.

Larry gazed back at

her passionately. He wanted to kiss her forehead badly, but it appeared that she did not

remember him.

It wasn’t until Larry had started walking that Selena finally regained her senses.

“Um... Those girls are my friends,” Selena explained awkwardly. “We are used to making

jokes like that. Please don’t take it to heart.”

“But I was not joking.” Larry stopped walking suddenly.

Taken aback, Selena’s breathing hitched.

“Do you really not remember me at all?” Larry gazed earnestly at her.

Selena looked back at him dubiously. Should I remember him?

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1870

Chapter 1870 As Long As He Is A Good Guy

“I’m sorry, Mr. Norton, but you must have mistaken me for someone else. I’m Selena,”

Selena said when she recalled hearing him calling her Joan earlier.

Larry kept quiet and simply walked toward the clinic.

“What happened to you, Selena? How did you get yourself hurt so badly?” The doctor asked

as she had always been close with Selena and Delilah.

“Oh, it’s nothing! I just slipped and fell, that’s all!” Selena said with an embarrassed smile.

“Is that so? Are you sure you aren’t being bullied?” The doctor shot Larry a cold and

suspicious glare as she said that.

Being similar in age to Delilah, it was natural that she cared about Selena like her own

daughter.

“Yes, doctor. He was the one who carried me all the way here after I fell down,” Selena

explained, much to the doctor’s relief.

Larry furrowed his brows as he scanned the interior of the clinic.

Why is this clinic so shabby and poorly equipped?

He then pulled out his phone and punched in Caspian’s number without any hesitation.

“Hey, Caspian. Go take a look at the hospital and see what equipment they have. After that, I

want you to purchase some proper ones and have them delivered to this location. I’ll text

you the address in a bit.”

Of course, Caspian wouldn’t say no to Larry’s orders and drove toward the hospital

immediately.

“Say, who is he? I can’t believe he carried you all the way here without a single complaint!”

the doctor whispered into Selena’s ear with a nosy look on her face.

“Oh, I found him unconscious in the rain yesterday, so I carried him home...” Selena

whispered back.

“I do have to say, he is pretty handsome and seems to be a really nice guy. I mean, he didn’t

even get mad at me when I was rude to him earlier! I think you two would make a great

pair.” The doctor gave Selena a gentle nudge on the shoulder.

“What are you saying? He’s from the city, and I’m just a nobody from the village...” The look

in Selena’s eyes turned dull when she said that.

There’s simply too huge of a difference between our backgrounds and lifestyles, so we

won’t be seeing eye to eye on a lot of things in life... Dating a guy like this would be so

exhausting...

“Ah!” Selena let out a cry all of a sudden.

“You silly girl! As long as he’s a good guy, it doesn’t matter where he’s from!” the doctor

said while pressing on Selena’s wound.

Larry came running into the ward the moment he heard her scream.

“What happened? Does it hurt a lot?”

He grabbed her tightly by the hand, shocking both her and the doctor instantly. Whoa...

Isn't he being a little too touchy-feely?

The doctor cleared her throat awkwardly, prompting Selena to pull her hand back

immediately.

"Right then... Here's some ointment for your wound. Make sure to replace the bandages

before bed every night, okay? Oh, and try not to walk around too much.

In fact, it's even

better if you don't walk at all," the doctor deliberately cast a glance at Larry as she said that.

Selena knew exactly what she meant by that and simply pouted without saying a word.

"Here, hop on." Larry knelt down in front of Selena while the doctor covered her mouth and

grinned as she watched from the side.

"Don't listen to her, Mr. Norton. I'm fine, and I can walk on my own, so you don't have to

trouble yourself..." Selena said as she tried to get off the bed, only to get pulled into Larry's

arms.

"Would you rather have me carry you on my back or in my arms?"

His voice was so deep and attractive that Selena found it a little hard to breathe.

Oh, no... What's going on? Am I really into him?

Selena clenched her fists nervously at the thought of that.

"Uh... I think you should carry her in your arms to avoid making contact with the wound on

her knee," the doctor said before turning around and walking out of the ward.

"What?" Selena looked in the direction the doctor went.

Before she knew it, she was being held in Larry's arms once again.

Along the way, everyone around them stared in surprise and curiosity, and Selena felt like

she was going to die from the embarrassment. Larry, on the other hand, enjoyed every bit of

it very much.

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1871

Chapter 1871 Lucius Is Her Son

The sky was getting dark, and the stars twinkled as the bright moon illuminated the path

home for Larry. It's so silent, yet so heartwarming... Selena found herself enjoying the

moment and subconsciously leaned her head against Larry's chest, causing a satisfied grin

to form on his lips.

"Mom!" Lucius shouted at her when he saw her, and the look in Larry's eyes turned grim

instantly.

Lucius is her son?

"What happened to you, Mom?" Lucius ran up to hold his mother steady.

"It's nothing. I just slipped and fell, that's all!" Selena gently ruffled his hair with a relieved

smile on her face.

Larry, on the other hand, had an ice-cold look on his face as he made his way to the

window.

"Are you okay, Mr. Norton?" Lucius walked up to him and asked cautiously.

Larry turned around and shot him a cold glare in response, scaring Lucius so much that he

ran away and threw himself into Selena's arms.

"Wah! His eyes were so scary, Mom!" Lucius whispered beside her ear, making her stare at

Larry in confusion.

Why is he being so cold all of a sudden? He seemed so warm and gentle when he carried

me home moments ago!

"It's getting late... You must be hungry, right, Mr. Norton?" Selena asked.

Larry slowly turned toward her, his eyes filled with love and affection as he stared at her.

Being uncomfortable with such displays of affection, Selena quickly looked away and went

into the kitchen.

"I-I should start making dinner! Ms. Young will be back soon!"

For some reason, my heart beats really fast whenever we make eye contact, and I can barely breathe too! I must be losing my mind!

Selena shook her head forcefully as if to snap herself out of it. Larry fell into deep thought as he gazed at the night sky outside the window while Lucius was focused on doing his homework.

Selena found herself constantly being distracted as Larry's face kept popping up in her head.

"D*mn it, why do I keep thinking of him?" Selena mumbled to herself. "Thinking of who?" Larry appeared behind her suddenly.

"Y-You... What are you doing here?" Selena stared at him warily. How did he get behind me without making a sound? This is ridiculous!

"I came to see if you needed any help with making dinner," Larry said softly as he walked up to her.

Selena quickly pushed him away to put some distance between them. "N-No need, I can handle this all by myself! I-It's really cramped here in the kitchen, so why don't you wait outside?" she stammered in a state of panic.

Damn it, my heart's racing again!

Selena began taking deep breaths in an attempt to calm herself down, only to have Larry step forward and force her against the cabinet.

What's he doing? Is he going to kiss me?

With his right hand on the cabinet door, Larry then leaned in closer toward her face.

Selena's heart was pounding so hard that it felt like it was going to burst out of her chest.

She closed her eyes tightly and prepared herself for the impending kiss when she saw that his lips were getting closer to hers.

Smack!

Selena opened her eyes and saw Larry closing one of the cabinet doors with his right hand.

"What were you expecting?" Larry asked with a mischievous grin on his face, causing Selena to feel incredibly awkward.

I seriously thought he was going to kiss me!

“Uh... N-Nothing! I... I’m going to continue making dinner now!” She then shoved him away and began cutting up the vegetables. How embarrassing! My ears are all red too!

“Here, let me do it. It’s too dangerous,” Larry said as he quickly took the knife from her hand. She must be really worked up right now, so it’s best if she stays away from the knives...

Selena had a strange sense of déjà vu when she watched him cut up the vegetables. This is odd... Why do I feel like I’ve seen this man make dinner before...

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1872
Chapter 1872 How About You Become My Dad

She gave herself a knock on the head at the thought of that. That’s impossible! He’s from the city, remember? There’s no way a mere villager like me would’ve met him before!

“I’m home!” Just then, Delilah’s voice sounded from the living room. “Grandma!” Lucius threw himself in her arms. “Selena! How is your knee?” Delilah called out toward the kitchen. “It’s fine, Ms. Young! It should be healed pretty soon!” Selena replied. Larry felt his heart ache when he looked at her wound. Her injury isn’t serious, but it’ll still take a few days for her to heal up... Wait, Joan used to be like this too, didn’t she? She’d rather suffer the pain all by herself instead of having others worry about her...

“Oh, my... What are you doing in the kitchen, Mr. Norton? Come on out and get some rest, both of you! I’ll take care of dinner!” With that, Delilah shoved the two of them out of the kitchen. Selena shot her a helpless glance before limping toward the living room. Larry stepped forward to hold her steady, much to Delilah’s delight. She had heard about what happened during the day as well as Larry’s character. He hasn’t laid a finger on another woman ever since his wife died in a car accident, and yet he carried

Selena all the way to the clinic and back home... I rescued Selena from the riverbank, and she clearly isn't from around these parts... Could it be that they knew each other before she ended up here? I have long since treated Selena like my own daughter, what would Lucius and I do if she were to leave me someday? Delilah frowned at the thought of that and looked at the two of them worriedly.

"Mr. Norton, I don't know the answer to this question. Could you teach me?" Lucius asked as

he walked up to Larry, much to Selena's surprise.

He went to Larry for help instead of me?

Larry found his heart melting at how adorable Lucius looked.

"All right, let me see..." He picked Lucius up and sat him down on the sofa before he carried

on explaining, "This question is actually very simple. All we have to do is break it down

and..."

Selena found herself grinning happily when she saw how serious the two of them

looked. This heartwarming atmosphere... Isn't this exactly what I've been searching for all

this while?

"Dinner's ready!" Delilah shouted as she served up the food.

"Let me help you, Ms. Young!" Selena was about to stand up when Larry sat her back down

on the sofa.

"You stay here and rest that leg of yours. I'll help her out instead." With that, he turned

around and went into the kitchen while Selena sat there with her face burning bright red.

"I'm sorry we aren't able to whip up anything fancy in this little village of ours, Mr. Norton. I

hope you're okay with these simple dishes," Delilah said softly.

"Don't worry about it, Ms. Young. This is exactly how I like my meals,"

Larry replied with a

smile.

"How about you become my dad, Mr. Norton?" Lucius couldn't help but ask as he really

liked Larry a lot.

Delilah and Selena were both frozen in shock when they heard that. What on earth has gotten into this boy? How could he ask such a tactless question?

“What are you saying, Lucius? Hurry up and finish your food!” Selena gave the boy a gentle kick under the table.

Realizing his mistake, Lucius kept his head low and carried on eating. “I’m okay with it if your mommy is,” Larry said softly while casting Selena a glance.

Lucius had explained to him earlier that Selena wasn’t his biological mother, and that he was merely adopted by Delilah a few years ago. Larry was furious when he heard him call Selena

„Mom“ earlier, but after giving it some thought, he realized that the boy was too old to have been her child anyway.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1873

Chapter 1873 Wash My Face For Me

“Do you mean it, Mr. Norton?” Lucius’ eyes lit up with excitement as he looked up at Larry.

Delilah too, put down her knife and fork and waited for Larry to respond. However, Larry

kept quiet when he noticed the awkward yet expectant look on Selena’s face. She probably needs a bit more time to truly accept me...

A hint of sadness and disappointment flashed past Selena’s eyes when she heard no

response from him. He probably just said that as a joke to liven things up a little... Gosh,

what was I thinking? There’s no way we’d have anything going on between us when we’ve just met!

With that in mind, she shook her head and continued eating, pretending nothing ever happened.

“Yes, I do, but your mommy doesn’t seem willing to marry me.” Larry glanced at Selena with a sad look in his eyes.

I don't know why Joan lost her memories, but I'm willing to stay by her side until she regains them!

Selena choked and spat her food onto Larry's face when she heard that. The entire place fell silent instantly as Delilah and Lucius were both shocked speechless.

"Uh... I'm done eating, so I'll be heading back to my room now!" Delilah broke the silence moments later.

"Me too!" Lucius ran off as well, leaving Larry and Selena by the dinner table.

"I... I'm so sorry, I didn't mean to..." Selena rushed to his side and began wiping his face with a paper towel.

Her hands trembled a little when she saw Larry staring at her affectionately.

"U-Uh... Sorry, Mr. Norton... Maybe you should wash your face instead..."

I'll start blushing again if he keeps staring at me like this!

"Okay, you can wash it for me," Larry said softly, and Selena found herself speechless once again.

What the hell? Why would he ask me to help wash his face? Before she could even say

anything to refuse his request, Larry had grabbed her by the arm and began dragging her toward the bathroom.

"Wash my face for me," he repeated himself.

Selena was hesitant at how awkward it felt, but it was indeed her fault that his face was all

dirty. Eventually, she grabbed a towel from the side and wetted it slightly before wiping his face down.

Noticing that she had to get on her tiptoes because of how tall he was, Larry bent his knees slightly to make things easier for her.

Selena was very focused on getting every inch of his face cleaned up and she would wipe

each spot a few times before moving on to the next one.

According to Ms. Young, the people from the city are very particular about their hygiene...

Larry found himself losing control when he saw the familiar look in her eyes and picked up

her scent that he knew all too well. He deliberately leaned in closer to her, and Selena

paused for a moment before continuing what she was doing.

Perhaps it had been too long since he had her in his arms, he lost his reason and he

wrapped his arm around her waist, causing her to look up at him shyly in response.

The next thing she knew, Larry planted a light kiss on her lips. He saw that she had her eyes

closed and seemed to be enjoying it.

Selena didn't even know why she let him kiss her, but Larry was able to feel all of her love

for him in that kiss.

Ring! Ring! Ring!

The little moment they had was interrupted by the sound of Selena's phone ringing in the

living room. She quickly opened her eyes and ran out of the bathroom to answer the call.

"Selena, I need you to come in for work earlier tomorrow. It's going to be a busy day."

Freya's voice sounded really cold.

Oh, boy... I wonder what Ms. Brooks is up to this time...

Selena let out a helpless sigh as she hung up the phone.

"What's wrong?" Larry slowly walked up to her.

"It's nothing, I was just told to go to work earlier tomorrow," Selena replied softly.

Oh, that's right, Lucius told me about this... She works as a cashier in a supermarket and is

often bullied... Looks like I'll have to make a trip to the supermarket tomorrow...

Larry clenched his fists tightly at the thought of that.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1874

Chapter 1874 You Are The One Who Should Be Fired

Selena had left the house very early the next morning. Lucius had left for school while

Delilah attended to her plants in the garden, so Larry was all by himself in the house.

Ms. Young has been treating me like family ever since we had dinner last night because she knows Selena and I have feelings for each other. On top of that, Lucius seems to really like me too...

With that in mind, Larry glanced at his watch and smiled in satisfaction before heading out.

"Oh, my! Welcome, Mr. Norton! What brings you all the way here?" One of the department leaders greeted Larry the moment he saw him.

As the manager wasn't in at the moment, Larry had no choice but to settle for the department leaders instead.

"Business seems to be booming, eh?" Larry said sarcastically.

Unsure of what Larry was implying, the department leader had no choice but to go along with it.

"It's all right, I guess..." he said with a nod.

"How about the way you department leaders treat your employees, then? I am a firm believer in treating employees with great respect, and I would be more than happy to take over the management here," Larry continued, his words startling the department leaders almost instantly.

Given his resources, we'd lose our jobs for sure if he were to take charge here!

"Rest assured that we're very respectful toward our employees, Mr. Norton!" the department leader quickly explained, only to have Larry sneer at him in response.

"What the hell is your problem, Selena? Didn't I tell you to sort all of this out yesterday?"

Why is everything in a mess now, huh?" Freya was heard picking on Selena who could only keep her head low and pout in response.

"So, this is what you mean by being respectful?" Larry growled at them, causing them to sweat and tremble all over.

"S-She's new here and d-doesn't know what she's doing, Mr. Norton. I-I'll be sure to lecture her about this later on!" one of the department leaders stammered nervously.

"Don't bother, I'll take care of this myself," Larry said as he made his way toward them.

"Selena wasn't the one who put these here yesterday, Ms. Brooks!"

"Yeah! You put them here yourself!"

"Shut up, all of you! One more word out of you and you're fired!" Freya shouted.

"You're the one who should be fired!" Larry said coldly, gaining the attention of everyone around him instantly.

Why is he here? What's he going to do?

Selena thought to herself as she stared at him in surprise and confusion.

As for Freya, she broke into a sweet smile when she saw Larry.

"Hello there, sir! What would you like to buy?" she asked in a gentle and somewhat shy voice.

The other employees pursed their lips in disgust when they saw her sudden change in behavior.

"Oh, I'm not here to buy your stuff. I'm here to buy your supermarket," Larry said calmly, shocking everyone around him once again.

That has got to be the sexiest thing I've ever heard a man say!

"A-About that... P-Please reconsider your decision, Mr. Norton... I... I'll be sure to give her a

good lecture, so... R-Rest assured that we'll change the way we do things here starting

tomorrow and treat our employees with the utmost respect!" one of the department leaders stammered as he came running over.

This supermarket is the only one in the entire village... the manager is bound to flip if he

finds out that it's been acquired by someone else! I'd lose my job for sure!

"Is that so? But I just witnessed a supervisor scolding an employee in front of everyone,

though. That didn't look very respectful if you ask me." Larry shot Freya a cold glare, causing

her to take a few steps back in fear.

"Yes, Mr. Norton! Absolutely! Feel free to drop by for an inspection if you don't believe me!"

the department leader reassured him.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1875

Chapter 1875 I Will Believe You This One Time

With that being said, should Larry insisted on acquiring the supermarket, it would be

deemed as going a little overboard.

"All right, I'll believe you this one time," he said while walking up to Selena.

Selena felt a warm sensation in her heart when she looked at him.

Was he standing up for me?

"You silly girl... Make sure to tell me about these things next time, okay?"

I'll make sure to

keep you safe." Larry gently ran his hands through her hair.

If I can't remind her of the past, then I'll just start over with her.

"Wow! Selena, is he your boyfriend?"

"You sure did a great job at keeping it a secret!"

A few of the employees asked Selena nosily while Freya glared at her from the side, her eyes

filled with rage and hatred and her fists tightly clenched.

Damn you, Selena... What have you ever done to deserve a man this great?

"No, listen to me, I..."

"I'll treat all of you to a meal someday, okay?" Larry placed an arm around Selena's shoulder

as he cut her off, sending the girls into another fit of excited screams.

Seeing how everyone was looking at them with envy and admiration, Selena hurriedly

dragged Larry out of the supermarket.

"What are you doing here, Mr. Norton? Hurry up and go home!" she said anxiously.

Jeez, why is she trying to hide the fact that she's happy to see me? This isn't like Joan at all!

Larry held her by the hand and looked her in the eye as he said, "I won't let anyone bully

you."

That was the sweetest and most touching thing Selena had heard so far. "All right, I'll be heading back now. Just give me a call if anything happens." Larry gave her a pat on the head before walking off.

What is this... Why am I feeling so reluctant to part with him? D*mn it, what on earth has gotten into me?

Selena gave herself a smack on the head to snap herself out of it.

"Are you missing him already, Selena? You could just take the rest of the day off, you know?"

"Yeah! Going on dates is just as important, after all!"

"That's enough, you guys! Come on, back to work!" Selena turned around and waved at the few women who had followed her out.

"What do you girls think you're doing? Get back to work or you'll be getting a pay cut!"

Freya shouted at them from inside.

The employees knew better than to make her mad, so they quickly returned to their posts upon hearing that.

"Freya, I know you're very young and hardworking, but... Sometimes you just have to ease up on your subordinates a little. This supermarket belongs to the village, and we can't let it fall into some outsider's hands..." The department leaders lectured her after summoning her to their office.

These department leaders are well-aware of how I bully Selena, but they've always turned a blind eye to my actions... I can't believe she would have a man like that stand up for her!

Damn you, Selena... Just you wait, I'll definitely destroy you someday! Freya thought to herself angrily when she spotted Selena upon stepping out of the office.

It was soon nightfall, and the family was gathered around at home once again. Selena

couldn't help but wonder why Larry chose to stick around.

"Grandma, Mom, the school has a parent-teacher conference tomorrow!" Lucius said while

looking at both Delilah and Selena.

He knew Delilah would be busy in the garden, and Selena had to go to work at the supermarket.

Both of them placed their cutlery down and exchanged helpless glances with each other.

The flowers in the garden couldn't be left unattended even for a day, and Selena would not be able to take the day off on such short notice either.

"I can go with you, Lucius!" Larry gave the boy an affectionate pinch on the cheek.

"Really, Dad? You'll attend it with me?" Lucius looked at him excitedly. Selena's jaw dropped in shock when she heard that, much to Delilah's amusement as she watched from the side.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1876

Chapter 1876 Your Husband Is So Handsome

"Of course, silly! Your mom is busy, so it's only natural that I go with you as your dad!" Larry

ruffled Lucius's hair playfully as he said that, and Selena couldn't help but feel something off about their little exchange.

Why is he playing along with Lucius calling him "Dad?" We've only shared a kiss so far!

"Lucius, you're supposed to call him „Mr. Norton“, remember?" Selena reminded him.

"Oh, don't be so shy, Mom! It's only a matter of time before I call him „Dad“ anyway!" Lucius said and pulled a face at Selena.

"Look at him, Ms. Young!" Selena turned to Delilah for help.

"Well... I, uh... I'm done eating here, so I'm going to head back to my room now..." Delilah

stood up and made her way toward her room while Larry and Lucius high-fived each other.

Lucius brought Larry to school the next day, feeling proud to have such a handsome dad.

"Who is he, Lucius?" one of his friends asked curiously.

"He's my dad!" Lucius patted himself proudly on the chest.

"Whoa... Hey, guys! Come check it out! Lucius' dad is here!"

Just like that, the two of them were surrounded by the entire class within seconds.

“His dad is so handsome!”

“You’re so lucky to have such a cool dad, Lucius!”

“I thought his dad went missing?”

The entire class was in an uproar, and Lucius no longer felt inferior for not having a father.

“Huh... Lucius, why aren’t your mom and grandma here?” The homeroom teacher frowned at him unhappily.

“My dad is here, teacher!” Lucius replied loudly and proudly, much to the homeroom teacher’s confusion.

Ever since Lucius started school here, Ms. Young had specifically warned me against mentioning his dad in front of him, and yet...

“Look, teacher! This is my dad!” Lucius said while pointing at Larry who was standing next to him.

Larry nodded at the teacher politely in response, and she immediately understood what was going on.

Lucius was extremely happy throughout the entire day, much to Larry’s relief. When it was time to leave, a lot of the students and their parents requested to take a picture with Larry.

Being Lucius’s dad, Larry had no reason to refuse their requests.

“Oh, my God! Your husband is so handsome, Selena!” One of the colleagues exclaimed upon returning to work from the parent-teacher conference.

Selena froze. Husband? What husband? I’m not even married!

“What are you saying? I’m not even married yet!” she whispered awkwardly in response.

Despite what she said, her head was instantly filled with images of Larry when she heard that.

“Oh, don’t bother trying to hide it! Your son Lucius has been telling the entire school about his dad!” her colleague said with a chuckle.

Of course, she wasn't being sarcastic and was genuinely happy for Selena.

That was when Selena understood what had happened. She's probably referring to Larry who attended the parent-teacher conference with Lucius today... Looks like he's gained quite a lot of attention... How am I going to explain my way out of this now?

"All right, I'll cover for you, so you can head on home now. I took half the day off, so I gotta make up for it." The colleague gave her a pat on the shoulder and motioned at her to seize the opportunity.

Selena flashed her an awkward smile in response and was about to leave when her phone started ringing.

Ring! Ring! Ring!

She checked the caller ID and saw that it was Larry calling.

"Hello, Mr. Norton."

"Where are you right now?" Larry sounded a little anxious.

"I'm on my way home from work. Why?" Selena tried to make herself sound as calm as possible.

"I'll go pick you up."

"Hey, you don't have to! I'll be home soon!" Selena was quick to reject his offer, but Larry simply hung up on her and ran out of the school.

"Mr. Norton, my mom loves strawberry-flavored lollipops!" Lucius called out to him from behind.

Hmm, maybe having Lucius around isn't too bad after all! Larry's lips formed a gentle smile at the thought of that.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1877

Chapter 1877 Could This Guy Be My Rival

It wasn't long before the two of them passed Selena by on the road, and she felt incredibly awkward as she didn't know what to say to him.

"Uh... Thanks for attending the parent-teacher conference on my behalf today." Selena

thanked Larry softly without even looking at him.

I mustn't look him in the eyes, or I'll lose myself in them!

"Oh, no need to thank me. I'm just doing my job," Larry said with a chuckle.

Selena paused for a brief moment before regaining her composure. How is this his job when he's not even Lucius' dad? She thought to herself while kicking the stones by the roadside.

Growl...

Selena's stomach growled all of a sudden, and she went bright red with embarrassment on the spot.

D*mn it, why did my stomach have to ruin a perfect moment like that?

This is so

embarrassing! I wish the ground would just open up and swallow me whole right now!

"Here you go!" Larry handed her a strawberry-flavored lollipop, much to her surprise.

How did he know that I like strawberry-flavored lollipops?

Selena took the lollipop over and began peeling the wrapper off without saying a word. All

she wanted was to stuff it into her mouth as quickly as possible and stop her stomach from growling any further.

The two of them then carried on walking side by side in complete silence.

"Selena!" Larry called out and grabbed her by the arm all of a sudden.

Selena turned around slowly and blinked anxiously as she asked,

"W-What is it?"

"What do you think?" Larry got straight to the point.

I'm sure she has feelings for me too. She just can't bring herself to accept my love, that's all!

It's either that, or she's holding herself back because of Lucius or Ms. Young.

"W-What... What do you mean by that?" Selena continued to pretend she didn't understand him.

Larry looked her in the eye and said seriously, "I'm pretty sure you already know this by now,

but I'm just going to say it anyway. I like you, Selena."

The sudden confession hit her like a bolt from the blue, as it was her first time falling for a guy that she had known for less than a month.

“What about you? What do you think about me? Are you willing to be my girlfriend?” Larry held her hand tightly.

“I...”

Selena was dying to say yes to him, but her reserved nature caused her to hesitate anyway.

“I am...”

“Selena!” A familiar voice cut her off before she could finish.

“Selena, Mr. Norton, what are you two doing here?” Kevin asked while panting heavily.

“Oh, we just happened to run into each other!” Selena replied.

Larry shifted his gaze between the two of them and wondered why Selena chose to lie. I

made it very clear that I came to pick her up! Why would she lie about it?

“Oh, I see... I heard you got hurt, Selena! Are you all right?” Kevin asked while eyeing her from head to toe.

“I”m fine, don”t worry about me!” Selena gave herself an awkward pat on the chest.

Larry”s frown deepened as he observed the interaction between the two.

C-Could this guy be my rival?

He was staring at Kevin suspiciously, but Kevin kept his eyes fixated on Selena the whole time and ignored him completely.

“It”s getting late, we should head home now,” Larry spoke up all of a sudden.

“Huh? Oh, right! It really is getting late! We”ll be on our way now, Kevin!” Selena said as she gave him a light pat on the shoulder.

I can”t believe she touched him!

Larry pursed his lips and called out to her from behind, “Hey!”

Selena jumped in shock and turned around to look at him.

“That guy earlier... How are you two related?” Larry asked her cautiously.

Selena hesitated on how she should reply to him. Should I tell him that Kevin used to court me and that I rejected him in the end? Hmm... I guess there's no need to...

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1878

Chapter 1878 Dad Is A Very Busy Man

"He's just some guy that helps Ms. Young out at the garden. She likes him a lot," Selena replied softly.

Larry glared at Kevin, who was behind him with a hint of jealousy in his eyes.

"Starting tomorrow, I'll go help out in the garden too."

"That simply won't do, Mr. Norton! You should just stay home and rest! I can manage the garden by myself!" Delilah tried to talk him out of it when she heard what he said.

She had noticed something off about him the moment he stepped through the door, and she turned out to be right about it.

"Ms. Young, I'll be the one to help you with your flowers from now on, so you don't need anybody else." Larry looked straight at her with a serious expression on his face.

Delilah wasn't sure why he would say such a thing all of a sudden, but she knew he must've had his reasons for it.

"B-But you're the p-president of Norton Corporation, so you must be really busy with work every day..." Delilah stammered.

"I meant during my stay here," Larry added.

Delilah stared at him in confusion, unsure of what to do. The president of a huge company helping me out in my garden? I bet the entire village would be famous if word were to get out about it!

As the sky grew dark, Larry smiled gladly at the sight of his handiwork while Delilah stood beside him with an awkward look on her face.

The two of them left the garden shortly after with Delilah thanking Larry for his help, but he

simply responded by saying, "I'm just doing my job."

Not knowing how to respond to that, Delilah kept quiet and carried on walking.

"Grandma! Dad! You're back!" Lucius came running out of the house. Delilah paused for a brief moment when she heard that, but was quick to regain her composure.

I can't believe this kid is just calling him „Dad“ like it's the most natural thing in the world!

"Lucius! What did I tell you? You're supposed to call him „Mr. Norton“!" Selena shouted at him from the kitchen.

Larry ran inside when he heard her voice and pushed her aside. "Why are you making dinner again? Get out of the kitchen, and get some rest. I'll take it from here." Selena smiled when she saw how experienced Larry was at cooking. It's like I've gotten used to everything he does for me...

Noticing how Selena was staring at Larry with a lovestruck expression on her face, Delilah walked up to her and gave her a gentle pat on the shoulder.

"So, what do you think about him?"

Hearing that made Selena feel awkward instantly.

It's true that I like him, but I don't believe in love at first sight... The only thing one could possibly love about someone at first sight is their physical appearance, and we all know physical appearances fade over time. What's to say he won't get disgusted and leave when I become old and ugly one day?

"I don't know..." Selena lowered her head and seemed to be in a dilemma.

Delilah immediately understood what she was going through when she saw her reaction. It's obvious that she likes him! She wouldn't be hesitating like this if she doesn't!

"All right, dinner's ready! Come try out my cooking!" Larry called out with a smile as he served up the food.

“Whoa! Dad, this smells great! Will you make dinner for me every day?”

Lucius asked

innocently.

Selena gave the boy a gentle nudge and said softly, “Dad’s a very busy man, Lucius!”

Both Delilah and Larry froze in shock upon hearing that, and it felt like time had stopped as

everyone fell silent.

“Mom... What did you just say?” Lucius eyed Selena suspiciously.

Realizing she had misspoken, Selena quickly placed a chunk of steak onto Lucius’ plate as

she explained, “I said Mr. Norton is really busy, now hurry up and eat your food!”

Damn it, I must be losing my mind! Why did I even say the word “Dad?”

Selena frowned at the thought of that.

After dinner, Delilah and Lucius were sitting on the sofa and watching some TV while Selena

was applying her ointment in her room. Larry walked up to her and snatched the tube of

ointment from her as he said, “I’ll help you.”

Selena simply sat there and stared at him with a sweet and relieved smile on her face.

Ring! Ring! Ring!

Larry checked the caller ID and answered the phone when he saw that it was Caspian calling.

“Hello? When will you be returning, Larry? Those shareholders are going to stir up trouble

again if you don’t come back soon!”

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1879

Chapter 1879 She Never Changes

Larry knew the shareholders would cause trouble, so he had been planning his return the

whole time. From what I’ve observed throughout the past few days, Ms. Young’s flowers

seem to be doing just fine, so I guess I could head back tomorrow...

With that in mind, Larry said, “Got it, I’ll head back tomorrow.”

Selena was surprised to hear what he said, and the gleam in her eyes turned dull as she felt

somewhat disappointed.

Should I at least hold a farewell party for him or something?

"I'll be heading back tomorrow, Selena..." Larry stared longingly at her, feeling reluctant to leave.

"Yeah..." Selena lowered her gaze to avoid his.

"W-Will you come with me?" Larry held her hand tightly, catching her off guard.

Is he seriously asking me to go live with him?

"I... I've got work tomorrow..." Selena said awkwardly while scratching the back of her head,

much to Larry's relief as she didn't reject him directly.

"That's no problem, Mom! Just take some days off or something!

Besides, given how rich

Dad is, you could even quit your job!" Lucius showed up at the door all of a sudden.

Larry looked at him and gave him a thumbs up in response.

Gosh, I love how kind and straightforward this kid is!

Selena stared at the two of them and felt that there was something off about their

interactions. Lucius has spent more time with me, so why is he taking Larry's side in this?

"For the hundredth time, Lucius... You should address him as „Mr.

Norton"!" Selena corrected

him once again.

Lucius walked over and plopped himself down in between the two, making the three of

them looked just like a normal family. A smile formed on Delilah's face when she saw what

happened while on her way to her room.

I suppose this isn't too bad, after all.

Knock! Knock! Knock! Delilah got out of bed when she heard someone knocking on her

door.

"Ms. Young, may I have a little chat with you in the living room?" Larry asked politely.

Delilah went straight to the living room without any hesitation.

"How did you get to know Selena?" Larry observed her carefully.

Since I'll be leaving tomorrow, I might as well find out about it now...

Delilah knew it was only a matter of time before he asked her about this, but she didn't

expect it to come so soon.

"I found her by the side of the river. She was badly injured with wounds all over her body..."

Delilah began recounting the incident in detail while Larry listened attentively for fear of missing out on any details.

"Selena is a good girl, so I hope you will treat her well." Delilah shot him a hopeful look, catching him off guard.

So she knew about it all along!

"I'll be honest with you here, Ms. Young. Selena's real name is Joan Watts, and she is actually my wife," Larry explained.

The two then had a long conversation before returning to their respective bedrooms.

Larry felt his heart ache a little as he stared at Selena's sleeping form.

God knows how much

pain and suffering she must have been through during her time here...

As he ran his hand gently through her hair, she grabbed it and held it tightly against her

chest. She then smacked her lips and smiled as if she was having a sweet dream.

Larry chuckled to himself in response.

She never changes, does she?

"Are you really leaving, Dad?" Lucius asked while clinging to his arm.

Selena stared at him from the side, eagerly waiting for his answer.

"I've got some stuff to take care of at work, so I have to head back for a bit," Larry said while giving the boy a kiss on the forehead.

Lucius pouted helplessly as he had taken a day off from school to spend it with Larry.

Delilah, too, had stayed home that day just to see him off, and things were getting really awkward at the table.

Although Larry had only been living with them for a week, it was more than enough for them to see him as family.

"Thank you, Ms. Young. Here's to you, cheers!" Larry stood up and downed his entire glass of wine in one go.

"Cheers!" As Delilah didn't like alcohol, she toasted with a cup of tea instead.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1880

Chapter 1880 Look Out In Front

Larry then shifted his longing gaze toward Selena and said slowly,

"Selena, if you don't

mind, you can come to my place with Lucius."

Selena wanted nothing more than to jump at that opportunity, but she couldn't bring

herself to leave Delilah behind all by herself.

"No, I think I'm better off staying here. Besides, I've got work." Selena looked at Delilah as

she said that, much to the disappointment of Larry and Lucius.

"You should go with Mr. Norton, Selena. There's something I need you to do for me in the

city anyway," Delilah spoke up all of a sudden.

Larry's eyes lit up instantly, and he stared at Selena expectantly. Selena took one look at

Delilah and understood the elder woman's intentions right away. Ms.

Young rarely sends

anyone into the city, so it must be something important if she's sending me like this...

"You see these flowers over here? I need you to send them to a girl

named Harriet. Just tell

her it's from me, and she'll understand. Remember, you have to hand them over to her in

person," Delilah said in a very serious tone.

Selena didn't know who Harriet was nor how important the flowers were, but she wasn't

about to refuse a request from Delilah.

"Mom, make sure you dress well on this trip with Dad or you'll make him look bad!" Lucius

gave her a gentle pat on the back.

Selena froze in disbelief. Did this kid just insult me?

"It doesn't matter how you look, because I'll still like you all the same!"

Larry wrapped his

arm tightly around her shoulder.

She brushed it off and blushed as she took a few steps back, much to Larry's amusement.

After saying goodbye to Delilah and Lucius, the two set off in Larry's car. It was a very quiet drive with Selena staring out the window in silence while Larry kept his eyes on the road ahead.

With the awkward tension rising in the car, Selena tried her best to calm herself down, only to find that she was getting a lot more anxious than before. Naturally, Larry had noticed her odd behavior and pulled over by the side of the road.

"What's the matter, Selena?" he asked while leaning closer toward her. "Huh? Oh, it's nothing!" Selena let out an awkward chuckle.

Larry continued inching closer toward her, making her so flustered that she found it a little difficult to breathe.

"Then why were you trying to avoid looking at me?" he asked while blowing gently into her ear.

Selena swallowed nervously at the sight of such a handsome face inches away from hers.

She then pointed at the window and said, "Oh, I uh... I was just admiring the view outside the window!"

As Larry leaned in even further, Selena closed her eyes and braced herself for the incoming kiss.

Snap!

Selena quickly opened her eyes when she heard a sudden loud noise. She saw that he had helped buckle her seatbelt which came loose earlier.

"What were you expecting, closing your eyes like that?" Larry asked.

"N-Nothing! Nothing at all!" Selena stammered.

Larry smiled mischievously and started the car once again.

However, he had too much fun teasing her and ended up not paying attention to the road while driving.

"Hey, Mr. Norton! Mr. Norton!" Selena shouted at him from the side, but he was too distracted to hear her.

Seeing as they were about to crash into the car in front of them, Selena tugged on Larry's arm in a state of panic.

"Mr. Norton!"

That snapped Larry out of it. "Huh? What?"

"Look out in front!" Selena pointed frantically at the car in front of them. Bang!

Both cars were overturned from the impact, and all the passengers were soon lying on the road.

"Joan!" Larry struggled as he reached his hand out toward Selena, but she showed no response whatsoever.

Eventually, Larry closed his eyes as his consciousness slowly faded away as well.

In the hospital, Delilah was holding Selena's hand tightly while Lucius stared at both of them worriedly. Caspian, too, had a frazzled look on his face as he stood beside Larry.

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1881

Chapter 1881 Are You Going To Leave Me

"It's been so long now, Grandma... Why aren't Mom and Dad awake yet?" Lucius asked with his eyes wide.

Caspian stared at Lucius curiously and began putting the pieces together. He was shocked

when he first saw Selena on the hospital bed, but he soon understood why Larry had not returned for so long.

"Joan! Joan!" Larry's eyes shot wide open all of a sudden.

"Oh, my God! You're awake, Larry!" Caspian exclaimed in relief.

"Caspian? Where's Joan?" Larry grabbed his arm tightly.

A gentle smile formed on Delilah's face when she saw that. He wakes up, and the first thing

he does is call out to Joan... Looks like I won't have to worry about Selena after all...

"You're finally awake, Dad! Mom's right here!" Lucius shouted.

Larry quickly got out of bed and made his way toward Selena.

"It's my fault... It's all my fault!" Larry said in a trembling voice while running his hand gently through her hair.

"It's okay..." Selena slowly opened her eyes.

It pained her to see Larry blaming himself like that.

She then reached out and wiped the tears off his face as she said,

"Don't cry, Larry..."

Both Larry and Delilah froze in shock when they heard that. Selena had always addressed

him as "Mr. Norton" instead of "Larry," so this must mean... This is Joan! Joan's back!

"Do you remember your name?" Larry asked anxiously.

"Of course I do, silly! What's the matter with you? I'm Joan Watts, duh!

I remember

everything now!" Joan said as she gave him a pat on the head.

The warm sun, the gentle breeze, the faint scent of flowers, and the rapid currents of the

river...

"Thank you for everything, Ms. Young," Joan said softly, having fully regained all of her

memories from before.

Delilah simply stared at her with a relieved and longing look in her eyes.

"Joan!" Nancy barged right into the ward all of a sudden.

"Hey, Nancy..." Joan called out to her weakly.

Nancy ran straight toward her and buried her face in her chest as she wailed away.

It was such an emotional moment that even Lucius began to tear up a little as he watched

from the side.

"Where have you been all this time, Joan? We were worried sick!

W-We... We thought you

were..." Nancy sniffled as she struggled to speak.

Joan smiled at her in response and gave her a light pat on the head.

Despite the tough front she usually puts up, she's just a little girl deep down inside...

"I was just gone on vacation. It was a little longer than expected, but I'm back now, aren't I?"

Joan said with a chuckle.

"Mom..." Lucius called out to her, seemingly a little depressed.

Does Mom not want me anymore now that she's regained her memories? His tears began to flow down his cheeks at the thought of that.

"Come here, Lucius..." Joan reached her hand out toward the boy while Nancy and Jory watched in utter confusion.

This is her child? Since when did she have a child this old?

"Are you going to leave me, Mom?" Lucius asked softly while leaning his head against her side.

Joan gave him a pinch on the cheek and looked at him, her eyes were filled with love and affection as she said, "Silly boy... You're my son! Why would I leave you?"

Lucius broke into a huge smile upon hearing that, much to Larry's relief as he watched from the side. Nancy and Jory, however, were still clueless as to what was going on.

Eventually, Nancy was unable to hold in her curiosity any longer and asked, "Joan... This boy is your child?"

"Yeah, of course he is!" Joan replied firmly.

Nancy stared speechlessly at Lucius, much to the amusement of everyone else who burst into laughter at how cute she looked when confused. Jory seemed to have figured it out after putting two and two together but decided to keep it to himself anyway.

It wasn't long before Larry and Joan were discharged from the hospital. Since Joan had regained her memories, Larry began bugging her to go back with him, even offering to bring Delilah and Lucius along with her. However, Joan knew there was no way Delilah would leave the village in which she had spent most of her life at.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1882
Chapter 1882 The Return Of Joan Watts

"Larry... I want to stay in the village a little longer..." Joan said and waited eagerly for his response.

The look in Larry's eyes darkened instantly. I don't get it... Why would she still want to go

back to that village after regaining her memories?

Joan leaned against his chest as she continued, "Ms. Young turns sixty this year, so I was

thinking of celebrating her sixtieth birthday with her before coming back."

Larry wrapped an arm tightly around her waist and buried his face into her

collarbone. Looks like Ms. Young means a lot to her... Not only is she her savior, but she's

also her mentor in life...

"All right, I'll go with you," Larry replied softly, much to Joan's surprise as she wasn't

expecting him to say that.

After briefly discussing their plans, the two made their way toward the village.

Larry put his most trusted assistant, Caspian, in charge of things at the company. He had

faith that his remote guidance combined with Caspian's capabilities would be enough to

take care of any potential issues.

"Mom! Dad!" Lucius was overjoyed to see Larry and Joan again.

"Why did you two come back?" Delilah stared at them in confusion.

Joan gave Delilah a hug as she replied, "Because we miss you two."

Delilah felt incredibly touched when she heard that.

"Oh, wow! Selena's back! That's quite a long honeymoon, don't you think?"

"I know, right? Selena, I can't believe you actually ran away with a guy before you two are

even married! Looks like you're growing up a little too quickly, huh?"

A couple of women teased her as they passed by. Having gotten used to their way of

greeting others, Joan simply smiled at them in response.

"All right, you guys head on inside. I'll go buy us some food from the supermarket!" Joan

said and ran off before Larry could even respond, unaware of the huge surprise she was in

for.

"Hey, Selena! You're finally back! I've missed you so much!"

“That’s right! Why didn’t you invite us along on that trip of yours?” Her colleagues surrounded her instantly, feeling excited to see her again. “Ahem!” Suddenly, a familiar voice came from behind, and everyone around Joan dispersed quickly when they saw Freya approaching. “Well, well... If it isn’t the great Selena Young... Why do you even bother coming back at all?” Freya shot Joan a disdainful glare with her arms folded. It took Joan every ounce of willpower she could muster to stop herself from slapping the living daylights out of her. She had been putting up with Freya back then while she was Selena, but things were different now that she was back to being Joan. “Why, I came back to see you, Ms. Brooks!” Joan said sarcastically. I don’t get it... Why on earth would the manager hire such an incompetent and unfriendly person as a supervisor? “Heh... Don’t you try anything funny, Selena! You’d better listen to me if you want to keep this job of yours!” Freya said with an ice-cold glare in her eyes. Funny hearing that from someone who’s always playing the victim after bullying me countless times... Joan sneered at the thought of that. “Sorry, but I’m resigning from my position here, Ms. Brooks,” she said with her chin held high. Freya froze for a brief moment before shouting at her, “I don’t approve of this resignation!” Oh, wow... She’s even trying to stop me from resigning now, huh? “I’m afraid this isn’t for you to decide, Ms. Brooks. I’m going to hand in my resignation to the manager,” Joan said with a smile before heading straight for the manager’s office. Freya then ran up to Joan and stood in front of her, blocking her path to the manager’s office with a mean look in her eyes. “The manager isn’t in right now, so I call the shots around here!” Does she place herself above the department leaders in the supermarket or something? Besides, I can clearly see the manager inside his office!

Joan thought to herself as she glanced at the manager's office.
"I'm heading toward the manager's office, Ms. Brooks. Now, please step aside!"

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1883

Chapter 1883 Do You Really Think You Can Escape My Wrath

Freya grabbed Joan by the arm when she tried to pass her by.

Being the only one who had bullied Joan during her time at the supermarket, she was afraid

of Joan telling on her to the manager while handing in her resignation.

"What on earth are you trying to do, Ms. Brooks?" Joan turned around and shot her a stern

glare, causing Freya's attitude to soften up instantly.

It was no secret that the manager was the only person in the supermarket that Freya feared.

"I... I mean... I approve of your resignation, so you may leave now...

There's no need for you

to go see the manager..." Freya whimpered.

"What's going on here?" The manager came out of his office upon hearing the ruckus. "Oh,

Selena! Have you come to see me? Please, do come in!"

Of course, Joan knew he was only being so nice to her because of her relationship with

Delilah.

"What? You're going to resign? Why? Oh, I see... So, your real name is Joan Watts?" the

manager exclaimed in shock.

After listening to Joan's lengthy explanation, the manager approved of her resignation.

"Sir, you mustn't let her resign!" Freya burst into the manager's office all of a sudden.

Whoa... Where did she find the courage to barge into the manager's office like that? Joan

stared at her curiously.

"Get out, Freya!" The manager shouted sternly.

"But... Uncle!" Freya's face was bright red with anxiety and awkwardness instantly.

"Who are you calling „Uncle“? I'm the manager, and you're a supervisor! Know your place!"

the manager shouted angrily, much to Freya's dismay.

She had always done as told and kept her identity a secret to avoid special treatment from the department leaders, but they all knew she was the manager's niece. "I don't care! She cannot be allowed to resign!" Freya repeated herself. Joan was confused. Why is she trying so hard to stop me from leaving? Is it so she could continue bullying me?

"Get out, now!" the manager yelled furiously.

Seeing as he had gone livid with anger, Freya could only pout as she stepped out of the office.

"I'm terribly sorry about this. Please excuse her rude behavior..." the manager apologized with a smile.

"It's okay, I understand." Joan replied with a smile.

The two then had a brief exchange, and Joan went home after that.

Damn you, Selena! Do you really think you can escape my wrath simply by resigning?

Freya had an ice-cold look in her eyes as she slammed her fist against the counter.

"Mom, Dad, when are you two getting married?" Lucius asked innocently.

Joan smiled and ruffled the boy's head.

"We're already married, silly!"

"Oh..." Lucius lowered his gaze, seemingly disappointed at not being able to attend their wedding.

Larry smiled in relief at seeing how happy the two of them were. Being able to find Joan is the luckiest thing that's ever happened to me...

Ring! Ring! Ring!

Joan answered the phone when she saw Nancy's name on the caller ID, only to hear her sobbing uncontrollably.

"Joan..."

Naturally, that scared the living daylights out of Joan.

"What's wrong, Nancy? Stop crying and tell me what happened!"

As Nancy was emotionally unstable, it took her quite a long time to finally calm herself down.

"I'm pregnant, Joan! What do I do?" she whispered softly.
Joan rolled her eyes upon hearing that. My goodness... That's it?
What's there to cry about
being pregnant? Jeez...

"And?" Joan asked with the most indifferent tone possible.

"I'm pregnant, Joan! What am I going to do?" Nancy repeated her
question a lot louder this
time.

Joan took a deep breath as she tried to think of how she should
persuade Nancy to keep
the baby.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1884

Chapter 1884 Nancy Is In Trouble

"I wonder if your mom reacted the same way when she found out she
was pregnant with
you..." Joan said with a playful chuckle.

She and Nancy were so comfortable with each other that they were okay
with poking fun at
each other like that.

"Oh, shut up! Look, just come see me tomorrow, okay? Honestly, why
did you even go back

to that village anyway? What's so great about that place? Life is so
much more convenient

here in the city!" Nancy grumbled.

Had it not been for Jory getting in the way, I would've stopped Joan
from going back to the
village the moment I found out about it!

"There's something very precious to me here," Joan replied.

Thanks to her wealthy family background, Nancy had gotten used to life
in the city since she

was a kid and had never once been to a village. As such, she had no idea
what life was like

in the countryside.

"Ah!" Nancy was heard screaming, and what came next was the sound
of the phone falling
to the floor.

"Nancy? Nancy!" Joan called out to her repeatedly, but there was no
response.

Something must've happened to her!

With that in mind, Joan quickly scrolled through her list of contacts and gave Jory a call.

“Jory, I think Nancy is in trouble!”

Jory hung up on her immediately and began making a phone call as he ran out of the office.

“Hello? I want you to track Nancy’s phone right now!” Jory shouted, his voice filled with

panic and frustration as he punched the steering wheel with all of his might.

“Larry, I think something’s happened to Nancy! Come on, we have to hurry!” Joan tugged on

his arm anxiously.

Larry had a concerned look on his face when he saw how dark it was outside.

“You stay here, Joan. I’ll go alone.”

“No, I’m going with you!” Joan said determinedly.

Knowing how stubborn she was, Larry knew there was no talking her out of it. The two of

them left in a hurry after saying goodbye to Delilah and Lucius. Joan kept calling Nancy

along the way, but there was no answer.

Larry felt his heart ache when he saw the tears trickling down her face and held her hand

tightly as he reassured her, “Don’t worry, Joan. Nancy’s a smart girl, so I’m sure she’ll be

fine.”

He then handed her his phone and said, “Here, give Caspian a call.”

Joan quickly took the phone over and dialed Caspian’s number.

“What? Nancy’s gone missing? Okay, I’ll start searching for her right away!” Caspian sprung

to his feet immediately after hanging up the phone.

Damn it, Jory! You can’t even protect your own woman?

There was an ice-cold and vicious look in his eyes as he punched the wall next to him.

Meanwhile, Nancy was tied to a pole in a dark and cold warehouse, still unconscious from

the hit to her head earlier.

After what seemed like an eternity, she slowly opened her eyes and glanced about in an

attempt to assess her surroundings. Despite the place being completely pitch-black, she could clearly tell that she wasn't at home.

"Hello? Is anyone there? Help me, please!" Nancy tried standing up, only to realize that both her arms and legs were completely immobile.

"Shut up! There's no point in screaming since there's nobody around to hear you anyway!" A man's voice rang in her ears all of a sudden.

Nancy pricked her ears and paid close attention to the man's voice as she asked, "Who are you?"

"That's none of your business! Hmm... So, this is the legendary Nancy Barrymore, eh? Quite a feisty one, aren't you?"

Nancy felt a shiver down her spine when she heard the man walking toward her.

"Turn on the lights and show yourself, you coward!" Nancy shouted while struggling against her ropes.

Snap!

The lights were switched on, and Nancy was able to see the face of her kidnapper.

However, she was unable to recognize him and had no idea who he was.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1885
Chapter 1885 The Security Footage

"I don't know you, so why did you kidnap me?" Nancy looked at the man coldly.

"What about me? Do you know me?" Suddenly, a woman emerged as her voice sounded across the room.

At that moment, Nancy understood everything.

Previously, she wanted to buy a bag she liked when she went shopping at the mall.

However, right when she was about to pay for it, a woman came and snatched the bag away. Given her personality, Nancy couldn't let this matter go.

Not to mention, she wanted the bag first. So, she argued with the woman and got the bag in the end. Unbeknownst to her, the argument made her an enemy.

“Was that bag nice?” The woman paced toward Nancy and stopped in front of her.

In response, the latter glanced at her with disdain in her eyes.

How despicable! Hiring people to kidnap me just because of a bag.

Slap! Suddenly, the woman slapped Nancy in the face and the impact was so big that it

managed to leave a red handprint on the latter’s face.

Nancy raised her head and glared at the woman as blood dripped down the corner of her

lips. Fury was residing in her eyes, but she remained looking ever-elegant like the socialite

she was.

Noticing Nancy’s disdainful look, the woman grew irritated.

“Kidnapping me just because of a bag? Do you know that this is against the law?” Nancy

glared at her and gritted her teeth.

The woman burst into laughter upon hearing her words.

“Do I look like I care?” The woman folded her arms and pulled on Nancy’s ear.

“So what if your man is powerful? I’m going overseas tomorrow. He can’t do sh*t.” The

woman said coldly as her lips curled into a wicked smile.

Meanwhile, Jory and Larry pulled all the strings they could to look for Nancy, but to no avail.

After tracking Nancy’s phone, they found it lying in a park. Naturally, she had already been

taken away by then.

“Jory, you son of a b*tch! Nancy is your wife. And this is how you take care of her?” Caspian

hurled his fist at Jory.

Larry immediately rushed forward to stop Caspian and motioned for him to calm down.

Watching the scene unfurled at the side, Joan quickly reminded,

“Caspian, what’s important now is to look for Nancy!”

“How can I calm down? Nancy is missing!” Caspian hugged his head as he grimaced in pain.

Although they were divorced, Caspian’s feelings toward Nancy never changed.

Ring! Ring! Amid Caspian's outburst, Larry's phone rang, and he hurriedly answered the call.

"Mr. Norton, we found the security footage." A man's voice sounded from the other end of the call.

"Okay, I'll be there right away." Upon hearing the good news, he hung up after replying and motioned Jory to follow him.

The group of people went to the security control room.

Seeing them arriving in the room, a young man who was sitting in front of the computers

said, "These are the security cameras in the places Nancy had walked past. You guys can

take a look. Since it hasn't been twenty-four hours, we can't file a police report yet."

They stared at the screen and tried to search for the location Nancy was last seen at.

Suddenly, Joan shouted and pointed at the screen. "There! Look at that."

"Enlarge it! Quick!" Caspian yelled hurriedly as he widened his eyes at the footage.

Wearing a cap and a black mask, a man dressed in black could be seen hitting Nancy with a

bat from behind before dragging her out of view.

"Do you recognize this person?" Larry turned to Jory. The latter leaned in and shook his

head after looking at the screen for a while. "No. I don't know him."

Larry continued to ask, "Jory, did you offend anyone recently? Especially those that you've

encountered in business?"

Jory walked to the window and closed his eyes to calm himself down.

Clearing his mind, he

started thinking about his business partners and those companies and projects he rejected.

"Nancy's been kidnapped! Why are you still pretending?" With that, Caspian grew furious

and was about to lunge at Jory to vent his anger.

"Caspian!" Larry shouted, and Caspian immediately put his hands down.

"I know you're anxious, but we all are. Nancy is Jory's wife, so he must be worried too." He

walked toward Caspian and tried to comfort him.

“But if he took care of Nancy, this wouldn’t have happened.” A cold glint flashed across

Caspian eyes as he spoke.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1886

Chapter 1886 The Search Begins

When one’s limit was breached, they would even retort the words of a person they

respected the most.

Larry stared at Caspian, his heart aching for the latter. It seems he still loves Nancy, even

after they were separated.

Suddenly, the young man said, “The car headed Northwest. That place’s rather remote.”

At that moment, everyone turned to the screen.

After pondering for a while, Jory announced, “No. I’m sure that I didn’t offend anyone.”

Although he had always been decisive and ruthless, he grew gentle ever since he married

Nancy.

The young man said, “However, there aren’t any security cameras there.”

Upon hearing his words, Joan’s eyes dimmed. Larry uttered, “The area in Northwest is

remote and the houses are rather few, so it should be easier to look for her.”

Caspian couldn’t bear to wait any longer, so he suggested, “Right then. Let’s go, now!”

Ever the calm man he was, Larry came up with an analysis. “Wait, Caspian. We have to lie

low since no one knows why he kidnapped Nancy. If money is all he wanted, he could’ve

contacted Jory. However, he didn’t, so Nancy could’ve offended someone.”

If it’s not about money and Jory did not offend anyone... then the reason for this kidnapping

could only be because of Nancy. They knew Nancy’s personality well.

She was a

domineering woman when it came to things she liked and the person she fancy.

In midst of the silence, Jory suggested, "Let's split up. Mr. Norton, Caspian and I would bring one group of men each and go there from different directions." Joan stood in front of Jory and insisted, "There's a direction left. So I'll go."

"I'll do it." Just when the others were hesitating to agree to Joan's request, a familiar voice sounded in the room.

"Dustin!" Jory shouted in surprise.

"Hey, don't worry. I'm here now." Dustin walked toward Jory and patted the latter's shoulder.

Then, he went to Joan, his gaze was gentle with a hint of longing mixed in as he stared at

her. Opening his arms slowly, he waited for Joan's hug.

The latter smiled and widened her arms to hug him. Larry's eyes dimmed seeing them being so close to each other.

"Why are you back?" Larry asked rudely as he pulled Joan to him and hugged her waist tightly.

"Joan's back, so why can't I?" Dustin's eyes were glued to Joan who was in Larry's arms, all while replying to him.

Larry glared at Dustin and clenched his fists.

"I called him here," Jory said.

The moment Jory knew Joan was alive, he informed Dustin about it.

Caspian reminded, "Alright, that's enough. Let's not get caught up in this matter. We have something more urgent to attend to."

Now that there were four men, they set off in all four directions.

Naturally, Joan followed Larry.

"Joan, it's late. Why don't I send you back home first?" Larry looked at her with concern.

However, Joan refused.

Nancy was important to her. It was the same as how Caspian was to Larry. As such, she could not bring herself to do nothing when her friend was in deep waters.

Ring! Ring!

Suddenly, Larry's phone rang. He took out his phone from his pocket and answered. It was

Jory. "Hello? Mr. Norton, we searched everywhere. Nancy's not here."

The man sounded

anxious as he voiced the bad news.

Soon after, Larry received calls from Caspian and Dustin. Turned out, their efforts were in

vain as well. This could only mean that Nancy was in the direction that Larry and Joan were

heading. Realizing this, Larry clenched his fists and furrowed his brows.

He wasn't afraid of getting hurt, but he didn't want Joan to be involved, as it might get

dangerous for her.

After all, no man could accept seeing the love of his life getting hurt.

He didn't wish for Joan to go with him. Nonetheless, he still asked for her opinion. With a

serious look, he said, "Joan, listen to me. Since Jory, Caspian, and Dustin said that they didn't

find Nancy, this must mean that she's where we're heading. It'll be dangerous. Are you sure

you want to go with me?"

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1887

Chapter 1887 Entering The Warehouse

Without a hint of hesitation, Joan replied, "Yes."

She wasn't doing this just for Nancy. It was for Larry, too.

Despite knowing that it was dangerous, she couldn't bring herself to leave Larry behind and

return to safety.

"Alright." Seeing how she was determined, Larry took her hand in his and handed something

to her.

"Here. This is a taser. Use it if someone attacks you. Remember, do not show any mercy to

them." His voice was cold as he shoved the taser into Joan's hand.

Since they had come this far, Joan knew she couldn't afford to show any mercy.

Later on, they went from house to house asking the residents about Nancy while showing

them her photo, but to no avail. Having searched high and low, their last ray of hope now resided in a small warehouse. The people there told them the warehouse had long since been abandoned. Thus, when Larry saw the dim lights in the warehouse, he decided to go in.

She must be in the warehouse!

He tightened his grip on Joan's hand, and she knew that they had come to the right place.

Suddenly, Joan whispered, "Ah, Larry. Wait a minute."

He looked at her in confusion.

"Let me make a call for safety purposes." With that, she dialed a number and placed her phone beside her ear.

She got straight to the point, "Hello, Caspian? There's a warehouse here. If you guys are done with the search, come straight to us. There's a high chance Nancy's here."

However, what she didn't know was that when the men had received their mission, they agreed to return to their original position and wait for the others to gather after finishing up their search. This was to prevent attracting unwanted attention, as their group was rather big.

"Joan!" Larry quickly gave Joan a nudge and motioned at her not to call Caspian here.

Seeing that, Joan hung up immediately. Although Caspian's EQ was quite low, Joan believed he would bring some men over to help them in no time.

Other than Larry, only two other men were with them. The others were arranged to follow

Jory, Caspian, and Dustin. So, Joan was rather concerned that they wouldn't be enough to take down the people who kidnapped Nancy.

They started approaching the small warehouse. Right when they were about to charge into the warehouse, Larry turned around suddenly to look at Joan.

“Joan, wait for us here and don’t come in. If we’re in danger, call for backup.” He looked at

her and was firm with his instructions.

Joan’s voice trembled as she replied, “No! Larry, I’m going with you!”

I finally regained my memories and returned to his side. I can’t just watch as he goes into

the lion’s den alone.

Larry grasped her hand and planted a kiss on her forehead. “Joan, calm down. You’re a

woman, and I’ll have to protect you if you go in. With that, I can’t go all out on them. So just

wait for me here, okay?”

Joan thought his words made sense, so she agreed. He’s right, I can’t drag him down.

“Okay. I’ll wait for you. But you must promise me that you’ll come out safely.” She gazed at

Larry with a worried expression.

God knows how many people are there in the warehouse!

“Don’t worry.” With that, Larry went into the warehouse with the two men behind him.

Thud! The door to the warehouse was kicked open, flinging it to the side.

As expected, there were a few lecherous-looking men in the warehouse surrounding a

pudgy man who was in the midst of molesting Nancy.

“Who the hell are you?” One of the men stood up and walked toward Larry.

“I’m Larry Norton,” Larry replied.

In an instant, the men shuddered and stepped backward. Everyone knew that Larry was

basically omnipotent in this city.

“Boss, he’s Larry Norton! We can’t afford to offend him. Let’s just go.”

A middle-aged man

leaned in and whispered to their leader.

The leader of the thugs gritted his teeth and looked at Nancy who was tied up at the side.

Walking toward the window, he started weighing the pros and cons.

Soon after, he lowered his voice and instructed, “See how many men they have and report

back to me.”

The man hurriedly ran out of the warehouse and came back soon after. He then whispered the information to his boss's ears.

Only three?

The boss scoffed inwardly.

"Well, well. The almighty Mr. Norton only brought two men with him."

The boss curled his lips in amusement.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1888

Chapter 1888 Fight

"Interesting." The boss rubbed his chin.

Nancy yelled, "Release me! Let me go! Larry, quick! Run away and don't mind me!"

Slap! The man beside her gave her a slap across the face.

Larry froze for a while before coming back to his senses, his usual composed expression was back on his face.

"What do you guys want?" he asked coldly.

"What else do we want other than money? As the saying goes, money talks." The boss gave his answer on purpose.

As expected, someone wanted to lay their hands on Nancy.

With this in his mind, Larry snorted.

"Release her immediately, and we won't take any action. However, if you guys want to drag this out, don't beg for our mercy later." Larry clenched his fists and laid out his warning.

Despite hearing that, the boss didn't seem to be terrified.

"What can the three of you do?" the boss scoffed and started picking on his fingers, looking at ease.

Just then, a young man standing behind Larry shouted, "W-Who said there's only three of us? W-We have a lot of men with us."

In an instant, laughter filled the warehouse.

The boss snickered, "Then why are you stuttering? Are you afraid?"

"Stop with the bullsh*t and let her go," Larry gritted his teeth.

Meanwhile, Joan, who was outside the warehouse, waited anxiously for Caspian's arrival. But after a long while, the latter was nowhere to be seen.

Even though only five minutes had passed since Larry and his men went into the warehouse, it felt like an eternity for her.

"I would advise you to mind your own business," the boss warned.

After scanning the surroundings, Larry noticed that the boss' boldness came from the

number of people on his side.

The middle-aged man whispered, "Boss, maybe we should..."

"Shut up! There are only three of them. What are you scared of?" The boss glared at Larry.

It seems they aren't going to release Nancy. Larry clenched his fists tight as he got ready to fight.

"Shut the door!" the boss commanded.

In an instant, the door to the warehouse was closed with a loud thud.

"Ah!" All of a sudden, Nancy screamed at the top of her lungs.

"You should take it as an honor that I'm touching you. How dare you bite me?" One of the

men slapped Nancy, causing her cheek to become swollen almost immediately.

"Stop!" Larry shouted coldly.

At that moment, the atmosphere turned cold as silence ensued in the warehouse. The boss'

men glared at Larry with hostility.

"Go get him!" Once the boss gave his command, each of the men took up bats from the

side and charged at Larry and his men.

Larry turned around and leaped before hurling a kick at them. The thugs collapsed to the

ground and fell unconscious. Although he was outnumbered, the bunch of untrained thugs

couldn't measure up to him.

Bang! Just when he was about to knock out every single one of them, he was hit by a

wooden bat from behind.

He slumped to the ground. Seeing this, the thugs began swinging their bats at Larry who

was on the verge of passing out from the impact. In an instant, bruises and wounds

appeared all over his body.

“Aren’t you good at fighting? Why are you not standing up?” The boss crouched in front of

Larry and sneered nastily.

Blood continued to drip out from the corner of his lips while his eyes went dull. Larry didn’t

have any energy left, and he couldn’t get himself to stand up.

“Beat him! Beat him to death!” The boss was ruthless.

Thunk! Thunk!

Larry curled up his body as the attacks continued to land on his body, from his head to his

shoulder, to his waist, sucking out every ounce of strength he had left.

“Joan...” he murmured.

However, no one could hear his voice, let alone his lover who he had left waiting outside.

Seeing Larry in pain, Nancy mustered her courage and shouted, “Stop! Stop beating him!

A**holes!”

“How dare you call us names? You must be bored, right? Come, let’s have fun together.”

With that, a long-haired man dragged Nancy to a corner.

“What are you trying to do?” Nancy shot the man a cold glare.

The long-haired man ignored her and started taking off his clothes.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1889

Chapter 1889 Caspian To The Rescue

Seeing this, anyone could have guessed what the man was trying to do.

Nancy hurriedly got

up, but the man pinned her down to the ground.

“Weren’t you being all regal and mighty earlier? I’ll show you the meaning of being weak.”

With that, the man reached out and started unbuttoning Nancy’s shirt.

“Let go of me, you a**hole!” Nancy shook her head and yelled.

Pieces by pieces, the long-haired man took off her clothes until all that was left was her

camisole and safety pants. Finally, with her hope extinguished, she stopped struggling.

Right when Nancy closed her eyes in despair, awaiting the humiliation that was about to

befall her, the warehouse’s door was kicked open.

“Stop right there, you scumbags!” Caspian stood at the entrance with a group of men

behind him.

At that moment, silence ensued in the warehouse as everyone stopped what they were doing.

Larry was lying on the ground lifelessly while Nancy leaned against the wall with her clothes disheveled. Having seen all this, anger swirled within Caspian who was standing at the door.

With a wave of his hand, the men behind him charged into the warehouse. He roared,

“Finish them off!”

“Larry!” Joan ran to Larry and hugged him gently.

Larry coughed weakly as he blinked to focus on the woman before him.

“Joan...” He reached out and touched her face gently.

In an instant, Joan’s face was smeared with Larry’s blood.

“Larry, hang in there! Please, live for me, okay?” Looking at Larry covered in wounds, she broke down in tears.

“You silly woman. I’m fine...” Suddenly, Larry closed his eyes and passed out.

“Larry? Larry!” Joan hugged him and cried out in agony.

In the meantime, Caspian went to Nancy’s side and took off his coat before draping it over

her body. “Nancy, wake up! It’s me, Caspian.”

Nancy opened her eyes slowly and saw Caspian. She called out to him weakly, “Caspian... I want to go home.”

At that moment, Caspian’s heart ached for her and he immediately carried her out of the warehouse.

In one of the ward at the hospital.

Nancy and Larry were still unconscious as they lay on the beds with IV drips stuck in their

veins. Tears were streaming down Joan’s cheeks as she sat beside them while Jory had a look of guilt on his face.

Larry always had the image of an indifferent man, coupled that with being the president of a company, he had never suffered such humiliation before. Seeing how he was beaten up,

Joan's heart tightened.

"Stop crying, Joan. It's okay. He'll be fine." Dustin patted Joan's shoulders gently.

"Then why isn't he waking up?" She gripped Larry's hand and stared at him, afraid that she would miss out on any of the man's movements.

Suddenly, Nancy yelled out in her dreams. "Don't! Please don't touch me! I beg of you..."

"Nancy, wake up! Nancy!" Jory nudged her.

Suddenly, Nancy jolted up on her bed with a thump.

After scanning her surroundings, she leaned against Jory's chest and burst into tears.

She cried out when she was reminded of the traumatic experience. "Jory, I had a nightmare.

Someone kidnapped me!"

Perhaps Nancy was too loud when she awoke because Larry regained his consciousness

soon after her.

"Larry, how are you? Are you feeling okay?" Joan leaned toward him and looked at him

anxiously the moment he opened his eyes.

Larry looked at her and smiled before taking her hand in his. "Don't worry. I'm okay."

Joan let out a sigh of relief.

"Caspian." Larry coughed as he called out to Caspian. The latter hurriedly dashed to his

front.

"Larry, don't worry. I've handed the thugs over to the cops, so everything is settled," Caspian

reported.

Larry turned to look at Joan, and she nodded in acknowledgment, proving Caspian's words

to be true.

If Jory and Dustin didn't come to the scene on time, Caspian could've dirtied his hands with

the blood of the thugs. After all, no one would have been able to keep their cool when they

saw the person they cared about being hurt.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1890

Chapter 1890 A Talk Between Two Men

“Good job, Caspian. As long as no one died, everything’s fine.” Larry patted Caspian’s shoulder, feeling relieved.

Knock. Knock.

Joan turned to look at the door, wondering who it could be.

The door to the ward was pushed open.

“Ms. Young!” When Joan saw who it was, she blurted in surprise.

Larry wanted to get up from the bed, but Delilah stopped him “Don’t. Just lie down.”

“Is everything alright?” Delilah looked at Larry in concern.

Larry nodded and smiled. Why is Ms. Young here?

“You young ones always lose your calm when this kind of thing happens.” Delilah pointed at the people in front of her.

Upon hearing her words, Joan and Larry lowered their heads in embarrassment.

Just then, the police captain came into the ward and called out to Delilah.

“Aunt.”

“Aunt, why didn’t you call me to pick you up?” The police captain had guilt written all over his face.

Hearing that, everyone in the ward was shocked. Joan glanced at the police officer and

looked at Delilah curiously. She wanted to say something but was at a loss for words.

“Come, let me introduce you. He is my nephew.” Delilah smiled.

Turned out, Delilah had found her family not long ago, but she didn’t leave the village.

Maybe it was because of her age that she didn’t want to move houses.

“Look for his help if you guys have any problems.” With that, she tapped on her nephew’s shoulder.

After a bit of chit-chat, everyone returned home. Before Delilah left, Larry asked her not to

tell Lucius about him getting injured because he didn’t want the child to worry.

“Promise me you won’t do this again. You scared me.” Joan pouted as she leaned against

Larry’s chest.

He caressed her hair, and his lips curled into a smile.

Days went by quickly after the incident. The woman who ordered the thugs to kidnap Nancy was taken into custody while Larry and Nancy were discharged from the hospital.

Everything was great, but Caspian still harbored hatred in his heart.

Ding, ding, ding...

Jory took out his phone and saw a familiar number on the screen.

After answering the call, he greeted, "Hello, Caspian?"

Caspian said coldly, "Jory, come out. I'm waiting at the restaurant in your company."

The way the man spoke made Jory's heart skip a beat.

It seems Caspian can be manly sometimes.

After hanging up, Jory took his coat and left his office.

At the restaurant, Jory and Caspian sat in a corner in the café. The two of them sat face to

face, and they both had stern expressions on their faces.

Caspian was the one to start the conversation and he said without hesitation, "Jory, you

know I don't like to beat around the bush. So, let's get straight to the point. I just want to

ask you this. Can you protect and take care of Nancy?"

On the way to the restaurant, Jory had guessed that Caspian had invited him out because of

this. He decided not to show any weakness.

"Caspian, it's my fault that I didn't protect Nancy. But, I'll make sure that this is the last time

she gets into danger." Mustering his courage, he looked at Caspian with determination.

He understood Caspian was doing this for the good of Nancy, so he wouldn't think that the

latter was jealous.

Caspian digested his words and kept silent. After taking a sip of his coffee, he stared at Jory

coldly as he enunciated his next words. "Jory, if there's a second time, I'll take Nancy back.

So please remember the words you said today."

Jory understood Caspian's words, so he swore to his promise in his heart.

In the office.

“Caspian, what’s the matter?” Larry looked at the man who had just returned with curiosity.

It must be something big, given how Caspian’s spacing out now and then.

“It’s nothing.” Caspian smiled awkwardly.

Seeing his reaction, Larry put down his documents and walked toward Caspian slowly. Even

if the latter didn’t wish to disclose the truth, Larry knew Nancy must had something to do with it.

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1891

Chapter 1891 Gabriella Is Here

“It’s okay. Nancy is fine, and that is the best silver lining there is,” said Larry while tapping

Caspian’s shoulder lightly.

Larry checked his ringing phone and picked it up immediately.

“So, uh, Dustin asked to meet up with me,” informed Joan softly.

Larry’s eyes dimmed upon hearing that.

Dustin, that a**hole. He’s just like a poltergeist that won’t go away! Why did he have to

come back when he already left the country?

Larry clenched his fists tightly before he asked grimly, “And?”

Joan knew the answer to her unspoken question when she heard Larry’s tone.

“And nothing. I’m not going to meet him,” Joan replied firmly.

A satisfied grin suddenly crept up on Larry’s lips.

Not bad. This woman learned her lesson.

He then cleared his throat a little.

“Actually, it’s fine if you want to meet up with him,” said the man.

This way, she won’t think that I’m petty and controlling.

Joan was dumbstruck by his .

“Okay,” said the woman before she hung up the call.

Beep! Beep! The busy tone was all that could be heard from the mobile phone, and Larry

was a little exasperated.

Bang! Someone suddenly flung the door open rudely.

“Sorry, Mr. Norton. We couldn’t stop him,” informed the receptionist guiltily with her head

down.

Larry waved at the receptionist to dismiss her.

“Lars, the employees of your company are getting more and more insolent. They won’t even let me in,” complained Gabriella in a coquettish voice that simply disgusted Larry.

Larry merely sneered.

“That’s because I told them to do so,” said the man mercilessly. Gabriella was slightly stunned, but she was quick to regain her composure.

“How have you been, Lars? I haven’t seen you in a while,” said Gabriella gently.

However, Larry continued reading his document, not even bothered to look at Gabriella. She

was a little hurt to see how distant the man standing before her was.

“I heard that Joan is back?” Gabriella changed the topic all of a sudden. Larry’s writing hand paused instantly upon hearing that question. How did she know that

Joan is back? Hasn’t she been overseas all this time? At that thought, Larry glared

suspiciously at the woman in front of him.

“Well, that’s great news. Congratulations,” said Gabriella through gritted teeth.

Darn it, Joan Watts. You just won’t leave, will you? How are you still alive after falling into the river?

Gabriella’s gaze was filled with malice and hostility.

“That’s right. Joan is back, but we’re still searching for the culprit and the mastermind behind the incident,” Larry deliberately declared.

Gabriella jolted in alarm. So they have been investigating the incident from all those years ago!

Looks like getting rid of the driver was a wise decision.

A vicious smile played on Gabriella’s lips.

“How’ve you been lately, Gabriella?” asked Larry to test the water.

To Gabriella, however, that was a sign of Larry caring for her.

“Well, I went on a vacation,” replied Gabriella delightedly.

Larry thought that something was off about that sentence. He knew Gabriella well, and it

was unlikely that she would stop her wicked schemes.

“What’s wrong, Lars? Did you miss me?” asked Gabriella. She suddenly wrapped her arms around the man’s neck.

Instantly, Larry flung her arms away and glared at her coldly.

Gabriella quickly tidied her clothes.

I knew it! This man just won’t bite the bait.

Naturally, fury rose in Gabriella’s heart, and the expression she wore on her face was ever so bitter.

Ring! Ring!

Gabriella’s heart skipped a beat when she checked her phone screen.

Why is he calling me all of a sudden? In an instance, Gabriella’s eyes dimmed.

“Hello?” answered Gabriella with great uncertainty.

“Hi. Uh, I heard that you’re back in the country. So am I. To be honest, I happen to be in a

bit of a financial muck lately...” the man said slowly.

At the end of the day, this man only ever calls me to get money!

“We had a deal! I’ve already paid you, so don’t call me again!” howled Gabriella angrily.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1892

Chapter 1892 Gabriella And Freya

“Have you forgotten that you were the one who insisted on murdering an innocent

woman?” threatened the man.

Gabriella scoffed as her expression darkened.

“Sorry, but that is no longer a murder case. She is back,” refuted

Gabriella without holding

back.

The man was stunned upon hearing that revelation.

“What did you say? But I saw that woman fall into the river with my own eyes!”

A cold glint flashed across Gabriella’s eyes.

“Since you failed at carrying out your task, why should I pay you?”

growled Gabriella before

she hung up the call.

On the other end of the line, the man’s features contorted in rage. He

clenched his fists and

looked out the window, lost in his thoughts.

There were times when people would abandon even their pride and honor just for money.

“We’ve got something, Larry,” Caspian whispered to Larry abruptly. Larry put his files down right away, and his expression was solemn when he turned to Caspian.

“Someone claimed to have inside knowledge of the accident back then. But he wants us to pay him in exchange for the information,” reported Caspian directly. He finally caved, huh? Larry grinned meaningfully.

“Pay him, but tell him that I want to see him in person. Offer him twice of what he asked for,” answered Larry firmly.

No one in the city knew anything about the accident from all those years ago, so to make a claim that bold meant that he was no ordinary person.

Caspian nodded before leaving. The sky was pitch black when Larry turned to the window, but a satisfied grin had shown up on his lips.

Bring it all on!

“What’s wrong, Larry? What are you thinking?” asked Joan while nudging Larry’s arm.

“I was just thinking about...” said Larry, who suddenly paused.

I better keep this a secret from her, or she might overthink it.

Larry kissed her forehead lightly with an adoring expression, and his eyes were filled with affection.

“How about we go home tomorrow?” asked Larry softly.

“Yeah, let’s go back tomorrow. It’s been a while since I last saw Lucius, and I miss him so much,” replied Joan. She hugged his waist tightly as if she was worried about him suddenly vanishing into thin air again.

“Okay, I’ll send you over tomorrow,” said Larry firmly as he looked at the woman in his arms.

Joan was taken aback and confused at the same time.

“Larry, aren’t you going with me?” asked Joan as she stared suspiciously at the man in front of her.

“I need to deal with some stuff over here first. But I’ll go to you as soon as everything is

settled,” promised Larry before he planted a soft kiss on her cheek.

Joan instantly looked a little down.

As promised, Larry took Joan back to the village the very next morning.

What he didn’t know, however, was that Gabriella was in the village at that moment as well.

“You’re Joan’s supervisor?” scoffed Gabriella as she checked the woman out.

Freya wouldn’t bat an eyelash even if angels visited from heaven, so a random woman from

the city definitely didn’t faze her. Some women made friends based on first impressions. If

they had a good feeling about that person, they would be friends.

Otherwise, they would

just treat the person as a stranger.

As Freya looked at the woman in front of her, her eyes shone with distaste before she

sipped some tea.

“What do you want?” demanded Freya arrogantly.

Her aura instantly shook Gabriella. She is nothing but a lowly supervisor from a tiny village!

What is she so proud about?

Gabriella sneered at that thought.

Freya had already known that Selena was actually Joan and that Joan had amnesia some

time ago. She was also aware that Joan’s amnesia was the reason why Delilah ended up

calling her Selena.

“I heard that you made things difficult for Joan when she was working here,” Gabriella

brought the topic up deliberately as her eyes shone with amusement.

Is this woman here to help that girl get justice?

Freya snorted while distaste remained burning in her eyes.

“So what? Are you here to avenge her?” asked Freya, who never bothered beating around

the bush.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1893

Chapter 1893 Larry Stayed

Gabriella suddenly felt like she made the right decision when she saw how straightforward the woman in front of her was.

“Not at all. I’m actually here to help you,” replied Gabriella.

Upon hearing that, Freya lifted her head slightly. She stared curiously at the woman in front

of her because she had no idea what the latter’s agenda was.

“I’ll be honest with you. Joan snatched my man from me, so I want her to suffer,” explained

Gabriella while a hostile aura emanated from her.

Freya figured everything out right away.

Ah, so she’s an ally.

Instantly, her lips curled up into a gleeful grin.

My, oh my, Joan. You’re running out of luck. Freya clenched her fists tightly.

“I don’t need your help,” answered Freya suddenly.

That response stunned Gabriella.

She truly is something else. Gabriella grinned at that thought.

“Nothing in this world comes free. Be honest with me if you want my help. I don’t cooperate

with crooks,” said Freya directly.

Gabriella’s eyes lit up instantly.

“Hello, my name is Gabriella Ward. I used to be Joan’s BFF....” introduced Gabriella.

The two ladies talked for quite some time before they went back home.

And just like that, they joined forces.

“Mom, you’re finally home!” called out Lucius as soon as Joan got out of the car, dashing

right into her arms.

Joan stroked the kid’s hair. She sounded a little apologetic when she said softly, “Good boy,

I’m home.”

“Mom, look! I won that trophy in a school competition,” shared Lucius as he pointed at the

trophy on the wall.

The expression on both Larry’s and Joan’s faces was a mixture of heartache and joy.

“That’s amazing. My Lucius is awesome! Let’s have a celebration feast tonight!” exclaimed

Joan.

Hearing that great news, the boy jumped in excitement.

Looking at the kid before him, Larry surprised himself when he felt the reluctance to leave.

He checked his phone and hesitated for a moment before he hung up the call.

“Dad, are you busy?” asked Lucius. It seemed like the boy didn’t want Larry to leave.

“Oh, I’m not that swamped,” answered Larry with a smile.

“Then can you stay?” asked the kid while swaying the man’s arm.

Larry deliberated before he answered, “Well, I guess I can stay for the day.”

Disappointment flashed past Lucius’ eyes.

That means Dad will be leaving tomorrow...

“Grandma, you’re finally here. We were waiting for you,” said Lucius as he ran to Delilah.

Delilah stared at the kid in puzzlement as she had no idea what he was talking about.

“Mom said that she’s taking us to dinner tonight,” Lucius revealed with a mischievous expression.

Delilah turned to Joan, who nodded with a smile.

“When did you two come back? Why didn’t you call ahead? I didn’t get to make any preparations,” complained Delilah.

“What is there to prepare? We’re a family,” replied Joan before she went to give Delilah a hug.

Delilah was delighted as she patted Joan’s back lightly.

Joan was willing to return to the village even after regaining her memory, and that, to

Delilah, was the best gift she had ever received.

A contented smile crept up on her face.

“Alright, let’s go. We’ll have dinner at the restaurant on the other side of the village,”

suggested Delilah while tapping Lucius’ shoulder.

With that, the family departed happily.

It was true when they said that no one could have the best of everything.

“Come now. Slow down. Don’t gobble up your food,” Delilah nagged in the private room

while getting more food for the kid.

“Okay, but it’s so delicious. Grandma, you should try this,” suggested Lucius.

Joan smiled when she saw the kid eating away happily.

Although Larry, who was sitting beside her, seemed to be in a good mood, Joan could tell

that he was preoccupied because he kept checking his phone.

Ring! Ring! Ring! Larry’s phone had been ringing time and again.

Joan finally couldn’t hold it in anymore.

“Larry, don’t hang up anymore. Just answer the call,” urged Joan when she saw the man’s

phone vibrating.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1894

Chapter 1894 Larry left

Something serious must’ve happened for Caspian to call so relentlessly.

Larry swept his gaze across the others before he grabbed his phone and left the private

room.

“Larry, that man is being unreasonable. He insisted on meeting you tonight,” reported

Caspian anxiously.

Shifting his gaze to the people in the private room, he landed a punch on the wall in

frustration.

Why is the timing so bad?

“Can’t we postpone until tomorrow?” Larry lowered his voice.

“He is persistent about meeting tonight. He said this is the only chance we have,” answered

Caspian anxiously.

“Mom, what’s wrong with Dad?” asked Lucius suddenly.

Joan paused for a moment, but she was quick to regain her composure.

“Be good, Lucius. Your dad is just a little busy,” coaxed Joan before she got some delicacies

for the boy.

Lucius turned gloomy while staring at Larry’s empty seat.

“Does he have to leave tonight?” asked Lucius while staring at Joan with his big, round eyes.

It was apparent that he was reluctant to part with Larry.

“Maybe, but don’t worry. He will be back to play with you as soon as he is done with work,”

replied Joan with a smile.

As expected, that sentence worked wonders, and Lucius got excited immediately.

At that moment, Larry hung up the call and returned to the private room with a troubled look.

Delilah broke the silence, "Mr. Norton, if there is something urgent to tend to at the office, please feel free to go."

Larry had been on the phone for so long that one could guess that something grave must have happened.

With an apologetic expression, Larry turned to Joan and Lucius.

"It's fine, Dad. Just do whatever you need to do. Mom said that you will be back as soon as you're done working," Lucius persuaded.

Larry grinned upon seeing how understanding the boy was.

He exchanged some pleasantries with them before leaving the restaurant. Soon, only three of them were left in the private room, and silence ensued.

"Come now, let's eat up. Lucius, your mom took you all the way here to celebrate your victory, so you must eat more, okay?" said Delilah while grinning.

"Okay..."

As Delilah and Lucius were chatting away, Joan excused herself to go to the washroom.

"Hey, Larry. It's late, so be careful on the road, okay?" Joan reminded.

"Don't worry. I'll be fine."

The two of them hung up after talking for a while.

For some unknown reason, Joan had been feeling uneasy ever since Larry left. Her heart was pounding fast as well.

I must be overthinking it. Joan washed her face before existing the washroom.

A bald drunkard with a greasy face suddenly showed up in front of her. Joan's guard came

up, and she tried to walk past him, but just as she turned, the man deliberately stumbled and fell onto Joan.

"Hey, sir." Joan hurried over to help the guy up.

“Who the hell do you think you are? How dare you trip me?” howled the man.

Joan saw how drunk the man was, so she took a deep breath, trying to avoid arguing with him.

“Sorry, please be careful,” said Joan as she helped the man up. She planned on leaving immediately after, but the man pushed her and pinned her against the wall.

“What are you doing?” demanded Joan cautiously as she stared at the man in front of her.

I don’t recognize him, and I don’t think he’s from this village.

“You tripped me, and you think you can get away with it just like that?” growled the man as

he slowly got closer to Joan.

As the man stared at the innocent-looking Joan who looked like a harmless bunny, a wicked grin crept up on his lips.

“Sir, we’re in public,” reminded Joan.

The man merely sneered in disdain.

“So what? It’s an honor for a secluded village like yours to have me as a guest,” replied the

man before he flexed his arms and stroked his chin. “At least this trip isn’t a waste, after all.

Who would’ve thought that a place like this would have such a beautiful woman?”

Joan was tempted to slap the man across the face when she heard his repulsive words.

“Excuse me, mister, but my son is waiting for me, and I have to go,” Joan quickly said,

preparing to leave.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1895

Chapter 1895 The Bald Man

“Your son? You have a son? That’s too bad, but it’s fine. I can afford to feed both you and

your son. Hahaha!” said the man.

Joan clenched her fists as anger burned within her.

She didn’t want to waste any time with that man, so she pushed him into the washroom

with all her might. Immediately after, Joan left and walked back to the private room.

“Why were you gone for so long? Is everything alright?” asked Delilah, who looked at Joan worriedly.

“I’m fine. I just bumped into a weird dude,” replied Joan with a smile. Meanwhile, the man in the washroom was leaning against the wall. It took him some effort to stand up and walk to the reception counter.

“What is wrong with you people? Hurry up and find her for me or I will tear this place apart!” howled the bald man.

The manager rushed over and lowered his head humbly as the bald man reprimanded him.

“Sir, please calm down. There is always room for discussion,” said the manager to diffuse the situation.

“What is there to discuss? Hand her over right now, and I will let this matter go. If you don’t, then there is nothing left to discuss,” the man bellowed as he slammed his palm on the table.

“Mom, what is all that noise out there?” asked Lucius curiously while looking at Joan.

Joan listened closely and soon realized what was going on.

Looks like the drunkard is making a scene again.

“I did it, so I will be responsible,” said Joan, who suddenly showed up in front of that man.

“That’s her! Boys, take her away,” ordered the man as he pointed at Joan.

A few subordinates rushed over and grabbed Joan’s arm.

“Let me go! What do you think you’re doing?” demanded Joan as she struggled with a cold glint in her eyes.

“Let go of my mom!” roared Lucius, who suddenly ran over to them. Slap!

Someone slapped the kid mercilessly across his face. Lucius collapsed onto the floor and

covered his cheek with his hands. His eyes seemed a little glazed over.

“Lucius!” shouted Joan.

“This has nothing to do with you, kid. Leave right now!” growled the bald man before he kicked Lucius.

Spectators started gathering then.

“Who the hell is that? I can’t believe he’d stoop so low as to hit the kid...”

“I know, right? I don’t think he’s from our village. We don’t have unscrupulous hooligans like him.”

The people gossiping behind the bald man were ruthless with their words.

Immediately, the bald man turned around and glared fiercely at the women before warning,

“Shut your mouths if you want to remain in one piece!”

The women backed away instantly.

Freya was lurking in a corner, grinning in satisfaction as she witnessed everything.

My, my, Joan. Aren’t you supposed to be very capable? I’d like to see how you’re gonna get out of this now!

Freya was hiding behind the crowd and watching the show.

“What are you waiting for? Take her away,” ordered the bald man impatiently.

“Wait!” shouted Delilah all of a sudden.

“Who said you’re allowed to take her away?” asked Delilah as she glared at the man in front of her.

The bald man turned around and scanned Delilah from head to toe. His eyes shone with disrespect as he threw her a discriminating look before he prepared to leave.

“What? Are you the uncouth bastard of a wh*re? Didn’t your parents teach you basic moral principles?” insulted Delilah loudly.

Those words got everyone in the area flabbergasted.

Everyone knew that despite being comparatively unknown, Delilah was still a respected figure in the village.

“You think you can intimidate me? You are nothing but an old hag!” growled the bald man

before he spat on the floor.

What a disrespectful man! Delilah was instantly infuriated.

"I promise that you meet your demise today if you take her away," threatened Delilah confidently.

Joan was stunned while the spectators gasped.

Delilah rarely stood up to fight, but when she did, all hell would break loose.

The bald man turned to Delilah and scoffed as he walked toward her.

Despite his menacing aura and his cold glare, Delilah remained unfazed. She even lifted her chin with a domineering expression.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1896

Chapter 1896 The Secret Weapon Of Delilah Young

This old hag has the guts to go against me in the open?

The bald man circled Delilah a few times before taunting, "What are you going to do? Kill

me? You really are funny, you old hag. How old are you? Seventy? Eighty?

You can't even walk properly anymore."

Delilah did not respond to his insults. Instead, she got her phone out and dialed a number.

"I have a bit of a situation here," said Delilah. Her conversation lasted less than two minutes.

When the bald man saw how confident Delilah was, he grew curious and wanted to know

just how much trouble an elderly woman like her could be.

Freya, who was hiding in the corner, started panicking because she had no idea who Delilah called earlier.

Bang! Someone kicked the door to the restaurant down.

Over ten men walked over to Delilah respectfully.

"Caspian?" blurted Joan in astonishment.

"Ms. Young, Joan," greeted Caspian. He then went for the bald man right away.

Instantly, the bald man was overcome with fear.

It turned out that Larry was so renowned that everyone knew his bodyguard, Caspian, as well.

“Who’s trying to kidnap my boss’ wife?” demanded Caspian. Everyone turned quiet as no one dared to speak up or answer his question.

The bald man’s subordinates who were holding Joan’s arms let go of her immediately before turning to him for his help. Unfortunately, most would choose to protect only themselves when in danger.

“Err... this is just a misunderstanding. My men were too dumb to understand my orders. I-I’ll teach them a lesson as soon as we get back,” answered the bald man to break the silence.

The spectators scoffed. He’s blatantly lying!

“Is that so?” questioned Caspian. He turned around and slowly approached the man’s subordinates. His gaze was as ferocious as that of a wild animal while he cracked his knuckles.

The subordinates were so scared that they trembled uncontrollably.

“No, that is not true. It’s his fault! He told us to grab the girl!” said one of the men before he and the others pointed at the bald man in unison.

At a loss for words, the bald man scratched the back of his head awkwardly.

Delilah seemed especially displeased when she saw everything playing out in front of her. We’re lucky that Larry sent Caspian over to keep us safe in case anything happened.

“Take him away,” ordered Caspian. The men standing beside the entrance walked over to the bald man immediately.

“No, wait. I didn’t do it on purpose. I didn’t know that she’s Mr. Norton’s wife. Please let me go just this once,” begged the bald man, who suddenly knelt down in front of Caspian.

Right then, Joan stepped up and spoke to Caspian, who then nodded in response.

“Fine, I will let you go this one time, and only because Joan spoke on your behalf. If you ever

try something like that again, I will kill you, regardless of who you're going after!" Caspian threatened.

Without wasting a second, the bald man and his subordinates rushed out of the restaurant as quickly as they could.

The spectators dispersed as well, and the only ones left were Delilah, Joan, and Caspian.

Someone had already taken Lucius to the clinic by then.

"Caspian, what are you doing here?" asked Joan as she tapped the man's shoulder.

"Mr. Norton asked him to come over," replied Delilah nonchalantly.

"Seriously, Joan, just how many people are after you? They're bullying you all the way from

the big city to the small village," teased Caspian. "Larry called me just before he went back

to the office. He asked me to keep you safe and gave me Ms. Young's number."

Joan suddenly felt all warm and fuzzy. Larry is so attentive and caring. But this incident is just a coincidence, right?

"Alright, everything's fine now. Thank you for dropping by. By the way, is Larry alright? I

noticed that you called him a few times earlier on," Joan asked while looking at Caspian worriedly.

He hesitated for a moment. Given Joan's reaction, it is likely that she doesn't know what

Larry is doing.

"He's fine. What could faze Larry Norton anyway? Come on, let me take both of you home,"

Caspian changed the topic right away.

"No, let's go to the clinic. Lucius is there," reminded Delilah.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1897

Chapter 1897 Witness

Upon hearing that, Joan jolted into action, dashing to Caspian's car right away.

"Hurry up, Caspian. Why are you still standing there? My son is hurt! We have to hurry!"

Joan shrieked.

Ring! Ring! Ring!

Joan checked her phone before picking the call up.

“Are you home yet? Is everything alright?” asked Larry in a worried tone. It was obvious that he didn’t know what had happened in the restaurant.

“Yeah, it’s all good. We just finished our meal, so we are heading home now...”

“How is my son?” asked Joan nervously while staring at the kid in front of her.

Lucius, whose eyes were closed, was lying on the bed with dried blood at the corner of his lips.

When he saw the injured kid, Caspian’s eyes burned with fury.

“Joan, what happened?” asked Caspian with his fists clenched, guilt washing over his heart.

Larry had instructed him to take care of all three of them. Yet, the kid is injured. How the f*ck am I going to explain myself to Larry?

“Your son needs to be transferred to a better hospital. It’d be best if he could do a full body checkup. Mr. Norton sent his men over some time ago, and they gave us some equipment, but our facilities are still limited,” replied the doctor calmly.

Joan’s heart ached when she saw the terrible shape the boy was in.

This is all my fault! Joan knocked herself on the head as hard as she could.

“Calm down, Joan. Let’s take the kid to the hospital,” said Caspian while patting the woman’s shoulder to comfort her.

After Joan nodded in agreement, Caspian picked the kid up and ran to his car.

“Don’t tell Larry about this just yet, Caspian. I know that he is busy with something important lately,” instructed Joan.

“Understood,” replied Caspian while keeping his eyes on the road.

At that moment, dim lighting and soft music filled a café. It was already late into the night,

so there weren’t many customers there. Larry sat in a rather noticeable spot inside the café

as he waited for the other party’s arrival.

It took some time before a man in a black cap finally showed up in front of Larry.

“Hello, are you Mr. Norton?” asked the man.

Larry stood up slowly to examine the man in front of him.

The man had a scar on his face, which made him stand out among the crowd.

“Yes, I am. Have a seat,” replied Larry calmly.

“Did you bring the money?” asked the man right away.

Looks like he is in dire need of cash. Larry sipped some coffee and stared out the window.

“No.”

The man lost his temper instantly, and he sprang to feet while growling, “You tricked me!”

Larry merely sneered.

I had to rush over from the restaurant in the village, so how could I have the cash with me?

“Calm down. I wasn’t in the city when I got the call and had to rush over from somewhere

else. That’s why I don’t have the money with me,” explained Larry.

“Then why the f*ck did you come and meet with me?” the man bellowed as he suppressed

the swirling emotions within him, trying not to attract any attention to himself.

With a grin, Larry signaled the man to have a seat so that they could have a proper chat.

“I am a businessman, so naturally, my guard is always up. How can I be certain that you’re

the culprit who caused the incident all those years ago?”

“I am,” replied the man eagerly.

Then, he quickly added, “No, I don’t mean that I am the culprit. I’m saying that I am the

witness who saw the entire incident and caught a glimpse of the real culprit.”

The man never actually admitted to being the culprit, but Larry didn’t think that the man

was just a bystander who happened to be in the right place at the right time either. Hence,

Larry asked that question to test the guy.

Looks like I found the criminal.

At that thought, Larry scoffed.

“How about this? Tell me what you saw in detail, and if your description is accurate, I will

believe you,” said Larry to mislead the guy.

The guy proceeded to recount everything about the incident all those years ago. He was focused and engaged. Only someone who experienced this firsthand will react this intensely when recalling the incident. Not even a witness could describe everything in such detail.

“So? How is it? Was I right?” challenged the man proudly as he looked at Larry.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1898

Chapter 1898 Hospitalized

“Yes,” said Larry before he nodded.

Except you don’t have any evidence! That was the most troubling bit for Larry.

“When will I get my money?” demanded the man impatiently.

What a money-minded fellow. On the bright side, that makes him a good bait to catch the big fish.

“Mr. Norton, you should know that everything I said is just a small portion of what I know.

There is so much more information that I can share with you,” informed the man as he tapped his fingers on the table.

Larry knew that there had to be a mastermind pulling the strings from behind the scenes.

“How about this? Leave your number with me. I will pay you tomorrow,” replied Larry as he

shot a look over at the man.

The man’s eyes instantly lit up.

“You’re very decisive, Mr. Norton,” praised the man while slamming the table in delight.

After leaving his contact details, the man adjusted his clothes and scanned his surroundings

before leaving. Larry’s lips curved into a grin as he watched the man with the black cap leaving.

Gabriella Ward, you had better not be the one behind all this or you’ll be doomed this time!

A menacing glint flashed past Larry's eyes.

There was a saying that all businessmen were cunning and would get quotes from different suppliers before deciding who they would cooperate with. Admittedly, there was some truth in that saying.

"What did you just say? You went to talk to Mr. Norton?" shouted Gabriella. Her mind was in disarray as she sprang up instinctively.

"Well, you refused to pay me, so I had to find someone else," dissed the man.

Bang! Gabriella landed a blow on the wall, and blood was dripping down her fingers.

"Abide by the rules if you want to continue working in this industry. Men like you should know all about those unspoken rules," growled Gabriella as her gaze turned cold.

As the man scoffed, his eyes were filled with distaste.

"Rules are made to be broken. Besides, our business deal concluded ages ago, and you have no right to stop me from working with Mr. Norton now. If you have nothing else to say, I'm hanging up," replied the man.

The truth was, the man didn't want to work with Larry either. If the latter were to discover the entire truth of the incident, the former would also be in trouble. In fact, the man was only doing that to force Gabriella's hand and get her to pay him.

"Wait." Gabriella finally caved, asking, "How much do you need?"

"Two million," answered the man directly.

My luck has been in the dumps lately. I lost all my money gambling, and I've got debts to pay!

Clenching her fists, Gabriella exuded a menacing aura.

"What the hell? Do you take me as a charity organization? I may have made some money overseas, but I worked hard for every single penny! They didn't just fall from the sky, you know?" shouted Gabriella.

If my family hadn't chased me out, I wouldn't have ended up in this wretched state!

Anxiety started welling up inside Gabriella's heart.

"One and a half million," countered the man. "I will not go any lower. We have no reason to work together if you can't even pay that."

"Fine! Deal!" replied Gabriella hurriedly.

A wicked smile showed up on the man's lips.

So she still has some money with her. I might be able to con even more out of her in the future. The man grinned with amusement as a devious glint flashed past his eyes.

Gabriella hung up quickly before she grabbed her bag and headed to the ATM.

I have to get this done immediately, but if this happens again, I will kill that man!

Larry drove to the village as soon as he left the café.

What he didn't know was that Joan and the others were already in the hospital in the city.

"How is my son?" asked Joan nervously while staring at the doctor.

"He's fine, but he needs to rest. Don't let him study first for the time being," replied the doctor.

Delilah was starting to get anxious. Looks like the attack impacted his brain.

"Please follow me to collect his medicine," instructed the doctor to Joan.

Joan nodded and quickly followed him out of the room.

"You're his mother. How did you let a kid that young get hurt so badly? Don't let him overexert his mind for the time being, or there will be complications in the future," reminded the doctor as he looked at Joan solemnly.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1899

Chapter 1899 Wounded

"What complications?" asked Joan, who was tearing up a little.

"From now on, he has to strike a balance between studying and playing. You must not let him overexert his mind, or he will develop a headache. He'll recover eventually if he rests up, though," replied the doctor.

Instantly, Joan's eyes glazed over.
At that moment, Delilah was standing by the door. Although she couldn't hear what the doctor said, she could tell from Joan's expression that things were bad. "Mom! Don't hurt my mom!" murmured Lucius as he shook his head with his eyes closed while lying on the bed.
"Lucius, wake up. I'm right here," Joan hurriedly comforted him.
"Mom!" blurted the kid. All of a sudden, his eyes flung open, and he sprang up but quickly fell back down and closed his eyes. He's having another nightmare.
Joan held the kid's hand tightly as regret and heartbreak filled her eyes. "Ms. Young," greeted Joan in a trembling voice.
Delilah walked to the young lady and gently stroked her hair before sighing aloud.
"It's fine. He'll recover," said Delilah to offer some comfort.
Caspian's eyes contained a hint of sorrow, seeing the scene before him. "Hello, Caspian? What is going on? Didn't I tell you to stay in the village? Why is the place empty?" asked Larry anxiously.
Caspian hesitated for a moment but ultimately decided to tell Larry everything. After all, the former had asked the doctor about Lucius' injuries, which turned out to be more serious than expected.
"What? At the hospital? Wait right there," instructed Larry before he hung up and turned his steering wheel to change course.
Everyone in the ward had their eyes on Lucius, and nobody knew what to say. All they could do was wait for the kid to wake up.
Bang! Someone flung the door open.
"What happened?" demanded Larry, who dashed to the bed. He caressed the boy's hair and turned to his bodyguard, growling, "Caspian!"
"I-I arrived late, Larry," replied Caspian with his head down.
Larry turned to the kid before he shifted his gaze to Joan and Delilah. Both ladies had reddened eyes, and it was obvious that they were crying.

“Joan,” said Larry. He held her tightly to try to comfort her.
“This is all my fault. I’m the reason Lucius is so badly injured!” cried Joan, who was in Larry’s arms.

The agony Joan was in, the boy’s injury, the silence of the elderly woman... Everything was breaking Larry’s heart.

“Calm down, Joan. Lucius will be fine. I’ll make sure of it,” promised Larry before he ran out of the room.

“Doctor, please administer the best medicine and use the best facilities. You must heal that boy,” requested Larry in a panic.

The doctor looked at the man standing in front of him, and the regal aura of the stranger told the doctor that the man was someone important. Hence, the doctor hesitated for a

moment before finally replying, “There is a specialist who lives overseas. My recommendation is that you take the kid to him.”

“No problem!” replied Larry right away.

No matter where the doctor is, I will get him to treat Lucius even if it means exhausting my wealth!

Joan turned to her ringing phone, and her eyes lit up upon seeing the caller ID.

“Hi Joan, are you free tomorrow? Let’s meet up,” suggested Dustin.

“Yeah, I’m free. I need to talk to you, actually,” Joan quickly replied.

Hearing how anxious she was made Dustin feel uncomfortable.

“What is it? Did something happen to you?” asked Dustin immediately.

“I...” Joan choked up on her tears, but she tried to reel her emotions in.

Dustin’s eyes dimmed on the other end of the line. She is definitely crying! The man

clenched his fists tightly and prayed that he could hear Joan’s voice soon.

“Uh, let’s talk about it tomorrow,” added Joan before she hung up.

The busy tone from the phone stunned Dustin a little, and an uneasiness overcame him.

The next day, the morning sunrays seeped through the window and warmed the room up,

but Joan still felt like she was in a freezer. The child remained unconscious on the bed, and neither Delilah nor Joan had a wink of sleep the night before. They had been staying guard beside Lucius the entire time while Larry got in touch with the expert from overseas.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1900

Chapter 1900 Can Dustin Help

“Mom, Grandma,” called out Lucius as he slowly opened his eyes.

“Lucius!”

Joan and Delilah yelped in surprise at the same time.

“I’m fine. Don’t worry. After all, I’m a boy,” Lucius comforted them while forcing out a smile.

Hearing that, Joan couldn’t hold it in anymore. She buried her head in the bed and sobbed.

“Don’t cry, Mom. See? I’m fine,” said Lucius. He reached out to stroke Joan’s hair gently.

Joan quickly wiped her tears away and forced out a smile before she turned to the kid on the bed.

“You must be famished, Lucius. What would you like to have? I’ll cook for you,” Joan said softly.

“I want the meatloaf you and Grandma make,” replied Lucius weakly.

“Okay, no problem.” Joan quickly nodded.

When Larry arrived at the hospital, he had the doctor reassign Lucius to the VIP room.

That room had amazing facilities, and one could cook and do laundry in there. In fact, it was not that much different from a house.

Lucius rested on the bed as he watched Joan and Delilah busying away. A faint grin popped up on his lips.

“Where’s Dad?” asked Lucius all of a sudden.

“I’m here, Lucius. How are you feeling?” asked Larry, who suddenly entered the room.

“I’m fine, Dad,” replied Lucius with a smile.

Tears welled up in Joan’s eyes once more when she saw that there were still traces of blood at the corner of the child’s lips.

Lucius has always been so stubborn. He refuses to admit it even when he is in pain. That was

why Joan had always treasured him.

Larry sat beside the bed and chatted with the kid while Joan and Delilah prepared the

meatloaf at the side.

That was the life Lucius had always wanted—being with his parents and grandmother. He

wished for nothing more than everyone living together blissfully.

“Come now. The meatloaf is ready,” announced Joan. She was quick to place a serving right

in front of Lucius.

“Can we eat together?” asked Lucius eagerly as he stared at the three of them.

“Yeah, let’s eat together,” replied Larry, who went and got himself a serving as well.

The three adults sat beside Lucius and ate away. The atmosphere was so joyous that it was

as though they weren’t in the hospital but at home instead.

Later on, Joan seemed a little uneasy as she waited in the corner of a restaurant with dim

lighting.

“Joan, what got you here so early?” asked Dustin in puzzlement as he stared at the woman

in front of him.

“Oh, I’m free today, so I came earlier,” replied Joan while grinning awkwardly.

Dustin could tell exactly how Joan was feeling at that moment.

“Joan, if you trust me, feel free to share your problem with me,” said Dustin with a sincere

look on his face.

He noticed her dark eye circles and pale face, and he would never believe it even if she said

that she was fine.

“Then I’ll be frank with you, Dustin. Someone gave Lucius a hard slap earlier, which

damaged his brain. According to the doctor, all we can do now is let him recuperate,”

replied Joan.

Dustin learned all about Joan's life in the village from Nancy, so he knew just how important Lucius was to Joan.

"How about this? I'll go examine him now, and if things really are out of hand, we'll take him overseas to receive treatment," suggested Dustin determinedly.

Joan instantly sighed a breath of relief upon seeing Dustin's serious and worried expression.

As a doctor himself, he definitely knows a lot of good local doctors as well as international ones. So he should be able to help, right? Clenching her fists, Joan's eyes shone with anticipation when she looked at Dustin.

The two of them arrived at the hospital soon after.

Dustin went to talk to Lucius' doctor right away to better understand the boy's condition. As expected, the local medical equipment and resources were limited, so they had difficulty treating Lucius. Dustin fished his phone out of his pocket right away and made a call.

Half an hour later, when he went to the boy's room, a hint of sadness crept up on his face upon seeing the tiny figure on the bed.

"Ms. Young," greeted Dustin.

Previously, Dustin met Delilah when Larry was injured and hospitalized, so they were familiar to each other.

"Dustin, you're here," said Delilah in a frail voice.

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1901

Chapter 1901 They Left

Lucius' condition got both Delilah and Joan so worried that they hadn't been eating and sleeping well. As a result, they both looked haggard.

"Don't worry, Ms. Young. I've already gotten in touch with a doctor from another country.

We can leave tonight," informed Dustin while checking on the kid.

Delilah was a little surprised as she didn't expect the man in front of her to work that

efficiently.

“Joan, do you want to leave tonight or tomorrow?” asked Dustin softly. Joan immediately turned her attention to the boy on the bed. He might have a better

chance of recovering if we head over earlier.

“Let’s go today!” replied Joan firmly.

With that, Dustin immediately bought a few air tickets.

When Larry went to the hospital, he realized that the place was empty, and no one was around.

“Hello, may I know where the patient staying in the room on the top floor has gone to?”

asked Larry in a worried tone.

“Oh, you mean the patient in the VIP room?” said the nurse calmly.

“They got the paperwork

done and left this morning. But they seemed to be in a hurry and left a lot of things behind.”

Larry was instantly stunned.

Why didn’t anyone tell me that they were leaving the hospital?

Larry quickly got his phone out and made a call.

“Sorry, the number you have dialed is unreachable...”

Both Joan’s and Delilah’s phones were turned off.

“Hey Caspian, have you seen Joan? Or Ms. Young and Lucius?” asked Larry as soon as a

connection was established.

“Aren’t they in the hospital?” blurted Caspian.

Immediately, Larry became panic-stricken.

Slam! Someone kicked down the door to the doctor’s office.

“Where are they? Where did they go?” demanded Larry as he clutched the doctor’s arm.

“Wow, calm down. They went overseas to get treatment for the kid.

Didn’t Ms. Watts tell

you about it?” asked the doctor curiously.

Larry finally understood what happened. Dustin dropped by.

“Did a man stop by today?” interrogated Larry while glaring at the doctor.

“Yeah. Isn’t that your friend? He seems like a professional in the medical field,” replied the

doctor nonchalantly.

Larry left the doctor’s office right away.

Bang! He landed a blow on the wall, and blood dripped down from his fist.

Why didn't they tell me? Larry's gaze instantly turned cold.

He stayed up all night for the child. He found the best doctor and the best hospital, then made all the necessary arrangements. Yet, they left without saying a word!

"Larry!" Caspian ran over while panting for breath.

"We just got news from the airport. Someone saw Joan, Ms. Young, Lucius, and..." Caspian

trailed off. A glint of hesitation flashed past his eyes.

"And Dustin," said Larry through gritted teeth.

Caspian was momentarily stunned, but he soon regained his composure.

"I will buy the air ticket for you right away," replied Caspian, who was fishing his phone out of his pocket.

"There's no need for that," said Larry nonchalantly. There wasn't even a hint of emotion in his voice at that moment.

Yet, Caspian felt that Larry seemed even scarier that way.

He knew that his boss was truly infuriated.

"How did the investigation on the man go?" asked Larry to change the topic.

They made a deal last night, and he agreed to pay the witness of the accident on that day.

Yet, the witness suddenly ignored all of his calls and deliberately went into hiding. All that got Larry a little confused.

"There's no progress at the moment. We tracked his phone down, but it was in a trash can," replied Caspian.

Looks like he was offered a better deal.

Larry's eyes instantly turned dimmer.

"Focus on this guy for now. I've already sent his photo to you, and if I'm right, the mastermind must've paid him off again," replied Larry as he narrowed his eyes and stared out the window.

"Understood!" replied Caspian before he turned around and left.

Joan, why didn't you wait for me? Do you trust Dustin more than me?

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1902

Chapter 1902 On Foreign Soil

Larry clenched his fists tightly. His blood oozed out of his fingers and fell onto the floor.

“Joan, have you called Mr. Norton and told him about this?” asked Delilah when they were already on the plane.

Joan was petrified. It turned out that she had forgotten all about it because they left in such a hurry.

“It’s fine. I’ll let him know after we touch down,” replied Joan with a smile.

Meanwhile, Dustin sat beside her with his eyes closed as if he was deep in thought.

The plane landed soon after, and they got out of the plane together.

Joan quickly got her

phone out to call Larry. That was when she realized that her phone had been switched off.

“Hey Joan, hurry over,” called out Dustin.

“Coming!” replied Joan. She then quickly tossed her phone into her bag and ran over to join the rest.

Dustin had always been efficient, and they saw the ambulance waiting by the airport’s

entrance as soon as they got off the plane.

“Dustin, it’s been a while,” said a doctor.

“Yeah, you annoying a**hole. How dare you toss a challenge this big to us as soon as we meet again?” teased another doctor.

Dustin exchanged some pleasantries with the other doctors before saying, “Alright, alright.

Drinks are on me once this is settled. Joan, Ms. Young, come on. Let’s get into the car.”

“So, how are things?” asked Dustin. He seemed worried when he spoke to the other doctors.

The doctors all looked troubled and exasperated.

“We’ll be honest with you, Dustin. The kid...” One of the doctors paused mid-sentence.

Delilah fainted instantly.

“Ms. Young, Ms. Young!” shouted Joan.

“Ah, no! I haven’t finished speaking. The kid’s condition is treatable. It’s treatable!”

However, Joan and Dustin were busy helping Delilah into an empty room, so they weren’t

paying attention to the doctor.

The unconscious elderly woman was put on a saline drip as she rested on the hospital bed,

and Joan couldn’t help but feel worried for her.

“Seriously, what is wrong with you? Can’t you talk a little faster?”

complained Dustin while

shoving the doctor next to him.

“I was just kidding to make the atmosphere seem less tense,” replied the doctor awkwardly

as he scratched the back of his head. “Oh, come on. Fine. You don’t need to buy anything.

Drinks are on me later, okay?”

Dustin shook his head and sighed deeply.

The medical field of the foreign country that they were in was a lot more advanced. The

hospital they were staying in also had top-notch medical equipment.

Moreover, Dustin’s

mentor happened to be there too. He was the best doctor in the hospital, and

coincidentally, he had returned a day earlier from his trip.

“What? Did you just say that my mentor is back?” blurted Dustin excitedly.

“Hey, calm down. Why are you so excited? He said to let him take care of the kid,”

whispered another doctor.

Dustin’s lips instantly curved into a satisfied grin as he knew just how skilled his mentor was

and that his mentor usually did not help just anyone.

“I should visit him when I’m free,” said Dustin as he tapped on his colleague’s shoulder.

The two doctors chatted away happily.

Dustin believed that the child would recover soon with his mentor’s help.

What they didn’t know, however, was that Larry was the one who requested Dustin’s mentor

to treat Lucius.

“Lucius, Lucius...” murmured Delilah on the bed. Her eyes remained closed.

“Wake up, Ms. Young. Lucius is fine now,” Joan comforted Delilah, helping the latter wipe away the sweat on her forehead.

Tears suddenly flowed out of the corners of Delilah’s eyes.

Joan’s heart wrenched in pain at that sight.

“Lucius!” blurted Delilah, who sprang up all of a sudden. She then stared at Joan in horror

and shared, “Joan, I had a nightmare, and Lucius was missing.”

Joan helped Delilah wipe her tears and sweat away.

Suppressing her emotions, the former gently stroked Delilah’s back to make her feel more comfortable.

“Don’t worry, Ms. Young. Lucius is fine,” informed Joan.

“Is that true? Where is Lucius? I want to go see him,” said Delilah as she got out of the bed.

She then walked to Lucius’ room, steadying herself against the wall.

Sorrow donned

Delilah’s face when she saw Lucius lying on the hospital bed.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1903

Chapter 1903 Murmurs At Night

“The child has such a terrible fate. First, his parents abandoned him, and he was bullied by

the other kids in the village. Now...” said Delilah between sobs.

Joan understood how Delilah felt, so she held the latter’s hand to try to make her feel

better.

“Dustin said that his mentor is back, Ms. Young. He will treat Lucius in person, so you don’t

need to worry. Lucius will be fine because Dustin’s mentor is the best doctor in this

hospital,” shared Joan confidently.

Delilah wiped her tears away immediately, and hope gleamed in her eyes.

“Mom...”

Joan hurried over to the bed to see how Lucius was doing.

“Mom, where is Dad?” asked Lucius. He had forced his eyes open, but when he checked his

surroundings, he saw that only his mom and grandma were with him.

“Be good, Lucius. We’ll video call your dad right now, okay?” suggested Joan while gently stroking Lucius’ hair.

The child seemed exhausted and could only nod.

Joan quickly fished her phone out and opened WhatsApp to make the call.

“Hey, Larry!” greeted Joan.

Larry, however, had a grouchy expression when he picked up the call.

“What?” asked Larry coldly.

Joan was a little surprised when she saw how distant Larry reacted.

What happened to him?

Is he angry because I went overseas without telling him beforehand?

“Mom, are you in a fight with Dad?” asked Lucius suddenly.

Upon hearing Lucius’ voice, Larry looked into the camera.

“Lucius, it’s all good. I’m just a little busy. Why would we be in a fight?” replied Larry with a smile.

He thought that he was having a private call with Joan, so his tone was off earlier. This is all

her fault for not calling before she left the country.

Gah! And she left with Dustin, of all people!

“Dad, how are you doing? We were especially busy on the day we flew overseas, so Mom

didn’t have the time to call you. Also, her phone battery went dead when we got off the

plane,” Lucius explained the situation.

He might be a kid, but he was more intuitive than others and could see through certain

things, even when the adults tried to hide them from him.

Larry grinned when he saw how understanding the kid was.

“Good boy. I will go visit you as soon as my work is done,” Larry quickly coaxed him, his

tender gaze filled with affection.

“It’s fine, Dad. Mom and Grandma are here, so you don’t need to hurry over,” replied Lucius.

He didn’t mention Dustin at all, and that got Larry delighted.

“Mr. Dustin is here with you too,” reminded Joan all of a sudden.

At that, Larry turned a little grouchy again.

Lucius was sitting beside Joan, and even he was exasperated with Joan at that moment.

“We miss you so much, Dad. Mom even called out your name last night in her dreams,” teased Lucius.

“Uh... I have to go to the washroom,” said Joan before she quickly left. That was so embarrassing. I had a dream last night, and all I saw was Larry’s face. I didn’t even know that I had been calling out for him the entire night until Lucius told him.

At first, Larry assumed that Lucius was lying to make him happy, but Joan’s reaction proved that he was telling the truth. A warm and fuzzy feeling rose in his heart. “Don’t worry, Dad. I will keep an eye on Mom for you,” said Lucius mischievously.

Larry was stunned, but he was quick to regain his composure. This little punk sure grows up fast...

After exchanging some pleasantries, the duo ended the call.

“Hey Mom, you can come out now. We ended the call,” announced Lucius loudly.

Only then did Joan get out of the washroom.

She was worried that something would happen to Lucius while he was sleeping, so she stayed overnight in the hospital room and slept on the sofa. However, she had never expected that Lucius would use a phone to record her murmurs in the middle of the night.

Joan’s face was burning red at that moment.

“Have you deleted that recording?” asked Joan cautiously.

“Nope. I forwarded it to Dad,” answered the kid calmly.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1904

Chapter 1904 Larry Showed Up

“Mom, Dad is here,” informed Lucius suddenly.

Joan was slightly stunned, but she recomposed herself soon.

“What are you talking about? Here. Eat your breakfast,” instructed Joan while putting some bread and milk in front of the child.

All of a sudden, Larry’s voice sounded from the door. “I’m here!”

Joan was taken aback instantly.

Why didn’t he call ahead?

“Dad!” greeted Lucius excitedly.

Joan was dumbstruck for a moment there. His arrival was too sudden, so she didn't get any breakfast for him.

"I, uh, I'll go buy you some breakfast now," said Joan, who was about to leave the room.

But Larry was quick to stop the woman and lock her in place.

"It's fine. We can have breakfast together. Do you mind that, Lucius?" asked Larry as he turned to look at the boy.

"Not at all. Good luck, Dad," replied Lucius while giving his dad a thumbs up.

With that, they left the hospital holding hands.

"What just happened?" asked Delilah as she rubbed her eyes.

"Nothing, Grandma. Go back to sleep," replied Lucius softly with a grin.

Meanwhile, in a café with dim lighting, soft music and the pleasant scent of rose filled the place.

Joan and Larry were drinking coffee in the corner, but neither spoke.

Joan suddenly got anxious.

"Larry, it was a spontaneous decision to leave the country that day.

Things were a little hectic, and..." explained Joan.

Larry sipped some coffee and studied the woman in front of him carefully. It has only been a few days, but she looks like she has gone through a lot.

"I understand," replied Larry. His rage had dissipated by then.

Right then, the familiar voice of a man sounded. "Joan!"

Larry didn't turn around because he didn't want to see that man.

"Morning, Dustin. Are you here to have breakfast as well? Come join us," invited Joan with a smile.

Dustin slowly walked to the woman's side. Only then did he realize that Larry was there too.

Instantly, his face fell.

What is he doing here? A glint of disdain flashed past Dustin's eyes.

"Dustin's mentor is Lucius' doctor," Joan explained to Larry, who scoffed upon hearing that.

Does this woman actually think that his mentor was there coincidentally when they arrived at the hospital?

“Don’t worry, Joan. My mentor has already learned all about Lucius’ condition, and he will definitely cure the boy,” said Dustin while gently tapping her shoulder. Larry was displeased to see that. She is my wife. How dare that filthy man touch her shoulders!

“I know, and I trust both you and your mentor,” replied Joan, quickly offering a piece of bread to Dustin.

Grinning, he accepted the bread and started chomping on it as if bragging to Larry.

Nevertheless, Larry did not utter a single word and merely drank his coffee.

“Here, Larry. This is for you. I’ve already spread the butter for you,” offered Joan before handing Larry a piece of bread.

Disappointment instantly flashed past Dustin’s eyes.

Larry is still the man she loves, and she knows him in and out. Dustin acted like he didn’t

notice anything and continued eating his breakfast.

After their meal, they headed over to the hospital.

“Mr. Norton, you’re here,” greeted Dustin’s mentor before hurrying over to shake the man’s hand.

“Thank you for your hard work,” replied Larry with a smile.

Joan was surprised to see how close the two of them seemed. Do they know each other?

“Don’t worry, Mr. Norton. The child will be fine. I will do everything I can to treat him, and I won’t disappoint you,” said the doctor while smiling.

“Then I shall thank you in advance for that,” said Larry politely.

Dustin, who was standing at the side, was confused as well.

On the other hand, Delilah was the only one who realized what was happening right

away. Larry is the dependable one at crucial moments like these. At that thought, a grin

showed up on Delilah’s lips. I don’t need to worry anymore, now that Lucius is with them.

“What is going on?” Joan murmured.

“Silly girl. Larry was the one who got the doctor to treat Lucius,” answered Delilah, gently tapping the young lady’s head. Jealousy flashed past Dustin’s eyes upon hearing that. So my mentor only showed up because Larry asked him to treat Lucius? Dustin clenched his fists tightly.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1905
Chapter 1905 Tumor

The doctor exchanged some pleasantries with Larry before he walked to Lucius’ bedside. Joan got a little worried when she saw how nervous Lucius looked. “Don’t worry. It’ll be fine,” said Larry while holding her waist. Everyone was waiting anxiously by the door. Joan and Delilah were especially anxious, and the pin-drop silence in the room made the situation even more nerve-racking. It took some time before the doctor left the room with Lucius. Immediately, everyone gathered around the doctor and asked him endless questions. “Calm down. The boy has just finished undergoing all the tests, so you should take him back first so that he can rest. Can one of you come to my office with me? I’d like to discuss this in detail,” informed the doctor grimly. “Me. I’ll go,” said Joan right away. After that, Delilah and Dustin brought Lucius to his room, while Larry and Joan followed the good doctor to his office. Uncertainty welled up in Joan’s heart when she saw how troubled the doctor looked. “Has that kid been hit in the past?” asked the doctor solemnly. Joan was stunned. The fact was, she knew nothing about the kid’s life before she showed up in the village, and Delilah never told her about his past either. All Joan knew was that Lucius’ parents abandoned him. “The thing is, doctor, the kid was abandoned by his biological parents,” replied Joan. The doctor lowered his head with a grim expression. It seemed like he was deep in thought.

"I suspect that he has a tumor in his brain, and it is likely that it has been there for quite some time now. Don't worry, though. We can definitely remove it with surgery. Naturally, all this is just my speculation. We'll need to conduct more tests to confirm it," informed the doctor.

Joan almost lost it when she heard the doctor say the word "tumor." She stumbled backward and leaned against the wall, her eyes reddened with tears. "Please save him. We will cooperate however we can to get him cured," Joan pleaded tearfully.

Larry hurried over and pulled Joan into his arms, caressing her hair gently to comfort her.

"Please treat him however you deem fit. I really hope that you can help him. We will be eternally thankful for it," said Larry before he bowed to the doctor. "Ah, Mr. Norton, don't do that. It is my duty as a doctor to save my patient. Moreover, even if there really is a tumor in his brain, all we have to do is perform a small surgery. You don't need to be so worried, Mrs. Norton," said the doctor to offer some comfort.

Larry helped Joan out of the office, wiping her tears away gently.

"He will be fine, Joan," promised Larry before kissing Joan's forehead. But the woman in his arms couldn't stop sobbing.

"Larry, if anything happens to Lucius..." said Joan hesitantly.

Larry covered her mouth right away.

"As long as I'm here, I will not let that happen."

Dustin was in a far corner when he saw the two of them together, and rage burned in his eyes.

So it's confirmed. There is actually a small tumor in Lucius' brain.

Meanwhile, Delilah's eyes clouded over when she leaned against the wall in the washroom in a trance.

"Ms. Young," said Joan hurriedly.

"Huh? Ah, Joan," said Delilah, wiping her tears away as soon as she came to her senses.

Joan knew that Delilah must feel terrible, so she held her hand tightly while putting on a brave face in an attempt to comfort her.

“Lucius will be fine,” Joan reassured.

Delilah nodded at the woman standing in front of her.

The most important task at the moment was to figure out how they would tell Lucius about the surgery.

At that moment, Larry was playing a game with Lucius in the room, and they seemed happy.

“Dad, when will I grow up to be as strong as you?” asked Lucius. His big, round eyes shone with anticipation when he said those words.

Larry stroked the kid’s hair and grinned.

“Actually, Lucius, I was sick when I was a kid. I even underwent surgery back then, and that surgery was what made me so strong now,” shared Larry to mentally prepare the kid for the surgery.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1906

Chapter 1906 Successful Operation

Lucius listened with great interest as Larry told the story in an animated manner as though he was living out the character in the latter’s story.

“Dad, why are you different before and after the operation?” Lucius asked curiously.

Larry hesitated for a moment and then tapped his son’s forehead playfully. “I will tell you all about it after you’re fully recovered.”

Lucius’ eyes dimmed in the next instance.

This was actually Larry’s way of leaving suspense in his story; a hope for Lucius to hold on and look forward to.

“Dad, when will I undergo my operation?” Lucius asked out of the blue. Larry was momentarily stunned but soon resumed his composure. I just wanted to paint a less scary picture for the surgical operation. I didn’t expect him to...

“Lucius, why are you suddenly asking me this?” Larry asked while stroking his son’s hair lovingly.

“You said you’ve become stronger after your surgery, so I want to be like you too,” Lucius answered matter-of-factly.

Lucius’ response caught Larry by surprise.

“So, you want to go ahead with your operation? Sure, buddy. Why don’t I arrange with the doctor?” Larry said with a wistful smile and pulled Lucius closer to him. He is just a kid. Why does he have to suffer so much?

At that thought, Larry’s expression grew grim.

“Alright, Dad. I’ll go with your arrangement,” Lucius said with a bright smile.

Lucius was not unaware of what was happening around him for the past few days. In fact, he knew precisely that his parents and grandmother were troubled by his upcoming operation.

He had overheard a conversation between Delilah and the doctor about tumor and surgery

the other day and managed to put two and two together. Instead of watching the adults

trying hard to tiptoe around him, Lucius decided to save them the hardship of breaking the

difficult news to him by proposing to undergo surgery himself.

“What? Lucius said that he wanted to go through the operation?” Joan looked at Larry in disbelief.

The man shifted his gaze from Joan to Delilah and nodded resolutely.

“That’s because he was aware of it,” Delilah said weakly.

After all, she knew Lucius’ personality well. He was someone who always put others before

himself, and Delilah had always thought that the child was too mature for his age.

A glint of sorrow flashed past Joan’s eyes upon hearing that.

Soon after that, they started making arrangements for the operation.

“You’re going to be okay, Lucius. Try to relax,” Joan comforted her child who was lying on

the hospital bed before being pushed into the operating theater.

Delilah, on the other hand, was all teary-eyed and dared not look directly at Lucius.

“Mom, please tell Grandma that I’ll be okay and ask her not to worry,” Lucius muttered to

Joan in a lowered voice.

"Mrs. Norton, we have to go into the operating theater now," the doctor said while trying to pry away Joan's grip on the bed railing.

Finally, Lucius was sent into the operating theater.

Delilah sat on the bench and buried her head in her palms, overwhelmed by anxiety and

agitation. While Joan was pacing nervously up and down the corridor, Larry's eyes were glued to the operating theater as though he might miss something important if he blinked.

The only other adult on the scene was Dustin, whose inexplicable gaze had been studying

Joan with his brows slightly furrowed.

After what seemed like forever, the light above the operating theater was still shining bright.

Delilah asked anxiously, "Joan, why is this taking so long?"

"Soon, Ms. Young. It'll be done soon," Joan tried to reassure both herself and the elderly

woman in a shaky voice.

Thud!

Finally, the light was turned off as the surgeon came out of the operating theater while

wiping beads of sweat off his forehead.

"Doctor, how's my son?" Joan asked while holding tight onto the surgeon's arm.

The doctor closed his eyes and took a deep breath before announcing calmly, "Don't worry,

the surgery was successful. But he will need some time to recuperate."

Joan and Delilah brightened up instantly at the good news.

"Thank you so much, doctor," Delilah exclaimed excitedly.

"He's here," Larry said when Lucius' bed was pushed through the operating theater doors.

The sight of her son lying on a hospital bed with his face as pale as a sheet was agonizing

for Joan.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1907

Chapter 1907 You Have Always Been Strong

"Let's not disturb him. He needs to rest now," the doctor reminded the adults and left.

In the ward, Lucius was still unconscious with an IV drip attached to his arm. Everyone was holding their breath while waiting for him to regain consciousness.

“Ugh...” Lucius finally made a sound.

“What is it, Lucius?” Delilah asked.

“Water...” Lucius muttered weakly.

Joan fetched the water and darted to Lucius’ bedside.

“Here, have some water.”

Lucius slowly opened his eyes and tried to find his bearings.

“Dad, have I become stronger now?” Lucius uttered the words in a barely audible voice.

Tears welled up in Larry’s eyes as he replied, “Son, you’ve always been very strong.”

As days passed and Lucius started to restore his strength, the adults began planning their trip back home.

“What are you doing here?” Larry scowled at Dustin when they met each other at the airport.

Dustin’s fists balled up as he shot a cold glance at Larry. “It’s none of your business where I’m going.”

The friendship between Dustin and Larry had shattered since Joan’s car accident. It was solely because of her that they were able to stand being in each other’s presence right now.

“Haven’t you always been residing overseas?” Larry snarled.

“I don’t think I owe you any explanation,” Dustin retorted while shooting the other man another cold glare.

“Can you two please stop bickering? Today is supposed to be a special day, right?” Joan said while looking at Lucius.

“That’s right, Mom. Dinner is on you!” Lucius said excitedly.

Joan fell silent at her son’s suggestion.

It was the meal I treated last time that resulted in him getting hurt.

“Uh... I mean, you have to prepare dinner tonight!” Lucius quickly corrected himself.

Joan and Larry decided to take Lucius back to the village so that they could look after him

properly.

The village had remained the same since before they left, still filled with mountainous clean air and friendly villagers.

“Ms. Young, we haven’t seen you in a while. Where have you been?” one of the villagers asked.

“That’s right. We’ve been missing you around here,” another added as a few other women started to chime in.

“Oh, It’s nothing. I had to run some errands, that’s all,” Delilah replied with a forced smile.

Seeing the friendly faces made Joan feel at home again as she let out a contented smile.

Ring!

Larry’s phone rang, and the caller ID showed Caspian’s name.

“Boss, are you back?” Caspian asked anxiously.

“Yes.” Larry stole a side glance at Joan and spoke carefully into the phone, “What have you got for me?”

“The man is at large at the moment. But I’ve looked into his bank statement. Someone had transferred a sum of money into his bank account,” Caspian reported dutifully.

Larry’s expression darkened upon hearing the latest updates. Then, the men brought each

other up to speed on a few other things before Larry ended the call.

Seeing Larry’s gloomy face after speaking on the phone, Joan hurried over. “What’s wrong?”

“It’s nothing,” Larry assured Joan while wrapping his hand around her shoulder.

Everyone was thrilled to be back home after being away for quite some time, especially for

Lucius, who loved spending time with Larry and Joan. Hence, he grabbed the opportunity

and got them to play with him. Seeing the delighted child, Delilah let out a contented smile

and walked into the kitchen.

Meanwhile, in Gabriella’s office, she tried to ascertain with Freya, “Do you know that she’s

back?”

Freya was mildly startled but soon gathered herself together. She replied calmly while

sipping on her tea, “I just did.”

“I suppose you haven’t forgotten our deal? Just name your price,”

Gabriella said with her

chill-inducing eyes.

Freya studied the woman for a long while as fear filled her heart.

What a vicious woman! Will she come after me once I help her finish off her business?

“What is it? Are you having second thoughts about this?” Gabriella

asked with unblinking

eyes.

She’d better not thinking about chickening out. If so, she’ll only have herself to blame when

I teach her a lesson about keeping a deal. What a useless wuss!

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1908

Chapter 1908 What A Vicious Woman

Gabriella continued to fix her gaze steadily on Freya.

“No, I’m not having any second thoughts,” Freya replied carefully.

Heaven knows what this woman will do to me if I tell her I’m harboring thoughts about

backing out of our deal. It’s better to just drag my feet for now.

Although there had been some acrimonious exchanges between Freya and Joan, they were

mostly trivial collegial rivalries and jealousy on Freya’s part. Therefore, she had not

considered Joan as her mortal enemy, much less wanted her dead. But all that did not apply

to Gabriella as she was adamant about making Joan disappear from the face of the earth for

good.

After a moment of hesitation, Freya finally decided against accepting the deadly deal.

It’s common for women to get bitter over jealousy, but to go to such length to eliminate

your rival is just bat-crap crazy.

“Ms. Ward, I’ve been assigned to go on a work trip by the manager, so...” Freya appeared to

be hesitant.

Gabriella looked at Freya's guilty expression and promptly understood. This woman is trying to get away from me!

Balling up her fists, Gabriella's vision turned deadly. Feeling chills down her spine, Freya

staggered a little and tried to calm her nerves by taking a sip of water.

"We've been swamped lately. Take a walk at the supermarket and see for yourself if you

don't believe me," Freya explained frantically.

Gabriella stood up and walked slowly to Freya's desk before stopping inches away from her

face.

"You should know that nothing can stop me when I want to get something done. And if I

want someone dead, she won't live to see tomorrow's sun," Gabriella spoke eerily into

Freya's ear while stroking her hair softly.

Freya shuddered as her eyes widened in intense fear.

What's she going to do? Is she going to kill me?

Panic-stricken, she kept tugging at her own shirt while floundering for the right words to

say.

"Ms. Ward, you see, you're meant to do something great, whereas I'm only a lowly villager. I

may not even be capable enough to carry out your order. Can you please just let me go?"

Freya pleaded with Gabriella.

Before this, Freya was under the impression that, like her, Gabriella just wanted to teach

Joan a lesson. Hence, she saw Gabriella as a potential ally. However, when she realized that

Gabriella had something a lot more malicious planned, Freya naturally got cold feet. After

all, Gabriella was talking about taking someone's life.

"What? Are you scared?" Gabriella said while holding Freya's chin.

How can she speak so calmly about killing off someone?

"Ms. Ward, I really have to get going. Maybe we can talk about this when I'm back from my

work trip?" Freya bargained weakly.

Gabriella was no idiot, so she knew Freya's real intention all too well.

Well, I'm afraid you won't last that long.

With that thought, Gabriella turned around and returned to her desk. "Fine. Let's talk after you come back from your trip," the woman said flatly.

Not long after that, Freya excused herself from the office and darted out with her handbag.

A glint of malevolence flashed under Gabriella's eyes as Freya disappeared out of sight.

The nerve she has for messing with me. She must have a death wish! Gabriella put down her glass of water with such force that the water spilled onto her desk.

Ring!

Joan looked at the caller ID on her phone and frowned before she answered the call.

"Hey, Joan, can you come over to the supermarket now?" Freya urged in a low voice.

Joan was puzzled by this sudden urgency, given that she had already resigned.

"Hi, Ms. Brooks, can't you just tell me over the phone? I'm kind of occupied here," Joan tried to reject her.

Freya grew agitated on the other end of the line.

"You don't understand. This is a matter of life and death. I'll explain to you when you get

here later." Freya hung up the call before Joan could respond.

Freya's eyes swept her surroundings nervously after hanging up her phone.

Following a few encounters with Gabriella, Freya had become paranoid; she had a feeling

that she was constantly being watched.

In the meantime, Joan looked at her phone, trying to decide if she should go to the supermarket.

"Joan, what's the matter?" Delilah asked.

"It's the supervisor from the supermarket. She asked me to meet her over there right now.

She sounded quite urgent on the phone," Joan replied.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1909

Chapter 1909 Freya Is Not Inherently Evil

Delilah pondered over the matter briefly and then patted Joan on the shoulder.

“Freya is still young, so sometimes she might act recklessly. But the bottom line is she’s not inherently evil.” Delilah chuckled.

Joan was convinced by Delilah and changed her clothes before heading to the supermarket.

“You’re finally here!” Freya exclaimed while checking over her shoulder discreetly.

“Ms. Brooks, what’s going on?” Joan was completely befuddled.

Instead of replying, Freya pulled Joan into her office.

“Joan, there’s something I need to tell you. Someone is hatching a plan against you. You

need to watch out,” Freya warned.

Joan smirked coldly.

Aren’t you the one who is always out to get me?

“I’m serious. Someone wants you dead. I admit that I used to give you a hard time at work,

but that was all due to jealousy...”

Freya’s confession only served to confuse Joan even more, as she could not recall stepping

on anyone’s toes.

“Ms. Brooks, is this some kind of joke?” Joan carefully studied the neurotic woman.

Freya’s expression turned solemn. I really want to slap some senses into this woman with a

thick skull.

“Didn’t you have a friend called Gabriella Ward?” Freya looked at Joan expectedly.

Instantly, Joan finally understood what Freya was trying to convey.

Gabriella did hurt me a lot in the past. But I haven’t seen her since I regained my memories.

Joan’s silence made Freya realize that Gabriella was telling the truth. Oh my, this woman is

so doomed. That Gabriella woman is definitely not someone I will mess around with. For

some reason, Freya started to feel sorry for Joan.

Freya tightened her grip on Joan’s hands and looked directly into her eyes.

“Joan, listen to me. Gabriella is dead set on coming after you. Here, this is for you. Open this

if you don't hear from me in half a month," Freya said while handing a box to Joan.

Joan looked at the box, then back at the woman, feeling bewildered.

"Ms. Brooks, why are you giving me this?" Freya asked.

This generous gesture is so unlike the supervisor I used to know.

"Look, now that you're no longer working here, take this as a parting gift for all the

grievances that I've caused you. But remember, don't open this until half a month later,"

Freya reminded once again.

Joan continued to look at the box, still feeling perplexed.

What kind of present cannot be opened for two weeks?

Unbeknownst to the two women, their encounter was being watched by Gabriella through

the security camera installed in the office.

Gabriella stared at the monitor screen with intense rage blazing from her eyes. Her fists

were balled up so tightly that blood was oozing from her clenched fingers.

Damn it!

Her fist landed on her desk in a loud thump.

"Hey, I need you to do something for me," Gabriella spoke into her phone.

Meanwhile, Joan returned home not long after bidding goodbye to Freya.

"What is it that you're holding?" Delilah asked.

"Oh, it's a gift from Ms. Brooks," Joan answered.

Delilah returned her a faint smile before walking into the kitchen.

Ms. Young was right; Ms. Brooks isn't an inherently malicious person.

She is just young and impulsive.

Just then, her phone rang.

"Hey, Joan, just wanted to let you know that I won't be going back today. I'm still buried in

all the paperwork in the office," Larry explained on the phone.

He had been neglecting his work to focus on Lucius' treatment before this. Now that Lucius

was getting better, Larry was back at the helm in the office.

The couple spoke for a few more minutes on the phone before ending the call.

Right after she hung up the phone, Joan's phone rang again. "Hello, Joan, where are you? I

think I'm lost." Dustin's voice rang from the other end of the line.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1910

Chapter 1910 Dustin Has To Back Off

"What are you talking about?" Joan frowned a little while holding onto her phone.

"I mean, I'm in the village at the moment. But I'm not sure which one is your house," Dustin

explained.

Joan was stunned.

He has come all the way here to this rural village?

"Oh, hang on. I'll come to get you," Joan said while darting out.

After a long search, Joan finally found Dustin's car in one of the small alleyways. The man

was huffing and puffing right then.

"Your place is not easy to find, to say the least," Dustin complained.

Well, nobody invited you here. Joan shot him a disinterested glance but made no comment.

"Hold on, wait for me." Dustin was panting heavily behind her.

"Mr. Dustin!" Lucius' voice rang abruptly.

"Hey, Lucius."

"Mr. Dustin, what are you doing here?" Lucius asked, looking innocent.

Dustin paused briefly before he let out a smile.

"Because I've missed you," the man said while pinching playfully at Lucius' cheek.

"Hi, Ms. Young," Dustin greeted Delilah.

Delilah responded by eking out a faint smile, which made Joan wonder if she was unhappy

about Dustin's unannounced visit.

"Here, have some water," Delilah said while handing him a glass of water.

Dustin's eyes swept one round skeptically before it landed on Joan.

"So, you've decided to live here?" Dustin asked, pursing his lips slightly.

Joan knew what the man was implying, and she nodded resolutely at him.

"Alright, then," the man said while resuming a neutral expression.

"By the way, I've bought some supplements for Lucius. They will help speed up his recovery."

Joan looked at the shopping bags and nodded absent-mindedly. I should have faith in the supplements he chose. After all, he is a doctor. "That's very kind of you." Delilah walked slowly toward Dustin. "Don't mention it." Dustin waved his hand. Nevertheless, Joan was still puzzled by the man's sudden visit. "You should have called first," Joan remarked. "No, I don't think so. Would Larry have let me come if I had called first? He may literally block every road into the village just so I can't get through," the man replied tartly. I still don't understand why they are always at each other's throat nowadays. I wonder if something terrible happened between the two of them during the few years when I wasn't around. But Larry has never mentioned anything to me. "Lucius, how have you been doing? Are you feeling any better?" Dustin asked, stroking the kid's hair. "I'm much better, thanks. Dad says that I've become a lot stronger after my surgery," Lucius answered loudly. Dustin's eyes dimmed instantly. Must he mention Larry at every turn? "Mr. Dustin, when are you leaving?" Lucius' question stunned everyone, especially Delilah and Joan. Dustin has just gotten here, and Lucius is already asking when he is leaving? That's rude. Joan quickly shot a glance at her son. Meanwhile, Dustin's smile froze awkwardly on his face. "Oh, it's just that it's getting darker, and I'm worried about Mr. Dustin's safety on the way back to the city," Lucius was quick to explain. Dad is not around, so I have to be vigilant about other men lurking around Mom. "Oh, I see. Well, it is indeed getting late. I suppose I'll get going and come back another day," Dustin said while scratching the back of his head embarrassedly. Joan could not help but feel bad for the man. "Um, maybe you could—"

“Yeah, Mr. Dustin. You should come back again in the morning.” Joan was cut off mid-sentence as Lucius decided to chime in.

The atmosphere froze instantly.

Two weeks later, Joan was in the supermarket and bumped into her ex-colleagues. “Hey, it’s

Joan,” one of them greeted.

“You must be feeling free like a bird after leaving this job.”

Conversations erupted as the few of them gathered around her.

“Aren’t you guys afraid of being caught abandoning your posts by the supervisor?” Joan

said in a low voice.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1911

Chapter 1911 The Gift

The women exchanged glances and smiled smugly.

“Don’t worry. Ms. Brooks has gone on a work trip. She’s not here,” one of them explained

cheerfully.

No wonder everyone is ecstatic. But then again, I thought Ms. Brooks hates going

outstation. That’s strange.

After Joan spent some time with the girls in the supermarket, she came home to find a

nervous Delilah who was hastily getting ready to head out the door.

“Ms. Young, what’s going on?” Joan hurried over to her side.

“It’s Freya. She’s in the hospital,” Delilah replied and sighed in exasperation.

Joan was startled. I thought she was on a work trip?

“Ms. Young, I’ll go with you,” Joan said before she hurriedly followed suit.

In the hospital, Freya’s parents were wailing and crying at the top of their lungs. After

squeezing through the grief-stricken parents, Joan finally saw the woman lying on a hospital

bed.

That’s Ms. Brooks, for sure.

A glint of sorrow flashed under her eyes as she looked at the unconscious woman.

“Freya!” the manager called out her name while rushing frantically into the ward.

“What are you doing here? This is all your fault!” Freya’s mother charged forward and grabbed onto the manager’s arm. A commotion broke out in the ward as they tried to calm the parents down.

“Doctor, how’s she doing?” Joan found the doctor outside the ward. Shaking his head, the doctor replied, “I’ve watched her grow up since she was a little kid.

And now, she’s fallen into a coma state.”

As though she was hit on the head, Joan collapsed onto the floor with a blank look on her face.

“Joan, are you alright?” Delilah quickly helped her up and patted her shoulder gently. “Why don’t you head home first? I’m their long-time family friend, so I’m going to stay back for a while.”

Joan slowly got on her feet; her eyes were still filled with disbelief at the rapid unfolding of events. Even though Freya did give her a hard time at work, most of them were of juvenile mischief than life-threatening harms, and her heart sank at the sight of Freya lying motionless on the hospital bed.

This is all too sudden. How did this happen?

Something struck Joan as she recalled their last conversation two weeks ago.

The gift! At that thought, Joan hastened her strides.

There was no one around back home. Without further ado, Joan took out the box Freya gave her and from which she retrieved a pen. She studied the pen as an unsettling feeling overtook her.

Click! Her hand accidentally pressed on a button, and a voice recording started to play from the pen.

It quickly dawned on Joan as she started to piece together what might have happened to Freya.

The voice recording was of a conversation between Freya and another woman. Her voice is rather familiar. Oh my goodness! It's Gabriella's voice! Joan shuddered as she listened to the content of the recording. If Ms. Brooks' hospitalization was not an accident, then Gabriella may be the person behind it.

Joan began to panic.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

Just then, someone was pounding on her door.

Sensing that something was off, Joan quickly hid the pen recorder.

However, before she could reach the door, it had burst open. Following that, a few intruders entered the house.

"Hey, who are you guys? And what are you doing here?" Joan yelled at them.

But the few burly men couldn't be bothered with the woman's shouting. Instead, they went

straight into the bedroom and started smashing things around. Joan was in utter shock at

what was happening before her.

She tried but failed to think of anyone who would do such a thing to her or Delilah.

"Hand it over!" Hubert, who was the leader of the gang, barked at Joan. Joan was befuddled.

Is he talking about the recorder?

"I don't understand what you're saying..." Joan took a few steps back instinctively.

"Give it to me, and I'll ensure your safety. Otherwise..." The man gestured at his fist and let out a wicked smile.

"Mr. Newman, we didn't find anything."

"Me neither," another man added. The men stopped and waited for their leader's instruction."

Without any warning, Hubert grabbed onto Joan's arm and flung her toward the wall. The man's eyes shone with a menacing glint that would send chills down one's spine.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1912

Chapter 1912 A Silly Woman

"Listen, if you don't want to die, hand me that thing!" The man clutched Joan's chin forcefully.

Tears started welling up in Joan's eyes as she sensed great pain building. "I don't know what you're talking about," she replied in a low voice. Slap! Joan's face reddened in a heartbeat as the man's palm made contact with her face forcefully.

"Don't try to feign ignorance in front of me. What did Freya give you?"

The man demanded fiercely as he pulled Joan's hair. It's that recorder! Joan sneered.

Freya just became comatose, and there are already people coming after the recorder!

"Ouch..."

Upon hearing her cry, the man immediately loosened his grip and looked at Joan furiously.

"You better do yourself a favor and hand it over now! You won't be able to get away with it."

Joan knew that the person behind this must have known that she had met with Freya.

Otherwise, the man standing in front of her right then wouldn't be so certain and dead set.

"Let me go and take it for you." Joan pretended to limp as she went to search for the gift that Freya had given her.

"Let's see... Where have I put it?" Joan muttered to herself, flipping all over the place.

"No, it's not here," she continued mumbling.

After looking at Joan rummaging around for a long time, Hubert could no longer stand it.

"Don't try to play your tricks here. I'll give you another ten minutes, and if you still can't find it, I'll kill you!" the man yelled.

Who on earth is behind this? How dare he or she take someone's life!

Joan was undoubtedly astounded by the situation.

"I found it!" Out of the blue, she shouted.

"Here, that's the gift she gave me." Joan handed the box over to Hubert.

"Open it!" the man roared dispassionately.

Immediately, a man behind him pushed Joan away and opened the box quickly.

“Mr. Newman, it’s a pen.”

Right away, Hubert rushed over to take a look.

“I haven’t opened this gift box since I got it. She said to open it after six months, so I didn’t

open it,” Joan clarified at once.

Hubert looked at her with a dubious expression, a ferocious glint in his eyes.

“Why did she give you a present?” the man asked in a deep voice.

Joan tried her best to think of a valid reason. “Err... This actually came alongside an apology.

Freya used to give me a hard time when I was working at the supermarket. I resigned after

that, and I suppose she felt guilty, so she presented me with this gift as a gesture of apology.”

It is actually more of evidence than a gift.

“Take it away!” Huber instructed aloud.

At that, Joan allowed herself to let out a sigh of relief.

“Don’t try to deceive me. If I ever find out that you’re lying, I can assure you that you’ll never

have a day of peace in the future.” Hubert patted hard on Joan’s shoulder.

Very soon, the few men disappeared, and Joan was left at home.

Looking at the mess in

front of her, the woman slumped to the ground with a little apprehension in her heart.

“What on earth happened!” As soon as Larry reached home, he saw Joan, who was busy

cleaning up the room.

“Umm, I’ll tell you everything after I get this done,” she replied in a placid tone.

Hurriedly, Larry went over to help. Watching the composed and silent woman in front of

him, a trace of uneasiness crept up on Larry’s face.

“Alright, tell me now.” Larry took a sip of tea.

“Something happened to Freya, and she’s now comatose,” Joan panted out.

In that instance, Larry was dumbfounded.

Who is this Freya? What does she have to do with me?

“Joan, I’m asking about this mess at home!” The man started to get agitated.

Seeing their house turning into such a mess all of a sudden, who in his right mind would

believe that nothing had happened?

“Calm down and let me finish...” Joan tried to explain.

Eventually, Larry had a rough idea of what had happened.

“It’s evident that someone’s trying to frame you,” Larry replied in a hushed tone.

Sitting at the side, the glint in Joan’s eyes dimmed upon hearing that. If it’s really Gabriella

who’s behind this, she’ll go to jail because of what she’s done!

“Was Gabriella here?” the man asked hesitantly.

“No. It was a few men who came by. Perhaps, she’s not the mastermind behind this?” Joan

was still keeping the last ray of hope within her heart.

This silly woman! She’s still trying to say something good about her at this point!

In Larry’s eyes, there was a fleeting glint of wretchedness.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1913

Chapter 1913 Something Is Off

“Hello, Caspian? Go inspect Gabriella’s recent actions,” Larry instructed in a furious tone.

Looking at the man in front of her, Joan found a sense of peace. With Larry around, she

didn’t need to worry too much. She knew he would take care of her.

Thump!

Gabriella tossed the box forcefully to the ground.

“What a bunch of imbeciles! All you found is a pen? Do any of you have a usable brain?” the

woman spat out as she glared at the few men in front of her.

The bunch of men turned to each other as they didn’t quite understand the situation.

“Ms. Ward, you were the one who asked us to search for the gift and bring it to you. Now

that we’ve handed it over to you, you’re tossing it to the ground. Why is that?” Hubert asked

softly.

Gabriella shook her head, and suddenly, an overwhelming aura emanated from her.

Damn! What a bunch of scumbags!

“Will you get someone a regular pen as a gift?” Gabriella glared at them. In a jiffy, Hubert ran up to the woman’s side after he figured out what she was suggesting.

“Ms. Ward, rest assured. I’ll certainly not disappoint you!” With that, he gestured his men to leave together.

“Mr. Newman, what does that mean?” one of his men asked.

Thump!

Hubert landed his fist forcibly against the wall, and soon, blood trickled down his fingers.

Seeing as such, his men quickly backed away and waited for his instructions with their heads lowered.

Nonchalantly, Hubert barked, “Capture that woman!”

Upon hearing his order, his group of men left to carry it out.

“Joan, those men you’ve lied to won’t let you off the hook easily. Why don’t you stay by my side from now on?” Larry patted her shoulder softly.

The woman wavered for a brief second. Indeed, they won’t let me go easily. Nevertheless, if

I insist that it was in fact a pen that Freya gave me, I don’t think anything will go wrong...

“It’s okay, don’t worry. Besides, the gift Freya gave me is indeed a pen. It simply came with a recorder.” Joan smiled and passed Larry the recorder.

“Help me keep it safe for now,” she uttered.

Looking at the woman standing across from him, Larry pecked on Joan’s forehead softly. His eyes were filled with affection.

“Let me keep it then. Otherwise, you’d be in danger as well if you take it with you,” Larry replied softly.

The two came to an agreement after discussing the best course of action for a while.

Every morning, Joan needed to spend some time with Delilah to take care of the plants in a

nearby garden. Hence, Larry decided to wait until she finished with those chores before

asking Caspian to send her to Norton Corporation.

However, little did they know that a plot was being hatched against them very swiftly in that instance.

Early the next morning, after having breakfast, Larry headed to the company while Lucius

went to school. Soon after that, Joan and Delilah entered the garden.

Perhaps it was because they hadn't had much time to take care of the plants, causing some

flowers in the garden to wilt. Seeing as such, Joan hurriedly got down to work on the small

pots of plants, trying to revitalize them.

After a long period of hard work, she took a gander at her watch and realized it was already

ten o'clock. She had to get going.

"Ms. Young, I have to leave now. Caspian will reach here any minute now!" Joan called out

loudly.

"Alright, be careful on your way!" Delilah replied.

Straightening her clothes, Joan left the garden in a joyful manner.

The garden was not very far away from Delilah's abode. Usually, the two of them often

traveled to and fro on foot.

"Ah!" Out of the blue, Joan let out a sharp cry, and immediately after that, silence ensued.

Delilah seemed to have heard something, so she looked up but found nothing unusual, so

she resumed working on the wilted plants again.

Having waited for an extended period of time in front of Delilah's house, Caspian started to

get anxious when there was still no sign of Joan.

"Hello? Larry, are you sure you have told Joan about this? Why hasn't she showed up yet?

She isn't answering my calls either," Caspian uttered in an agitated tone.

"Yes, we've talked about it. Maybe she's still busy in the garden. Why don't you wait a little

longer?" Larry replied thoughtfully.

"Achoo!" Suddenly, Larry sneezed.

“Have you caught a cold?” Caspian was a little worried.
“It’s not a big deal.” With that, the man hung up the call.
For some reason, Larry was a little irritated all of a sudden. He felt that something was off,
but he couldn’t pinpoint exactly what was wrong.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1914

Chapter 1914 Beat Her Up

Time passed in each tick of the clock. It was half-past ten, then eleven,
and then half-past
eleven...

Throughout his wait, Joan did not appear even once in Caspian’s sight.
Agitated, Caspian could feel that something ominous was about to
unfold.

“Is Ms. Young here?” Pushing open the door to the garden, Caspian
inquired loudly.

“Coming!” Delilah answered almost immediately.

“Oh, it’s Caspian. Why are you here?” the woman cleaned the dirt on
her hands and asked.

“Ms. Young, where’s Joan? Larry asked me to pick her up,” Caspian
asked in a hurry.

For a moment, Delilah was baffled.

“Joan? Didn’t she already go home? She said you were reaching soon, so
she hurriedly went
back home to change,” she answered.

Damn!

Caspian’s eyes dimmed in a flash.

He knew that by asking him to pick Joan up, Larry was trying to prevent
something from

happening. And now, what the man had been trying to stop from
happening had already
taken place!

“I waited for a long time, but she was nowhere to be seen. Ms. Young,
do you know the
direction as to where Joan usually goes?” Caspian asked anxiously.

At that moment, Delilah was hesitant.

Normally, no matter where Joan goes, she’ll never disappear without
leaving any message
and let Caspian wait for such a long time...

Delilah had a faint premonition and was feeling doom within.

“Let’s go take a look around.” Taking off her apron, Delilah led Caspian out of the garden.

“What? Joan is missing? Didn’t I tell you to wait for her at the door?” Larry bellowed over the phone.

For a moment, a piercing glint flashed across Larry’s eyes. It has finally come to this point. Is it finally time for me to take action? “Alright, seal off the entire village until Joan is found.” Larry hung up after that.

Gabriella, when will you stop playing your sick game?

Slap!

Joan was awakened by the noise. In front of her stood a few familiar faces, and she found herself in an equally familiar place.

“What... What do you want?” Joan asked in a weary voice.

Hubert walked over to her and lifted her face.

Slap! Slap! Slap...

After a few repeated slaps on her face, Joan could feel the blistering heat on her cheeks.

“You wench, how dare you lie to me!” Hubert kicked her forcefully as he bellowed out his anger.

“Ouch...”

Joan knew that they might have possibly found out that the pen she handed over to them wasn’t the real gift Freya gave her.

She let out a cold chuckle.

Such intelligence can never be found in men like these. Otherwise, they would have figured

it out at the house that day. It must be the mastermind behind this who called my bluff!

As the thought of Gabriella crossed her mind, an icy glint flashed across Joan’s eyes.

“Spit it out. Where is it?” Hubert roared like a beast as he stared coldly at the woman in

front of him whose blood was dripping down the corner of her mouth.

Joan shook her head vigorously several times to keep herself clear-headed. All of a sudden,

she was relieved that she had passed the recorder to Larry.

“The gift she gave was that box. It was just that box alone, and I have never even opened it before handing it to you,” Joan answered in a hushed voice.

“What a damned woman. You’re still stubborn, huh? Come, give her a good hiding!” Hubert bellowed.

“Wait a minute.” Suddenly, Lonnie ran up to Hubert.

“Mr. Newman, you should think carefully about this. Even though the sum offered by Ms.

Ward is important to us, we must keep in mind that she is Larry’s woman,” Lonnie reminded him.

Hubert hesitated for a while, and then he strode over behind Joan, pondering.

What trick is he trying to pull?

Taking a gaze at him, Joan remained silent, her body stiff.

Suddenly, Hubert howled, “Beat her up. Don’t pull your punches!”

For a moment, Lonnie was confounded.

“No matter who she is, we’ll just pretend that we don’t know. Let that woman bear all the responsibilities and consequences!” Hubert added in a ferocious manner.

Old age and treachery will always beat youth and skill.

Lonnie’s lips curled up in satisfaction.

“What are you doing?” Joan cried in horror.

Bang! The door flew open all of a sudden.

It wasn’t Larry, nor was it Dustin. Instead, it was the man who had kidnapped Joan before.

He had come together with another few men.

“Who is it?” Hubert asked.

“Come on, get them!”

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1915

Chapter 1915 Do Not Blame Me

A few roughnecks ran over at the bald man’s order.

Joan was dumbfounded in that instance.

“Mrs. Norton, are you alright?” Out of the blue, the man ran up to Joan and helped untie her.

“Larry...” She fainted even before she could finish her words.

At the hospital.

Joan was lying in bed with her eyes closed. The back of her hand was attached to a saline

bag. Larry held her tightly by the hand, his face full of remorse.

“Larry, don’t worry. She only suffered some minor physical wounds,” said Caspian to comfort

Larry.

“Shut up!” The latter lashed out directly.

The other man grew silent in an instant.

“Joan!” Out of nowhere, Delilah barged into the room.

“How is she? Is Joan alright?” Delilah’s voice seemed to be trembling.

Awakened by the noise, the woman lying on the hospital bed opened her eyes slowly and

looked around her.

White walls, white ceiling, white bedsheets, and a white blanket. It looks like the hospital...

Sitting up slowly, it was at that moment that Joan realized she was drained of all energy.

“Joan, don’t move. Tell me what you want. Let me help you with it,” Larry hurriedly stated.

“Err... It’s alright. I only want to drink some water,” Joan replied in a weary voice.

Upon hearing that, Larry quickly poured a glass of water and handed it to her.

It looks like I haven’t died yet!

A smile crept up on Joan’s face.

Being able to see Larry is such a wonderful thing. Joan slowly ran her fingers across the

man’s cheek.

“Mr. Norton, Mrs. Norton, since you’re both well, we shall leave first,” the bald man suddenly

spoke.

“Hold on!” Joan called out weakly.

The bald man turned around swiftly when he heard her cry. He looked at Joan attentively.

“Thank you. Thank you for saving my life...” The woman enunciated each word with her last

ounce of strength.

The bald man smiled and waved his hand, and he then left directly.

Larry turned to look at Caspian suspiciously, which prompted the latter to run over to Larry’s

side.

“When they went to the village to settle something, they passed by an abandoned garage and heard Joan’s voice,” Caspian explained.

How lucky was I!

Joan grinned.

“Ms. Ward, shouldn’t you pay for the medical fees? Mr. Newman was beaten in such a horrible way!”

Gabriella smirked as she looked at the man standing across from her. They haven’t even got the things I require done, and yet they’re looking for me as soon as they suffer a little loss.

“I think you don’t quite understand the situation here. I’ve paid you to work for me. Now, not only have you failed to accomplish it, but I’m also not being refunded. Despite that, you’re accusing me?” Gabriella asked vilely.

Upon hearing her harsh and sharp words, Lonnie was a little embarrassed.

She was right. They had agreed earlier that the payment was to be made before they took action. Nevertheless, it was out of their expectations that Joan would be such a difficult target to deal with. Now that many of their men were badly injured, they were in a dire need of funds to pay the medical fees. The previous sum given by Gabriella was far from enough.

Lonnie was at a loss.

“I don’t want my money back. Just treat that as I’ve paid for your medical fees.” With that, Gabriella got ready to turn around and leave.

“Hold on, Ms. Ward, can you transfer another sum of money to us for the sake of Mr.

Newman? He has always been fond of you...” Lonnie looked at the woman in front of him very carefully.

Gabriella let out a snort at that stupid request.

Men are all jerks!

“Let’s get clear on one thing—personal feelings shouldn’t be confused and mixed with

business. I’m only involved in business with your boss, nothing else.”

Gabriella spurted her words and left in a huff.

Lonnie remained rooted to the ground as a piercing cold glint flashed across his eyes.

Out of the blue, his phone started chiming.

“Hello, Lonnie, the doctor said Mr. Newman needs to undergo an operation... We need to make the payment instantly!”

At once, Lonnie’s eyes dimmed in despair.

Well, don’t blame me for what will happen next then!

“Hello, is this Larry Norton? I have something to discuss with you...”

Lonnie spoke in an extremely icy tone.

“Alright, send me the address, and I’ll be there in a minute!” Larry hung up the call at that.

He made another call right after. “Hello, Caspian, prepare a sum of money right away. I need it!” Larry instructed with a grim note in his voice.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1916

Chapter 1916 A Filthy Woman

“No, wait, Larry, why do you need so much money all of a sudden? Did something happen?”

Caspian asked in concern.

“Let’s not waste time talking about this for now. I’ll explain it to you later. Just prepare it for me!”

The truth will come out. Gabriella, Gabriella, you’re leaving yourself with no way out by taking it to such an extent.

Larry clenched his fingers tightly in a fist, a livid glint in his eyes.

“Stop right there! Why are you calling Larry? What’s happening? What’s with our previous agreement? Are there no more rules?” Gabriella chided aloud.

Lonnie sniggered.

Rules? Money is the only rule!

“Are rules more important than Mr. Newman’s life?” Lonnie looked at the brutal woman with

a wrathful expression.

Never would he have expected that this woman had been actually spying on him!

“I can give you the sum of money you need. I’ll save your boss’ life!”

Gabriella answered

coldly.

It’s too late!

I’ll never trust what this woman says anymore. When she previously talked Mr. Newman off

the roof, I had thought she was a good woman. But now, I see that she had only done so

because she needed his help. Now, when he’s in great danger, she gives no damn at all, and

even refuses to lend us money to pay for the medical expenses! What a wrench! And now,

when she realizes I’ve contacted Larry, she reneges on her words and says she’ll save Mr.

Newman!

How can I ever believe such a woman!

“There’s no need,” Lonnie replied dispassionately.

All at once, an irate glint glowed in Gabriella’s eyes, and she clenched her fists tightly.

You’re making me do it the hard way!

Gabriella asked in a low voice, “Don’t you want to become the boss instead?”

Lonnie widened his eyes in shock.

“Are you satisfied with being just the second in line?” she continued.

Lonnie snickered. What an atrocious woman. How dare she try to sow discord between Mr.

Newman and I!

“Yes. I like to be the second in line.” With that, the man turned and left.

Gabriella was left alone on the spot with a steely glint in her eyes, so incensed.

Looks like I’m left with no other option!

She retrieved her phone and made a call.

“Hubert, Lonnie bullied me...” Gabriella wracked out some sobs.

“Wha—What did you just say?” Hubert responded weakly.

“Hubert, what happened to you? Where are you now?” Deliberately, Gabriella pretended to

be anxious.

"I'm... at the hospital."

Thirty minutes later, Gabriella appeared in Hubert's ward.

"Hubert, what's Lonnie trying to do? Even if our negotiation didn't turn out well, you can't

burn your bridges. Look at what he's doing now. He's straight away selling me out!"

Gabriella purposefully added that seemingly innocent piece of information.

Hubert had admired the woman for a long time. Naturally, he wouldn't want to see her

aggrieved, not even when the other person involved was his own man.

"Alright, alright, don't be angry anymore. I'll talk to him," Hubert replied in a low voice.

"Mr. Newman!" Out of nowhere, Lonnie barged into the ward with some supplements in his hands.

When he saw Gabriella, he froze on the spot, manifestly astounded.

However, he regained

his composure soon and put on his usual expression.

"Lonnie," Hubert called out to him.

"Mr. Newman, if there's anything you want to tell me, let's wait until you recover, alright?"

Lonnie looked at the bedridden man, deep concern in his eyes.

On the side, Gabriella was evidently agitated, which prompted her to grab the man by the

shoulder. She started shaking it.

"Hubert," she fawned.

At the sight of that, Lonnie understood the situation at once.

This Gabriella is such a filthy woman!

She won't stop using others even when she clearly doesn't like them!

Lonnie clenched his fist tightly, trying his best to contain his anger.

Hubert spoke with some difficulty. "Lonnie, I don't know how much time I have left to live,

so I want to ask you for a favor. Please protect Gabriella well. She is the woman I love most

in this world."

Tears started welling up in Lonnie's eyes, and his heart ached in sorrow.

"Mr. Newman, stop it. You'll get better!" Lonnie's voice was trembling by then.

For a moment, Gabriella was moved by Hubert's words, but the look on her face was soon

replaced with her usual cruel and harsh expression.

Only Larry is worthy of my love. No one else can be the exception!

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1917

Chapter 1917 Stay Away From Him

Gabriella turned to the side and acted as though she hadn't heard anything.

Looking at the cold-hearted way the woman behaved, Lonnie fumed.

"What's wrong, Lonnie? Aren't you supposed to listen to what Hubert says to you?"

Gabriella looked at Lonnie arrogantly with a frosty glint glowing in her eyes.

Lonnie turned around right away and ignored the ruthless woman.

"Stand right there. Aren't you afraid that those will be the last words of your boss?" Gabriella

glared at Lonnie coldly.

Listening to that, Lonnie's heart sank, and his face turned extremely grim.

What? Is this woman about to start another scheme?

Turning around, Lonnie walked slowly toward Gabriella. The look on his face was brutal and

remorseless. A piercing cold glint emanated from his eyes; it looked like he was about to

murder the woman. Gabriella shuddered a little, but she quickly straightened her back and

raised her chin to show her supremacy.

"Ms. Ward, please get your facts right. We are the hooligans here, and you are the heiress of

a well-off family." Lonnie placed his hand on Gabriella's face and put on a playful grin.

What is he trying to do?

Gabriella glared at him fiercely, but in her eyes, there was a glint of fear.

Damn it! He's only working under Hubert. How dare he treat me in such a way!

"If you don't listen to your boss' orders, it means you're going against him. Perhaps you're

trying to replace his position, but do you think the other men would agree to that?"

Gabriella feigned composure as she said that.

“Such a clever woman!” Lonnie lifted her face, and both their faces were so close that the space between them was almost non-existent.

“Let go of me!” Gabriella struggled.

Lonnie sneered. So even this woman can be afraid, too!

“Ms. Ward, please stay away from Mr. Newman in the future. He’s not feeling so well. He

shouldn’t be seeing some filthy and cruel being when he’s sick. If you don’t leave on your

own accord, I don’t mind helping him get rid of stumbling blocks!” With a sudden jerk,

Gabriella was sent over to a corner by Lonnie.

Looking at the figure of the man leaving, Gabriella touched the corner of her mouth with a

trace of fear on her face, where, in fact, ferocity and savagery were much more evident.

After hesitating for a while, she made a call.

“Standby and listen to my instructions!” She ended the call right after.

Perhaps, there’s no longer any reason to waste more energy and time!

Gabriella squeezed her fists tightly at that thought.

The next morning, the sun rose as usual. Everything seemed normal; there wasn’t anything

that looked different or out of place.

It was all good until the tranquility was broken by a phone that started ringing out of the

blue.

“Lonnie, quick! Come to the hospital now. Mr. Newman is dying!”

Upon hearing that, Lonnie got up in an instant and rushed to the hospital at once.

“What happened!” he yelled at the nurse the moment he reached the ward.

The nurse lowered her head with her eyebrows furrowed.

“I... I don’t know. I... I was on duty for the entire night, and he was alright last night, but this

morning...” The nurse looked hesitant and frightened.

“Has anyone come to the ward?” Lonnie asked furiously.

“N—No.”

Looking around, Lonnie suddenly noticed that the large window in the ward was open. He

remembered that he had closed the window when he left yesterday as he had been worried that Mr. Newman would catch a cold.

Damn it!

Lonnie clenched his fist and landed it against the wall forcefully.

“Arrange a surgery for him immediately!” Abruptly, Larry appeared at the hospital.

Looking at Larry, who had suddenly shown up, Lonnie was pleasantly surprised.

“Mr. Norton, I’m sorry to trouble you.” Lonnie rushed over to Larry hurriedly.

Larry waved his hand. “Saving his life is of utmost importance now. Let’s not talk about other things first.”

“Doctor, how’s Mr. Newman doing?” Lonnie quickly asked.

“Fortunately, he was rushed to operation timely. Otherwise, he would have died.” The doctor let out a sigh.

Lonnie’s eyes dimmed in a second.

“Are you alright?” Larry asked him in a low voice.

Lonnie shook his head and didn’t say anything. He might have been greatly affected by Hubert’s condition, so much so that he was in a daze for a very long time.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1918

Chapter 1918 The Fight

Larry had already taken his leave when Lonnie turned around.

The latter immediately dialed a number on his phone.

“Gabiella, are you crazy?” he bellowed.

Gabiella had already known this was coming. Hence, she had already mentally prepared herself for this moment.

“Ah, Lonnie. It’s not fair of you to take it out on me this early in the morning,” she said in a low voice.

Her blatant ignorance of the situation caused Lonnie to explode with fury.

He threw his phone on the ground.

“Get me Gabiella’s location right this instance!” he bellowed to his group of men.

“Larry, where have you been?” Joan was snuggling up with Larry as she spoke.

“Oh, I had some urgent matters to attend to. Why?” Larry stroked her hair lovingly.

“Nothing, I just miss you,” Joan said softly.

She had been out of it ever since she had gotten kidnapped. Hence, Larry had instructed

Caspian to keep a look out for her to make her feel safe.

Ring... Ring...

Joan picked up the phone and saw that it was Lucius’ homeroom teacher calling.

“Hello, is this Lucius’ mother? Your son got into a fight in school. Please hurry over right

now.” The homeroom teacher sounded displeased.

Joan bolted up at that piece of news.

“What happened?” Larry looked at her anxiously.

“Lucius got into a fight,” Joan explained incredulously.

Larry was stunned, but he quickly regained his composure.

They both knew Lucius was a gentle boy. He would never get into a fight under normal circumstances.

“I’ll go with you.” Larry patted Joan’s shoulder.

In the office, Lucius stood in a corner, glaring at a boy who was crying beside him.

“This is not over. My son has never been beaten up before. It’s all his fault!” a woman dressed in elegant clothes shouted.

“Calm down. His parents will be here soon,” the homeroom teacher hurriedly replied.

The woman bent down and patted her son’s back. “Don’t worry, son. Mommy has got your back!”

The crying boy only cried even harder at that.

“Lucius!” Joan shouted the moment she stepped foot into the office.

“Oh, so you’re Lucius’s mother. What a big shot. Your son beat my son up! What are you

going to do about it?” The woman raised her chin and glared at Joan fiercely.

It was obvious that she wasn’t about to let Lucius off easily. The woman looked like a tigress

with her hands on her hips, afro hair, and piercing eyes. Joan walked over to Lucius slowly, totally ignoring the other woman.

“Lucius, are you okay?” she scrutinized the young boy from head to toe.

“Mom, I’m fine,” Lucius replied in a low voice.

“He may be fine, but my son’s not. Look at what he did to my son!” the woman yelled.

“I didn’t do it!” Lucius looked at the woman coldly.

“You brat! How dare you talk back at me? And that glare of yours! I will teach you a lesson

in your mother’s place today!” With that, the woman rolled up her sleeves and rushed up to

Lucius.

Joan immediately stood in front of the boy protectively with her arms outstretched.

“Oh, how protective. Why? Are you going to teach your son a lesson yourself?” the woman sneered coldly.

Joan smirked, turned around, and cleaned Lucius’ face.

“Lucius, did you get into a fight? Tell me honestly,” Joan asked softly.

“Mom, he constantly badmouths you! He even soiled your reputation. I only pushed him

lightly to get him to stop. I didn’t beat him up,” Lucius said with a serious look on his face.

Joan patted his shoulder gently, her actions contradicting the cold glint that flashed in her eyes.

“You heard him. My son didn’t beat your son up. On the contrary, I’m pretty curious to know what your son said about me.” Joan walked up to the crying child slowly and gave him a stern look.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1919

Chapter 1919 Jealous Joan

The child stopped crying immediately.

“Hey kid, what did you say about me?” Joan smiled lightly and asked.

The boy quickly ran behind his mother and began to cry again.

“Hey, what on earth are you doing? How can you bully my son as well?”

The woman pushed

Joan to the floor.

“Mom!” Lucius ran up to Joan and helped her up.

Joan stood up, dusted her clothes, and smiled at Lucius to show that she’s fine.

“Miss, she didn’t bully your son...”

“Shut up!” The woman cut the homeroom teacher off.

The boy behind her cried even more fiercely at that. It was open to debate whether he was doing it on purpose.

“What do you want?” Joan asked coldly.

The woman harrumphed.

They’re probably just ordinary citizens if what they’re wearing is any indication...

She lifted the corner of her lips.

“I want some money to make up for my son’s mental distress, medical fees, and his time.”

The homeroom teacher’s eyes widened to the size of saucers as she listened in on their conversation.

This woman is just making things difficult.

“What about the money to make up for our family’s mental distress and loss of reputation?”

Larry suddenly walked into the office, his presence enveloping the room. The homeroom teacher’s eyes lit up as she covered her mouth incredulously.

The homeroom teacher ran up to Larry. “Mister, you’re...”

“I’m Lucius’ father,” Larry replied nonchalantly.

He had only been gone to pump gas, he wasn’t expecting to be met with such a tense atmosphere the moment he entered.

“Dad!” Lucius threw himself into Larry’s arms.

The homeroom teacher’s face fell at once.

So this is Lucius’ dad. With that thought in mind, she took a few steps back.

“So you’re Lucius’s father. Great, now that his entire family’s here, what are you guys going to do about this?” The woman peered haughtily at Larry and sneered. Larry hadn’t even settled the old scores yet. How dare she get a one-up on him?

“What do you think I should do?” The man stared daggers at the woman.

The woman was stunned by his imposing manner but quickly regained her composure.

“We only want to be compensated for our mental distress. I’ll let the rest slide,” she demanded.

Larry shook his head. This wasn’t what he wanted to hear.

The woman felt a little lost. She didn’t know why the man standing before her looked so intimidating.

“Your son is an uncultured swine!” she snapped.

Larry walked up to the child hiding behind the woman and glared at him.

“So you’re saying your child’s upbringing is better than mine when he badmouths others

behind their back?” he retorted fiercely, leaving the woman tongue-tied.

“Mr. Norton, you should have told me you were coming. I would have sent someone to pick

you up.” Suddenly, a man, who was sweating profusely, burst into the room.

“Honey!” The woman threw herself into the man’s arms and whined coquettishly.

The man immediately ordered, “Get off me!” The woman immediately moved away from

him when she saw the look of contempt on her husband’s face.

Larry looked at the couple in front of him and sneered.

No wonder the kid’s uncultured.

“Mr. Norton, to what do I owe this pleasure?” The man bowed deeply.

“Oh, I heard my son beat your son up,” Larry said slowly.

The man was stunned. He shot Lucius and his son a look before he tried to pacify Larry.

“Oh, Mr. Norton. What are you saying? Your son is simply teaching my son a lesson for bad behavior.”

Larry gave the rude woman a look and sneered.

“Honey! What are you saying? His son beat our son up!” she shouted.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1920

Chapter 1920 Romantic Candlelit Dinner

The man ignored his wife and walked up to the homeroom teacher.

“Ms. Lee, why don’t you tell us the details?”

“Well, your son was indeed bad-mouthing Lucius’ mother in front of the other students.

Lucius lost his cool and pushed him lightly. They didn't get into a fight..."
The crying boy's mother stared daggers at the homeroom teacher. She badly wanted to give the educator a tight slap.

"Ms. Lee, you mustn't lie as an educator!" the woman threatened. Larry immediately walked up to the homeroom teacher and patted her shoulders lightly to calm her nerves.

It was easy to tell who was having the upper hand here. She gave Larry a smile.

"So that's what happened. Mr. Norton, I apologize on behalf of my son." The man bowed once more in apology.

His wife was stunned.

Who the hell is this man? Why is my husband sucking up to him? She glared at Larry fiercely.

Larry trailed on, "But your wife wants us to compensate her for mental distress, medical fees, and..."

"No, no, no, you should be the one to receive compensation from us." The man went flush in the face.

Larry smiled with satisfaction and nodded. "If you insist."

After that, the two children apologized to one another and returned to class.

However, Joan was displeased with the outcome. It was uneventful inside the car en route.

Larry looked at her curiously.

"Joan?" he called out tentatively.

She ignored him as she stared out of the window.

The car suddenly stopped by the roadside.

Larry couldn't stand the awkward atmosphere anymore. "Joan, what happened? Talk to me!"

The woman turned to look at him with a steely glint in her eyes.

Does he really not realize what he has done?

She kept quiet.

Larry slowly crept up to Joan and leaned in toward her. They were so close they could hear each other's heartbeats, making Joan stunned by their proximity.

“Larry, what are you doing?” she asked in a low voice.
He gripped her chin and kissed her on the lips, leaving her completely stupefied.
“Larry!” She pushed him away.
“Calm down!” she panted.
Her reaction made Larry smile.
“Tell me why you’re mad then.” He held on to her hand and gave her a serious look.
“Why did you touch that woman just now?” Joan lifted her chin up.
Larry was confused. Who did I touch?
“I mean Lucius’ homeroom teacher. Is she prettier than me?” Joan tugged on his tie.
All at once, Larry recalled what he had done at the school.
“Oh, no, of course not. The woman was threatening her just now. I was trying to comfort her and calm the teacher’s nerves,” he explained.
“She can tell right from wrong. She’s a teacher. You didn’t need to do that.” Joan glared at Larry.
Larry suddenly burst into laughter.
Joan looked at him, feeling bewildered.
“Just say you’re jealous. Let’s go. I’ll take you out for a nice dinner!”
Larry started the engine and sped off.
Eventually, Joan let the matter slide.
It had been a long while since they had spent time together. Larry felt a little guilty about it.
“I’ll spend the rest of today with you.” He kissed her lightly on the forehead.
His actions warmed Joan’s heart.
Inside the restaurant, soft music coupled with dim lighting made up a romantic atmosphere.
Suddenly, the lights went out.
Joan was so taken aback that she bolted up from her seat.
Whoosh! Their table lit up.
Larry had prepared a romantic candlelit dinner.
“Joan, this is for you.” The man said, gifting her a bouquet of roses.

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1921

Chapter 1921 Evidence

Tears welled up in Joan's eyes as she stared at him.

Meanwhile, in the village, "Grandma, where are my parents?" Lucius asked.

"Oh, they had... something to attend to. They won't be coming back for dinner tonight,"

Delilah replied with a smile.

Lucius tilted his head, confused.

Knock... Knock... Knock...

Delilah immediately put her guard up. The knocking didn't sound familiar to her.

"Who is it?" she shouted.

Nobody answered, but the knocking continued.

Delilah walked up to the door and asked once again.

"Ms. Young, it's me. Open the door!" a man shouted.

He doesn't sound like a robber.

"Ms. Young, is Mr. Norton around? He's not picking up his phone,"

Lonnie asked.

"Oh, he has business to attend to. What's the matter?" Delilah answered cautiously.

"We have something for him to show our appreciation for his help..."

Lonnie explained.

Hubert's surgery had been a success, the man had entered the recovery stage.

"Do tell Mr. Norton I will bring what he wants over tomorrow." Lonnie smiled before walking away.

Delilah watched as Lonnie left. She wasn't sure why, but she felt a little uneasy around the man.

I must be overthinking again.

Delilah shook her head.

She immediately told Larry and Joan about Lonnie upon the couple's return. Larry returned

Lonnie's call soon after.

"Hello, Mr. Norton, are you perhaps free tomorrow? I have a voice recording which I think

you will be very interested in," Lonnie said in a low voice.

"Tomorrow sounds fine. I'll meet you at our usual meeting place." Larry hung up at that.

Gabriella, as soon as I get my hands on all the evidence pointing towards you, you'll be done for.

His eyes flashed with a fierce light.

The next morning, Larry arrived at the café early on and waited for Lonnie's arrival. However, the man didn't show up after a long while.

Larry's face darkened as he pulled out his phone and dialed Lonnie's number. However, nobody picked up.

Larry's blood began boiling at that.

Bam! The door was slammed shut.

Joan could tell something bad was going on when she saw the cold look on Larry's face.

"Larry, what happened?" she walked up to him and asked in a low voice.

"It's nothing," he replied coldly.

She let it slide since he didn't want to talk about it.

It was as if Lonnie had disappeared into thin air as the days went by.

Larry felt a little uneasy about it.

Meanwhile, in the hospital, tears welled up in Hubert's eyes as he stared at the photo in his hand.

Larry strolled into the ward and greeted him. However, Hubert totally ignored his presence.

Larry walked up and saw that it was a photo of Lonnie.

"Where is he?" Larry growled.

What's the meaning of this? He disappeared after telling me he's going to give me the

evidence! Is it the money? Or is he backing out?

Before Larry could grow angrier, he was stunned when he heard Hubert's quivering voice

say, "He's gone, forever."

He left the country? Or...

"My darling Lonnie is gone forever!" Hubert wailed.

Larry immediately understood what was going on. Something had happened to Lonnie.

He immediately contacted Lonnie's lackeys to find out what really happened to the man.

“Mr. Norton, Lonnie’s dead. He was beaten to death,” a man explained in a low voice.

But why aren’t they calling the police?

Larry stared suspiciously at the few men before him.

“We can’t call the police... We’re gangsters ourselves. We’ll be doomed if we do that,” the man explained.

What a cold world this is. They’re just going to pretend they never knew Lonnie since he’s now dead?

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1922

Chapter 1922 Dead

“Are you people even human? You guys are trying to shy away from the responsibilities

when bad things happen. You should find out the truth instead of hiding here!” Larry bellowed.

The men lifted their heads up and looked at Larry coldly.

“What do you know? He was trying to take over Hubert’s position! It was tit for tat.”

“Yeah, he was in the wrong!” they argued.

Little did they know that they had all been played by Gabriella.

The woman, who was hiding in a corner, sneered viciously at the scene unfolding before her eyes.

Things are getting really interesting.

Larry was stunned by their explanations. Even though he wasn’t close with Lonnie, he could

tell that the man’s loyalty had lied with Hubert.

It looks like someone must be fanning the flames.

His eyes flashed with a fierce light at the thought.

“Where is Lonnie now? Where’s his body?” Larry continued.

“I couldn’t find it. Heard that it’s been washed away by the current,” a man said in a wistful tone.

“You went to look for his body?”

“Why? Are you trying to betray Hubert?”

The other men immediately ganged up on him. What a bunch of losers! Larry shot them a look, shook his head, and left.

They can't even see what's happening before their eyes. How are they going to survive in the underworld? How humiliating.

However, what they said about the river...

There was only one river located on the other side of the village.

Did he die on the day we were supposed to meet? Did he pass by the village?

Larry's gaze turned sharp and cold.

"Caspian, I need you to look up someone for me..."

Everyone had thought Lonnie was dead. However, he was lying in the village's clinic at the moment.

"Don't move. You're injured all over," the doctor chided.

Lonnie opened his eyes and took in his surroundings.

Is this heaven?

There's even an angel dressed in white!

He massaged his temples in an attempt to sober up.

"You're awake? Here, have some water." The doctor handed him a glass of water.

"Who in the world did you offend to get beaten up so badly?" the doctor mumbled, more to himself than to his patient.

Lonnie was stunned. So I'm not dead.

He was supposed to meet up with Larry that day. However, he had headed straight for the

village to hand Larry the evidence after finding out that he was being followed. He knew

Larry would return to the village after work every day. However, Lonnie was robbed on his way there.

"Where am I?" Lonnie asked in a low voice.

"You're at a clinic, not a hospital."

Meanwhile, Larry was flipping through some documents irritably in his office.

Ring! Ring! At the sound of his phone ringing, Larry hurriedly picked up the call.

"Boss, he was followed the other day. He was seen driving towards the village, but he

suddenly disappeared," reported Caspian.

My assumptions were right!

After that report, Larry ended the call and stared out the window coldly. Gabriella, how many people are you going to kill before you stop this nonsense?

He balled his fists angrily.

Bam!

His office door was suddenly kicked open.

"It's been a long time, Lars." Gabriella flipped her hair enticingly.

Larry turned around and glared daggers at her.

How dare she show up in front of me now? Reckless woman!

"What are you doing here?" he asked fiercely.

He wasn't able to prove Gabriella guilty yet due to a lack of evidence.

"I came because I miss you, of course." Gabriella purposefully walked up to Larry, making

sure to sway her hips as she made her way to him.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1923

Chapter 1923 Hide

"What's wrong? Is Joan being too strict with you these days?" Gabriella teased, posing

seductively.

Larry let out a scoff and turned around.

"Get to the point. I'm a busy man."

The woman stared at Larry helplessly. She was aware of how he was dismissing her.

Larry, I'm not going to let you have your happily ever after since I can't have you for myself.

She dug her nails into the flesh of her palm.

Bam! The clinic's door was flung open, giving the doctor inside a scare.

"Mr. Norton, why are you here?" The doctor peered at Larry curiously.

"I'm looking for someone."

His tone sent shivers down the doctor's spine.

Joan wasn't around, and the clinic only consisted of doctors and patients.

Who in the world

is he looking for?

"Mr. Norton, Joan's not around..."

The doctor quickly shut herself up when she saw the look on his face.

Fine. Whatever. I'll just let him do whatever he likes.

The doctor nodded goodbye and walked to a hut beside the clinic to have lunch with

Lonnie.

"Who came?" Lonnie asked with his guard up.

He would be dead meat if it were the same men who had beaten him up.

"It's nothing. Eat up. Ignore it." The doctor chewed on a piece of meat as she spoke.

Larry had searched through most of the wards, but Lonnie was nowhere to be found.

Did Caspian get it wrong?

Larry pulled out his phone and called the man.

"Caspian, did you give me wrong information?" he asked impassively.

"No, boss, he's definitely there. I'm sure of it!" Caspian said determinedly.

Larry's expression grew grim.

Suddenly, he noticed a small hut beside the clinic. It was where the doctor cooked and had

her meals. Larry slowly walked up to the door. He knocked lightly.

"What is it?" the doctor called out.

"Can I come in?" Larry asked politely.

In that instance, Lonnie panicked. "Oh no, I need to hide."

"Why? He's not here for you." The doctor grabbed Lonnie's arm.

However, Lonnie felt it was better to be safe than sorry in these trying times.

Larry placed his ear on the door and listened in.

She's having a conversation! Larry furrowed his brows.

"Doc, it's kind of complicated. I'll explain everything to you later. Can you please help hide

me first..." Lonnie said anxiously.

The doctor became alert as she stared at man before him.

He's not a wanted criminal, is he?

"Hurry!" Lonnie wailed.

The doctor was so terrified upon that thought that she immediately pointed at the

cupboard beside her and watched as Lonnie hid himself there.

The doctor took a deep breath, calmed herself down, and opened the door.

She smiled awkwardly when she came to face Larry. "Mr. Norton, how can I help you?"

The man barged into the hut and looked around.

"Were you alone just now?" he asked coldly.

The doctor hesitated for a bit, deciding to cover up for Lonnie in the end.

"Yeah, I was alone," she replied cautiously.

Larry regarded her with eyes that held suspicion.
Why is she lying? She wasn't alone just now.
"Doctor, have you seen a green-haired man anywhere?"
She hesitated for a bit before denying.
Larry could tell that she was lying based on her awkward reaction.
However, he didn't understand why she was doing it.
Lonnie held his breath as he hid in the cupboard. Even though the man's voice sounded familiar, he dared not reveal himself because he couldn't seem to recall whose voice it belonged to.
After a brief exchange, Larry left the clinic and walked over to Delilah's house.
"Larry, what happened?" Why do you look so glum these days?" Joan questioned worriedly as she went to grab hold of his arms.
Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1924
Chapter 1924 The Clinic
Larry's eyes lit up as an idea flashed in his mind. "Joan, aren't you close friends with the doctor in the clinic?" He looked at her, questioning in his gaze.
The woman stared at him blankly before answering him. "Yes, I am."
"Why don't you invite her over for a meal?" Larry suggested all of a sudden.
What's he plotting this time? Joan looked at him suspiciously with a hint of curiosity in her eyes.
"Hey, don't look at me like that. Think about it. You both share a great relationship. It'll make sense to have her over for a meal. Besides, we could ask her to take good care of Delilah if we were to leave one day..." Larry quickly responded.
He's right. Why didn't I think of that? Joan nodded slowly at his words.
I'm glad Larry's a thoughtful and considerate man. We should establish a good relationship with her in case anything happens in the future.
"Alright. Let me give her a call then," Joan said softly.
The corner of Larry's lips curled into a grin.

“Joan, I’ll head out now,” Larry shouted when he saw Joan hang up the call.

The woman whipped her head towards the direction of his voice and hurriedly ran up to him.

“What’s going on with you? It was your idea to have her over for dinner, and now you’re heading off?” Displeasure was written all over her face.

“I...” Larry hesitated as he tried to think of an excuse to leave.

“I received a call earlier from the office. Something urgent came up that needs to be dealt

with immediately,” he stated, praying Joan would take the bait.

Why’s it always work? Joan crossed her arms and looked at him unhappily.

“Come on; I’ll be back right away as soon as I get it settled, alright? I promise I’ll be back

before you finish dinner,” Larry said as he tapped on his chest lightly.

Forget it. I know he’s working hard for the sake of the family.

“Okay, go ahead. Please be careful,” Joan said.

Larry pulled her into his arms, kissing the top of her head gently.

Soon enough, the lady from the clinic arrived at Delilah’s residence.

At the same time, Larry arrived the entrance of the clinic.

The lights in the clinic were still on; it was just as he expected!

Larry curled his lips into a playful grin as he stared at the clinic.

Upon seeing a child in the clinic, he walked up to him, squatted down, and said, “I need you

to do me a small favor. All you need to do is knock on the door, tell the doctor that you

have a stomachache, and ask for a prescription.”

He continued, “Take this. But, you have to promise me that you’ll keep this a secret. Can you

do that for me?” Larry tapped on the child’s shoulder gently as he passed him some money.

The child smiled in delight at the deal being offered. “I will not disappoint you, sir!”

Knock! Knock! Knock!

Lonnie instantly grew alert at the sound. He shot a sharp glance at the door.

“Doctor, please open the door! My stomach hurts! Please give me some medicine!” The

child cried out, clutching his stomach, true to his act.

Lonnie let out a sigh of relief. Oh, it's a child!

No one answered the door.

The child looked at Larry and frowned, beginning to think there weren't any doctors in the clinic.

Larry looked at the closed door thoughtfully. Hmm... I knew this would happen. But fear not, everything's going just as planned.

"It's okay, go on," Larry whispered as he waved the money, giving the boy initiative to continue.

The child instantly went back to "work" with even more enthusiasm.

"Doctor, please open up! My stomach hurts so much!" the child shouted.

No one in the clinic responded to his cry once again.

The child decided to try a different approach as he threw himself on the ground and cried loudly.

"Help! Someone help me! I'm dying in pain!"

Larry was shocked at the child's behavior.

Lonnie could not bear to see the child in so much pain. Hence, he opened the door of the clinic and walked out.

Larry snagged that chance. He rushed up to Lonnie and grabbed him by the neck.

Both Larry and Lonnie were stunned when they saw each other. On the other hand, the child was still busy crying on the ground.

"Erm, kid? You can stop now. Your work here's done!" Larry chuckled as he handed him the money.

The child's eyes sparkled in joy, and he sprung from the ground, running off with the money clutched tightly in his hand.

"Mr. Norton?" Lonnie asked in surprise as he stared at the man before him.

"So it was you," Larry said as he observed his surroundings.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1925

Chapter 1925 Witness

“Come on, let’s talk inside,” Lonnie suggested.

Larry’s eyes darkened when Lonnie explained what had happened to him.

“So, who do you think was behind all this?” he asked tentatively.

Who else could it be besides Gabriella? I can’t think of anyone else who’d be so cruel to want Lonnie dead so badly.

“I’m pretty sure it’s Gabriella. She even persuaded me to take over Mr. Newman’s place, but I rejected her...” Lonnie muttered.

Suddenly, everything made sense to Larry. No wonder everyone was indifferent towards Lonnie’s incident!

“What are you planning to do next?” Larry asked him in a serious tone.

“Mr. Norton, I was thrown into the river. Therefore, the recording is now nowhere to be found. I can’t provide you any sort of evidence now. However, I do a copy. But...” Lonnie hesitated.

“What’s wrong?” Larry urged.

“Gabriella wouldn’t have let me off so easily. Thus, I guess she would have sent someone to look for the recording that’s kept in my house,” Lonnie answered as his eyes dimmed.

He’s right. Gabriella has always been very cautious when dealing with such matters.

“Send me the address. I’ll go take a look,” Larry said.

Lonnie was going through a rough time, so Larry advised him to stay at the clinic until he gets better. He’s a witness, after all. I can’t let anything happen to him.

“Mr. Norton!” Lonnie called out with an embarrassed expression on his face.

“Please take care of Mr. Newman too,” Lonnie said softly.

What a righteous man!

Larry’s lips curled into a smile as he gestured an “okay” sign to him and left.

“Larry, I think the person has gone abroad.” Caspian looked at him cautiously.

Larry was looking out of the window and didn’t seem to hear Caspian’s words.

The former spoke after a long time, "You can put that matter on hold for now. I need you to do something else."

I wonder when I will ever find peace when there's so much going on?

Sadness flashed

before his eyes as he recalled the incidents in the past.

"You're mom's a homewrecker! I'm sure of it!"

"She's not!" Lucius defended.

"Yes, she is! She seduced the president of a big company and the husband of her best

friend..."

"You're mom's a terrible woman..." A few classmates blurted out as they gathered around

Lucius.

"You're mom's a b*tch!"

"You're just as terrible as your mom!" The children hurled one insult after another.

"Shut up! No, she's not!" Lucius shouted.

"Lucius." Joan appeared by the corner at that moment in time.

"Mom." Lucius ran into Joan's arms and hugged her tightly.

Joan instantly knew that he had been mistreated. She comforted him, patting his back

lightly.

"Mom, you're not a homewrecker, are you? You didn't seduce your best friend's husband."

Lucius looked at her expectedly, his eyes filled with tears.

Joan did not answer him right away. The whole matter was rather complicated.

There was no romance between Larry and Gabriella, nor did he ever acknowledge her as his

girlfriend. Thus, I don't understand why others assume I seduced him.

Besides, I don't

believe she has ever treated me as her bestie.

"Lucius, things are much more complicated between us adults. But I promise you that I

haven't done anything against my conscience," Joan explained as she looked at the young

boy.

Lucius let out a bright smile as soon as he heard her words. He chose to believe whatever

Joan told him.

“Mom, I’m craving for buffalo wings today,” Lucius said cheekily as he held Joan’s hand.

“Sure. I’ll also make some other favorite dishes of yours, alright?” she replied as she pinched his cheeks adoringly.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1926

Chapter 1926 Rumors

Gabriella stood by a corner and watched the two of them leave. She observed them like a hungry wolf, waiting to pounce on its prey.

My dear Joan, I’m coming for you! Gabriella thought to herself as she clenched her fists.

“Dad!” Lucius threw himself into Larry’s arms as soon as he arrived home.

Larry was very pleased to see the boy and tightly hugged him back.

“Dad, you’ll only love Mom forever, right?” Lucius suddenly piped.

Oh my, how can he be interested in love at such a young age? Larry looked at him

questioningly as his lips curled into a grin.

“What’s wrong, Lucius? Are you in love?” Larry pinched Lucius’s cheeks playfully.

“Dad, a good man should only love one woman for the rest of his life,” the young boy said deliberately.

What’s going on? Why’s he behaving so weirdly today? Larry looked at him suspiciously.

“Lucius, did you hear something today at school?” he asked softly.

Lucius glanced gloomily at Joan, who was busy cooking in the kitchen.

Noting his hesitance,

Larry quickly carried the child into his room.

“Lucius, you must tell me if there’s anything wrong. We’re a family, and I don’t want to see

you or Mom getting hurt,” Larry said seriously.

“My classmates called Mom a homewrecker after school today. They even said she took

away the husband of her bestie...” Lucius uttered with his head hung low.

Larry’s gaze darkened as soon as he heard that sentence.

Why are all these past matters being brought up again? In fact,
everything that's been
circulating is all fake!
Damn, it seems like you're ready for a battle, Gabriella!
Larry clenched his fists tightly, anger flashing in his eyes. I would have
sent you to jail if it
wasn't for the destroyed evidence!
"Come here, Lucius. Remember this. Your mom's not a homewrecker,
nor did she seduce
anyone's husband or boyfriend. Could you tell me who told you all this?"
Larry asked,
looking expectantly at the young boy in front of him.
"It was from a classmate of mine in school!" the boy answered softly.
How could she use a child to carry out her dirty plans!
"Okay. How about this? I'll pick you up from school tomorrow. How does
that sound?"
Meanwhile, Gabriella was handing a child a handful of candy. "Here, you
did great
yesterday."
"Thank you, Madam. Shall I continue doing so today as well?" The child
took the candy
offered and glanced at Gabriella's beautiful face in adoration.
"Yes. Do your best today!" the woman said deliberately.
The child soon left happily with the candy in hand.
Oh, Joan, I always knew you disliked rumors. So, here's a taste of what
you fear most! Let's
see how well your beloved Lucius can take all of this! Don't blame me for
this. You deserve
every bit of what's in store for you! Gabriella stared at the school, lost in
thought.
Once again, Lucius was surrounded by the same bunch of kids yesterday.
They laughed and
ridiculed him.
"Hold up!" A man ordered as the children went silent.
They stopped in their tracks and turned around slowly to face the
mysterious voice. The
children took a few steps back as they watched Larry approach them
slowly.
"What did you all just say?" he asked emotionlessly.

Lucius instantly knew Larry was mad and was about to lose his temper. The man was never one to lose his temper easily. However, he'd become a demon once he does.

"We weren't talking about you, sir," a boy answered cutely.

Larry smiled as he tapped the child's shoulder lightly.

"I know you weren't. But do you know what you're doing was defamation and you would be held legally responsible? However, you're just children. Perhaps your parents would have to

face the consequences on your behalf?" Larry threatened softly.

"No! I don't want my Dad to go to prison!" a young girl cried out.

The group of children instantly panicked as they turned and glanced at their leader.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1927

Chapter 1927 Happy Family Once Again

"Boss, I quit. I don't want your candy anymore. I have to go home now."

a boy said as he hurriedly ran off.

"Boss, I have to be home for dinner. I'd be in big trouble if I get home late. So, I'll get going now!"

In a blink of an eye, the child who started the ridicule was the only one left. The children disappeared one by one.

The only child left was now frightened. He froze in place and dared not move.

"What's wrong?" Larry asked him gently, warning lacing his tone.

"I'm sorry. Madam told me to this and gave me these candies in return.

Please, don't send my parents to jail!" the child begged, teary-eyed.

Larry hesitated.

Ugh, forget it. He's just a child whom that woman made use of.

He let out a sigh and caressed the teary-eyed child's head.

"Then promise me that you'll never do something like this again, alright?" Larry asked.

"Okay, sir. Thank you." The child burst into tears of relief.

"I'm sorry, Lucius. I've been very mean to you in the past. Could you forgive me?"

A child was as innocent as a lamb. If one knew that their actions would cause harm to their parents, they would surely stop immediately.

"Alright, I forgive you. We're friends, after all." Lucius smiled.

The two children reconciled and became good buddies once again.

Damn it! Gabriella, who was watching the scene, smashed her fist into a wall.

Why did he appear? Her eyes burned in anger.

"Mom!" Lucius rushed into Joan's arms.

"Mom, I have good news..." He leaned into her ear excitedly.

Joan was touched when she heard Lucius tell her how Larry had settled the problems that

bothered her. Her heart filled with warmth from his actions; she felt very grateful to have the man in her life.

"Mom, I believe both you and Dad love and respect each other. I want you two to live a long

life as a couple!" Lucius exclaimed happily as he patted his chest.

Wow... He may be young, but he seems to know a lot of things. How mature of him.

"Oh wow, look at you go." Joan stared at Lucius as she planted a kiss on his forehead

lovingly.

Ding! Ding! Ding...

Larry looked at his phone and quickly picked up the call.

"Larry, it seems like someone's been here before. Everything's a mess," Caspian reported.

I knew it! We were too late after all! But since when did Gabriella become so meticulous?

Larry pondered the situation as he squinted his eyes. Does her change have anything to do with her trip overseas?

"Take a good look around. Lonnie said there's a USB drive he kept well hidden. Try to see if

there's any other evidence that might be useful to us," Larry answered.

The men exchanged a few more words before the call was ended by Larry.

He looked out of the window, deep in thought.

Ring! Ring!

Suddenly, his phone rang once again.

“Hello, Mr. Norton? When are you returning to the office? A few directors of the board have decided to resign. They intend to cash out or sell their shares to someone else...” His assistant sounded panic-stricken.

Larry’s eyes turned colder if it were even possible.

What are these old foxes up to this time?

“Alright, I’ll return tomorrow morning.”

Why’s everything spiraling out of my control? So many things have happened one after

another. First, it was my family, and now it’s the company. Larry’s head began to ache at the

thought of everything as he rubbed his temples.

Upon seeing Larry so drained, Joan asked worriedly, “What’s wrong? Are you feeling unwell?”

Larry looked at her and held her in his arms, drawing his lips close to her hair.

“It’s nothing,” he replied tiredly.

Joan knew he was exhausted from taking care of matters in the household and the office

and wanted to ease his burden.

“Larry, leave the household matters to me from now onwards. Now, I know what you’re

going to say. But, don’t worry. We’re not in the city, so there shouldn’t be any trouble. You

should focus on your company matters.” She leaned against his chest as she spoke.

The man kept quiet as he hugged her tightly in his arms.

The next day, Larry left for the company in the morning.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1928

Chapter 1928 Leave Or Stay

“Mr. Norton, I would like to live a quiet and relaxing life now that I’m old. So please...”

“Indeed, we’ve passed our prime...” the Shareholders each voiced their reasons as they

glanced at Larry in disdain.

Larry closed his eyes and took a deep breath to calm himself.

The show must go on despite whoever leaves Norton Corporation.

“Alright. I believe you’ve already made up your mind. So, would you like to cash out your shares to me or someone else?” Larry asked directly without wasting any time.

The shareholders looked shocked by the fact that he had agreed so easily. They had not expected Larry to do so without a fight.

They had merely wanted to threaten Larry in hopes that the man would be more respectful towards them. Their last resort had been to ultimately leave the company.

Norton Corporation had gone through countless challenges to become the company it was today. Thus, no one was willing to cause trouble. No one wanted to fight over the so-called benefits for themselves, especially at the age of retirement. Their lives were what was deemed the most important!

“Mr. Norton, is this something you’ve always looked forward to?” a Shareholder queried all of a sudden.

Larry let out a cold laugh as he shot the man an icy glare.

“My dear shareholders, I believe you’ve witnessed how far the Norton Corporation has come all this while. It wasn’t an easy journey; we faced many problems like any other corporation out there. We’ve overcome so many challenges together. Therefore, I hold a clear conscience against every one of you. Yet, now you’ve decided to leave as you please.

Haven’t you thought of my feelings? Larry slammed his palms flat on the table.

The shareholders were taken back by his words. The tension in the atmosphere intensified.

“I was the one who took matters into my own hands when the company was in deep waters.

On the other hand, you only showed support when the company was making a profit. So, what do you all want now? You wish to resign altogether? Go ahead. I’ll sign it right away as

soon as you hand me your resignation letter. That's all!" Larry got up and headed towards the door.

"Mr. Norton!" a Shareholder called out.

"Let's talk this out. We shouldn't fight among one another, especially when the company's in a stable condition," the shareholder said.

"There's no need for that. I've decided to withdraw my shares!" a senior shareholder claimed.

Larry grunted coldly as he side-eyed that particular shareholder.

In fact, the remaining shareholders had not planned to withdraw their shares. Yet, they were

now under the pressure of the senior shareholder to do the same thing.

All of them had

joined forces only because they were convinced that Larry wouldn't provide them with the

best benefits. Nevertheless, Larry was aware that some shareholders did not intend to

participate in this drama.

"I'll give you three days to consider. If you choose to stay, you will be rewarded. If not,

please feel free to leave!" Larry said flatly as he left.

I've had enough with these people.

A few shareholders instantly got up and left while a few senior shareholders remained

seated in the meeting room.

"Mr. Norton!" A shareholder suddenly rushed up to Larry.

Larry knew that that particular man had been forced by the others, but he was mad that the

shareholder had succumbed under pressure.

The startled staggered backward when Larry shot him a cold look.

"Erm, Mr. Norton? I would... like to have a chat with you," the man stuttered.

"We'll talk in my office," Larry quipped.

After that rectification, the company regained its peace. The greedy "old foxes" got what

they wanted as they cashed out their shares and invested the money in other companies.

On the other hand, some shareholders returned to their hometowns to live peacefully.

“Mr. Norton, besides those who returned to their hometowns, the other shareholders have

all sold their shares,” his assistant reported.

Well, I’m not surprised. I knew they would do so.

“Find out who they sold it to,” he answered coldly.

“There’s no need for that.” a man interrupted as he walked into the office.

Larry looked at the newcomer questioningly, unconvinced.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1929

Chapter 1929 Surprise Surprise

Could it be him?

“You’re right. It’s me,” Dustin said, walking over to a sofa to take a seat.

“Could you give us a moment?” Larry gestured to his assistant.

“What do you want?” the man questioned as he got up to walk over to the other man in the room.

Dustin sneered.

What’s with the face? Is he scared?

“What else can I do? I merely bought some shares,” Dustin answered.

Those scumbags! How could they sell the shares to him when they knew we have beef!

Larry clenched his fists tightly in anger.

“I’ll do my best, Mr. Norton. It’ll be nice working with you!” Dustin walked towards Larry and stretched out his right hand.

No wonder you’re a doctor. Look how hypocritical you look!

Larry grunted.

“Mr. Silverman, it’s been a while! I look forward to a great cooperation with you as well!” he

grumpily said and shook Dustin’s outstretched hand.

Ring! Ring!

Gabriella glanced at the caller ID and answered the call immediately.

“Hello, Ms. Ward. We’ve looked around a few times, but we still can’t find the recording

you’ve mentioned,” a man reported.

Useless trash! Why can’t you find it?

Gabriella frowned, her eyes narrowing in deep contemplation.

“Keep looking! He must have a backup hidden somewhere in the house!” she yelled.

“We’ve searched the house several times, and there’s no sign of it. Besides...” the man hesitated.

“Besides what?” the woman asked coldly.

“Besides us, I believed someone else came by looking for something as well,” the man answered.

Damn it!

Gabriella gripped her hands tightly.

Could it be Larry? Her eyes dimmed at the thought.

“Find it! I don’t care how you do it. Even if you have to flip the house upside down to get it,

do it! Or else, you won’t get the remaining money I promised!” Gabriella hung up in a huff after that.

Oh Larry, I guess I’ve underestimated you!

Gabriella gritted her teeth.

“Boss, I found a USB drive, but...” Caspian trailed off.

“But what?” Larry urged.

“But the USB drive’s in bad shape,” Caspian finished.

“Bring it back here. We’ll try to fix it,” Larry instructed before he hung up.

Yes! We’ve finally found it! There’s nowhere to run now, Gabriella!

Larry eyed the corner of his office, the anger in his eyes slowly subsiding.

However, he soon

heard a sharp cry.

“Excuse me, Miss! You aren’t permitted go in there!” Larry’s assistant yelled.

Larry frowned as he listened to the commotion going on outside his office. Well, who would

cause such a huge commotion besides Gabriella?

“Larry!” The woman he had in mind approached him sweetly.

“What do you want? I’m busy.” He didn’t look up to meet her gaze.

“Larry, have you forgotten what day it is?” She batted her eyelashes at him.

He did not respond.

Anything related to you has nothing to do with me!

Gabriella grew anxious when she noticed Larry ignoring her. The man flipped through his documents in silence, his eyes looking anywhere but her.

“Larry, it’s my birthday today!” she yelled.

The man sneered. How does that concern me?

“Larry, my Dad kicked me out because of you. It’s my birthday today, so can’t you spend the day with me?” Gabriella asked cautiously.

I bet it’s just an excuse for you to cause trouble!

She looked at his emotionless expression, waiting for a response.

“I’m very busy. Go find someone else to bother,” Larry replied.

“Come on, Larry. Let’s have a meal together, okay? I have no one left but you.” Gabriella looked at him sadly, playing with her absentmindedly as she did so, Larry blinked as if considering her request, but he quickly regained his usual expression.

“Let me make this clear once again, Gabriella. It’s your fault that you didn’t handle your relationship with your family well. I have nothing to do with it! Furthermore, if you dare try to mess with Joan again, I won’t let you off!” Larry warned as he looked at her, a deadpan expression on his handsome face.

She really leaves no stones unturned! First, the village, and then Lucius’s school!

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1930
Chapter 1930 Smooth Criminal

“What are you talking about, Lars? How could I make a move on Joan when I haven’t even seen her recently?”

It irked Gabriella that Larry had rebuffed her numerous attempts to go on a date.

Damn you, Joan Watts! This is all your fault!

Gabriella’s demeanor turned biting cold.

“How’s it going?” Larry asked impassively.

“Hmm. This one’s a complete goner, Larry,” Caspian said with finality.

Larry’s face was filled with disappointment as he looked at the damaged USB drive. He didn’t know that it contained nothing more than the daily mundanes of Lonnie, Hubert and

the rest of their gang.

“Forget it.” He took it back.

“I found many electronics and some maintenance tools in his room. He might be trying to fix this thing too.”

Larry’s eye lit up suddenly, and he rushed down to the village’s clinic with the drive in hand.

Thump! Thump! Thump! One could hear the urgency from the continuous knocking.

“Who is it?” the doctor asked aloud.

“Larry.”

“Mr. Norton’s cool. Let him in,” Lonnie said with a smile.

As soon as he saw Larry, he asked, “Do you have it?” The latter checked the surrounding,

shut the door quickly, and pulled Lonnie into the house.

“Is this it? Can you fix a damaged USB drive?” Larry handed him the item.

“You took the wrong one.” Lonnie’s dismay was instantaneous. “I kept it in the corner,

sandwiched between the pages of a book. How could you miss it? Hold up. Has anyone else

been to my place?” he asked cautiously.

Larry nodded.

“Damn, these f*ckers are fast!” Lonnie cursed as he clenched his fists.

“What’s important now is for you to stay here and keep yourself safe.

They must be looking

all over for you on Gabriella’s orders. I know she’ll want to see your body even if you’re

dead.” Larry patted his shoulders.

“What about my boss, Mr. Norton?” Lonnie looked worried.

“I’ll go and check on him at the hospital later.”

All of Hubert’s earlier medical expenses were covered by Larry, who was tied up recently to make regular visits.

That was his promise to Lonnie, whose loyalty was what drew Larry to him in the first place.

After a brief exchange, Larry left the clinic and drove to the hospital.

“Mr. Norton,” greeted the doctor deferentially.

“How is he?”

“Physically, he’s fine, but...” the man appeared hesitant.

“But what?” Larry regarded the man before him inquisitively.
“Mentally, he’s not all there. According to his boys, Lonnie’s attempt to usurp his position shocked him,” the doctor replied calmly.
What a load of bullsh*t!
Larry thought as he glared at the men standing guard at the door. Hubert was looking at Lonnie’s photo and weeping when I last visited. What could have made him lose his mind?
Larry secretly sensed that something was amiss.
“Ms. Ward!”
Gabriella unexpectedly appeared in front of him.
“Ah, what are you doing here, Larry?” she asked as she primped her hair.
“Got some stuff to sort out. You...” Larry’s gaze shifted between Gabriella and Hubert, who was laying in the ward.
“Oh, I’m here to visit a friend.” Gabriella then gestured toward Hubert. Larry smirked. She thinks I’m a fool!
The men standing guard clearly addressed her as Ms. Ward. It would seem that she already had them wrapped around her finger.
Gabriella, Gabriella. Aren’t you something? Pulling this off so smoothly!
Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1931
Chapter 1931 Dumplings
“Looking great today, Ms. Ward,” one of the boys commented.
Gabriella turned and shot the man a look, which shut him right up.
“It’s such a wonderful coincidence for us to run into each other today. Why don’t we go grab a bite together?” she said as she rested her right hand on Larry’s shoulders.
He shrugged her off rather strongly, which left the woman feeling a little awkward.
“Is he bothering you, Ms. Ward?” The men left their positions at the door behind and approached.
Gabriella forced out a smile and waved them off.
“It’s fine. I’m just joking around with my friend here,” she said.
“I’ve other things to attend to, so I should get going.” With that, Larry turned to leave.

Gabriella watched the silhouette of the departing man fade before she hurled the thermal

insulated container in her hand onto the floor. That shocked the men.

Just you wait, Larry Norton. One day, I'll have you begging!

The woman's gaze was scorching.

Ding, ding, ding...

Larry answered phone quickly after one quick glance at the incoming caller ID.

"Hey Larry, when will you be coming back? Ms. Young and I have prepared the dumplings.

We're just waiting to put them to pot," Joan said.

"I miss you so much, Daddy!" Another energetic voice came through the other end of the phone.

That put a smile of gratification on Larry's face.

He loved his life. His wife and kid would wait at home in the evenings for him to come back

from work. That felt more like home.

"Hey, look what you've done, Lucius. You've gotten flour all over my face," Joan groaned.

"He did it on purpose." Delilah chuckled.

A warm and fuzzy feeling crept into Larry hearing their voices from the other end of the

phone. All his troubles seemed to have evaporated there and then.

"You must come back quickly, Daddy," the cheeky boy said.

"Okay, I will be right back."

It was already dark by the time he returned home. Larry thought they would be done with

dinner, but to his surprise, everyone was waiting for him in the living room.

"Oh good. I'll go put them to boil now." Delilah yawned.

"You're finally back, Daddy." Lucius stretched himself, as though he had just woke up.

Larry had to make a detour to his office when he was halfway home. He received a call

pertaining to a matter that required his immediate attention. He had expressly informed

Joan of this over the phone and asked them not to wait.

"Why haven't all of you eaten yet?" Larry looked at Joan in astonishment.

“We were waiting for you. Ms. Young said the dumplings taste better when we have them

together as a family,” she replied with a slight smile.

“Ms. Young.” Larry walked steadily toward Delilah, feeling profoundly moved.

“Alright. Save your mushiness for your Joan!” she quipped with a laugh.

“No, save them for me! I want to eat more today!” Lucius abruptly chimed in.

That had the entire family in stitches.

...“I’ve found him, Larry,” Caspian said.

Larry jumped to his feet. “Where is he?”

“Already here.”

Larry smirked.

Finally! The man ecstatically pumped his fists.

Bang! The door was kicked wide open.

Larry stared murderously at the disheveled man who lay unconscious on the floor.

“He’s an addict,” Caspian stated plainly.

No wonder he asked for so much money! Larry regarded the man frostily.

Splash!

The man finally came to after a bucket of cold water was poured unreservedly on him. “Who

are you people?” he asked as he slowly stirred.

Suddenly, his eyes widened upon recognizing Larry.

“Why am I here, Mr. Norton?” the man asked in feigned ignorance.

Larry sneered and snuffed out the cigarette between his own fingers. He had stopped

smoking for a long time. However, after what befell Joan, he kept up the habit every night

until her reemergence.

Chapter 1932 The Race For The Evidence Part 1

“What’s going on now? Don’t you know the rules of the trade? What are you trying to prove

by disappearing on me?” Larry glared at the man on the floor.

“I’m so sorry, Mr. Norton. I’ve my reasons, so please let me off.” The addict abruptly got on

his knees and begged, appearing quite aggrieved.

Larry walked steadily and squatted down in front of the man.

“What reasons could you possibly have?” He lifted the latter’s chin and asked expectantly in a low voice.

“Whatever it is, you should not have played me out!” With a powerful strike, he sent the man hurtling towards the side of the room.

The man touched his bloodied lips and evoked a look of piteousness.

“Mr. Norton, I told you everything about the traffic accident. I was just passing through by chance that day. I really know nothing about the driver who was responsible.”

Larry snorted at his hasty explanation and said, “Hand him over to the cops and let them deal with him.”

“No, please don’t do this, Mr. Norton!” The man panicked.

Larry walked off without looking back. He was not in the habit of giving second chances.

Twice! Gabriella, oh Gabriella. Who the h*ll embolden you?

Thump!

Larry furiously drove a fist into the wall.

“How’s the search going?”

“We’ve looked everywhere, but there’s no sign of that white USB drive he mentioned. Could someone else have taken it, or did Lonnie remember it wrong?” Caspian asked, quite concerned.

“I don’t believe so,” Larry replied.

He knew that Gabriella, too, was on the lookout for the USB drive.

Otherwise, there wouldn’t

be so many people actively searching for it apart from Caspian.

“Why don’t we take him along?” the bodyguard asked.

It is not a bad idea, but...

Larry furrowed, somewhat hesitant. I can’t risk his life for the evidence!

“In that case, increase the manpower. You’ve to ensure his safety.” He

regarded Caspian

intently.

Knock. Knock. Knock.

“Mr. Norton.”

For some reason, Larry felt uneasy when he saw Lonnie.

When his intention was explained to him, Lonnie readily agreed.

"Don't worry, Mr. Norton. Rest assured that I'll do my best."

"Remember. Your safety is the most important thing, no matter what happens. Even if the evidence is lost, we're good, so long as you are safe. Do you understand?"

Lonnie was touched.

Apart from Hubert, Larry was the only other person who cared about him.

The very next day, Caspian escorted Lonnie to the house as planned.

"We should be good. I've brought along more men this time," the bodyguard said as he placed a comforting hand on the latter's shoulders.

Lonnie merely smiled.

"There's a vehicle on our tail," a middle-aged man suddenly said.

Caspian turned and saw that they were indeed being followed. He was curious to see what would happen next.

"In that case, we shan't go there. Circle the area."

"Here they come," Lonnie said grimly with his head lowered.

"Who are these people?"

"Some boys who served under me."

Caspian was astounded.

Are they going to kill their own second-in-command?

"Why?" he regarded Lonnie quizzically.

"They're manipulated into believing that I'm after Mr. Newman's position. But I'm not."

That woman must be responsible for this! How many more people does she want to ruin before she'll stop?

"Gabriella's behind this," Lonnie continued.

Gabriella again!

There was a murderous glint in Caspian's eyes.

Chapter 1933 The Race For The Evidence Part 2

"You're right, Caspian. They're still onto us," the middle-aged man said.

Caspian quickly pulled out his phone and made a call. "Hey, pull over and stop the vehicle behind us! Make it fast!"

A third car then abruptly put itself between the two vehicles. From it, a couple of men alighted and went straight for that vehicle on their tail.

Ring, ring, ring...

Caspian glanced at the display and picked up promptly.

"Pull out and return immediately. You must ensure his safety!" Larry said.

"Understood!" Caspian ended the call and instructed, "Back the way we came."

"Aren't we headed there?" Lonnie asked.

"Larry wants to prioritize your safety," Caspian replied as he monitored the rear in vigilance.

Unbeknownst to them, they were being followed by more than just the one car.

"Mr. Norton's a good man," Lonnie said with relief.

"I wouldn't have served him for so many years if he wasn't," Caspian mumbled under his

breath. Then he asked, "Are we in the clear yet?"

"So far, so good," replied the middle-aged man at the wheel.

Caspian was especially meticulous in this aspect. He avoided sending Lonnie directly to the

clinic, choosing to continue circling the roundabout.

"That should be enough, Caspian," the driver said.

Caspian remained unsure as he checked the rear to his left and right.

"No. Tell you what. Swap your clothes, the both of you," he said as he nudged Lonnie and

regarded the man in the front.

"Thank you, Caspian," said Lonnie, deeply moved.

"No need for that. You can thank me by staying alive."

"What's the situation?" Larry asked, concerned.

"We're safe and on the way back," came Caspian's quick reply.

Larry let out a sigh of relief before he looked out of the window, but little did he know that

some visitors had amassed all around the clinic in the village.

Knock. Knock. Knock.

The pounding on the door grew more threatening. Lonnie looked at the doctor. The fear

that gnawed at him from the inside was surfacing, and it showed on his face.

"This is no courtesy call," he whispered.

"Hide yourself, and quickly!" The doctor then led the man to a concealed basement.

“Don’t come out without my say-so!” With that, she shut the door after him.

The village had been the setting for many skirmishes in the past, so the fact that the clinic

had a basement was nothing out of the ordinary.

Back in the day, this basement had saved countless lives in the entire village. Since the descendants rebuilt the village after the war, very few were aware of its existence.

“You... Who are you looking for?” the doctor asked.

“Out of my way!” One man shoved the doctor aside and went straight inside.

“Hey, what do you think you’re doing. This is a private property and you’re trespassing!” the doctor shouted in protest.

Bang!

Thud!

The house was turned inside-out; medication, drips, and test tubes were left strewn across the floor.

“No one’s inside, Boss.”

“I’ve got nothing here either!”

A few men ran back and reported to their boss.

Damn it! He got away!

The leader of the pack grabbed the doctor and pinned her down on the rickety couch to the side.

“Where is he?” he demanded.

“W-Who a-are you talking about?” she stuttered because her body was trembling so badly.

“We... are talking... about the man with green hair.” The head of the thugs mimicked her in mockery.

What a positively rude man!

A cold glint flashed across the doctor’s eyes.

“I’m the only one in the clinic,” she replied resolutely as she faced away.

Chapter 1934 Animals

“Are you sure?” The man looked at her questioningly.

“I am.” She raised her chin and challenged him with a firm stare.

With her clinic messed up like this, she had to stand her ground! The doctor's hands balled into two tight fists.

"Let me warn you, old hag. Come clean, and save yourself a world of pain," the man said as he lashed his whip menacingly.

What a joke! Does he think I'm afraid of him?

The woman pursed her lips in contempt.

"Let me say that apart from you lot, I've never had animals in here. Besides, I'm a doctor, not a vet!"

The man regarded her with suspicion.

Was she not fearful before? How is she so calm now?

"Aren't you afraid?" he asked.

She rolled her eye at him and smirked.

"What's there to fear about you? Do you think you can get away with killing me? Hilarious."

The doctor shook her head and taunted, "For all you know, we might be on a live stream right now,".

The man immediately relinquished his grip on her and checked his own attire.

"Search the place for surveillance equipment. Now!" he barked.

What a bunch of fools!

The doctor rubbed her hands and regarded the men with displeasure.

She was curious to see what they could find.

"Nothing, Boss!"

"I've nothing here either."

When the leader made a beeline for the doctor, she panicked.

She thought that her little lie would scare them off. Never did she expect them to be this thorough.

Larry, oh Larry. When are you going to show up?

The doctor shrunk and retreated.

"You've some guts trying to play punk with me!" The leader seized the woman by her shoulders and glared at her.

"Don't test my patience. Tell me where he is, or you'll die in his place!"

The man then drove

a fist into the wall behind her, staining both it and his own knuckles in fresh crimson.

“Ah, you’re bleeding!” the doctor said in an attempt at a diversion.

“Where is he? Out with it!” he bellowed.

She shuddered, and her eyes evoked a hint of distress.

“I won’t be able to tell you even if you beat me to death because I don’t even know who

you’re looking for. I’m the only one in the clinic all this time,” she said as she tried to collect herself.

“You asked for it...”

Thump!

Just as the man was about to lay his hands on the doctor, the door burst open with a kick.

“What do you think you’re doing on my turf?” Larry said as he stared at the leading thug.

“What an honor this is, Mr. Norton. May I know to what do we owe the pleasure of your presence.” The thug let go of the doctor and strutted toward Larry.

“Should I not show up when there’s trouble at my clinic?” Larry asked. The leader was taken aback momentarily, but recovered just as quickly.

“To the best of my knowledge, this is the village’s public clinic,” he said as he twitched his nose.

Larry sneered. Although he knew the men would come, their arrival was sooner than he had expected.

“I’ve already bought over the clinic. It now belongs to me,” he replied. The air became stilled in an instant.

“Look at what they’ve done, Mr. Norton. The medicine is no longer usable.” The doctor purposefully ran up and complained to Larry.

Damned hag!

The leading thug glared at her with fists clenched.

F*ck it. I’ll just take you down with me!

“We’re just looking for one of our guys, Larry. I saw him come in here myself,” the leader whispered as he looked at his whip.

“What’s that you say? Looking for someone? Surely this is not the way to get about with it?”

Larry pointed at the mess on the floor.

"Let's get out of here, Boss. We can't afford to offend Mr. Norton." A young man said as he nudged at the arm of his own leader.

Chapter 1935 At The Restaurant

Larry smirked, but said nothing.

"Shut up! What are you so scared of? He's just the one man!" the leading thug shouted.

Then he glared at Larry.

"Larry!" Suddenly, Caspian arrived with a few dozen men.

That prompted the thug leader to take a few steps back. He had seen Caspian and knew how formidable he was.

"We must be mistaken. Sorry for disturbing you at this hour, Mr. Norton," the man hastened to apologize.

"Are you going to keep looking?" Larry asked cordially.

"No, not anymore. It's late already so we'll be going." The man waved it off and motioned for his entire crew to leave.

"Are you alright?" Caspian looked to Larry in concern.

The latter dismissed him and approached the doctor.

"Where is he?"

"Inside. I'll go fetch him," she said as she left the room.

"Mr. Norton!" Very soon, Lonnie reemerged.

Seeing that the man was in one piece, Larry finally felt relieved.

If the doctor had not dialed his number secretly with the phone hidden in her sleeve, Larry reckoned that it would have been a long night and the doctor herself might have lost her life.

"Thank you, Madam." Larry went up and gave the woman a hug.

"Silly boy. It was the right thing to do." She patted him reassuringly on the shoulder.

"Why has this happened, Caspian?" Larry suddenly turned to regard Caspian with severity.

"It's all my fault!" the bodyguard replied with his head lowered in self-reproach.

"Don't blame him. Maybe those people were already prepared for this," Lonnie interjected.

Now that the clinic was compromised, Larry had Caspian arrange another hideout for Lonnie until the danger passed.

Ring, ring, ring...

Joan picked it up quickly.

"Hello, where are you, Joan? I haven't seen you in a while. Let's meet up for some grub,"

Nancy said.

Women behaved differently when they were pregnant. Even their tone changed.

"Sure."

The two women rattled on for a while more before they ended the call.

"I'm headed out for a few hours, Ms. Young," Joan said to Delilah.

"Joan, be careful out there," the latter said with a smile.

Everyone in the village was feeling a little uptight recently because of that incident at the clinic.

The restaurant had great ambience; the lighting was subtle, the music mellow, and a pleasant floral scent lingered in the air.

Nancy was early, so she waited for Joan at a corner table.

"Over here, Joan!" she hailed excitedly.

Joan smiled and headed for the table.

"How have you been?" Joan asked.

"Hmm, I can't complain," Nancy replied sheepishly as she rubbed her own belly.

Joan's lips curled into a gratified smile upon seeing the blissful look on her friend's face.

"How are things going for y'all? I heard that trouble was abound at Norton Corporation,"

Nancy said as she took a sip of coffee.

Joan was a little stumped. Larry never discussed his work with her, and her own focus had primarily been on the family.

"What have you heard, Nancy?"

"It seems that Dustin has bought up quite a bit of stocks in Norton Corporation. That

currently makes Larry and him the two biggest shareholders in the company," Nancy replied unhurriedly.

Joan was dumbstruck. She suddenly felt a throbbing headache and started massaging her temples.

"What's wrong, Joan? Are you not feeling well?" Nancy quickly clasped her own hands around Joan's.

"I'm okay. Probably slept too late last night."

Why would Dustin want to buy up stock in Norton Corporation? Joan contemplated this with her eyes closed.

Chapter 1936 The Affairs Of Men

"Wow. What a coincidence!" A familiar voice rang out.

"Well, join us," Nancy said aloud.

While Dustin made his way over, there was a twinkle of delight in his eyes when he glanced at Joan.

"Joan's here too," the man said.

"Yeah. I came to catch up with Nancy," she replied.

Ring, ring, ring...

Nancy answered her phone promptly.

"What? Today? Alright, got it. I'll be right over." She appeared quite anxious when she hung up.

"I've got something to attend to. If you don't mind, Dustin, keep Joan company on my behalf. And don't you pick on her!" With that, Nancy picked up her bag and dashed for the exit.

The mood suddenly turned stifling.

A slightly self-conscious Dustin sat across Joan while she kept her head down and pretended to be focused on working her knife into her steak.

"Joan, what's gotten into you today?" He finally broke the silence.

She paused, laid down her cutlery, and regarded the man earnestly.

"Why are you making moves on Norton Corporation?" she asked.

So, it's about this.

Dustin smirked when he wiped at his own mouth.

"I could withdraw myself if my entrance into Norton Corporation makes you uncomfortable.

I don't wish to see you unhappy," he said.

That made her feel a little discomfited.

Forget it. The affairs of men was not something she should interfere in.

Joan sipped at her coffee.

"No. It's just business, but I hope that you and Larry can work together."

That's how much she loves that man!

Dustin's fingers wound tightly fists. His initial plan was to buy the shares from some existing

shareholders and become Norton Corporation's largest shareholder.

Who would have

expected a few of them had a change of heart and sold them to Larry instead!

Is he dependent on a woman now?

"Of course we will." Dustin snorted and stared at his cup of coffee.

Boom!

Lightning and thunder accompanied the sudden downpour as it beat down on the windows.

Joan shuddered.

For some reason, she felt strange.

"What's wrong, Joan?" Dustin asked with concern.

The woman shook her head and implied that she was okay.

The growing intensity of the downpour as the sky darkened only added to her burgeoning

sense of unease.

"It's getting late. Let me send you back," Dustin said.

"I..." Joan then turned to see the foul weather outside.

"I'll be fine. You should go ahead. Larry will come pick me up later," she replied.

Out of fear, she had sent Larry a text to pick her up when she visited the bathroom earlier.

"Are you sure?" Dustin regarded the unsettled woman with skepticism.

"Yes. You should go. Larry will be here soon," Joan said.

Larry again!

Dustin sighed.

Perhaps she does not want him to see her with me! So be it!

Dustin left her with a few words and departed from the restaurant.

By this time, Joan was the only customer left inside. The woman clutched her cellphone

tightly and looked anxiously at the sky outside.

The raging storm, the thunder and lightning... everything looked so mortifying. A young tree and the road markers uprooted by the wind were nowhere to be found.

"Why isn't he here yet..." she muttered.

"Who are you waiting for? Larry?" The familiar voice of a woman reached Joan's ears.

"Gabriella?" Her appearance piqued Joan's interest even as she regarded the former with suspicion.

What is she doing here?

"Are you waiting for Larry?" Gabriella sat herself opposite Joan and regarded her frostily.

"Yes." The latter turned away to look out in the direction of the window.

Chapter 1937 The Heinousness Of Human Nature

Gabriella snapped her fingers to get the attention of a server who conscientiously brought her a cup of coffee.

It seemed that she was a regular here. Joan remained guarded as she looked at the woman before her.

"Let me send you back. Larry won't be showing up even if you stay the night here," Gabriella said purposefully.

Joan sneered. Why would she be so kind as to send me home? And how did she know Larry won't be coming?

Joan regarded Gabriella with misgiving but held her own tongue.

She thought it would be better if they spoke less. Joan looked idly outside the window.

"I'm talking to you here, Joan Watts. Are you deaf or dumb?" Gabriella glared at the woman across from her.

"What exactly do you wish to say?" Joan went straight to the point without establishing eye contact.

The women were best friends once, but Gabriella had hurt her repeatedly.

What caused two kindred spirits who withheld nothing from each other to become so

distant?

It was the heinousness of human nature!

"I said that I'll send you back. Why? Are you afraid or something?"

Gabriella said.

"There's no need for that. I'll just wait for Larry," Joan replied resolutely and answered an incoming call.

"I'm a little busy on my end, Joan, so I don't think I'll be able to come fetch you. Could you

hire a ride home?" Larry sounded a little harried.

Joan's eyes dimmed in that instant.

They continued talking briefly before the woman hung up.

Gabriella was practically gloating as she regarded her. A cold glint flashed across her eyes.

"I'll make a move first." Joan suddenly got up to leave.

"Joan Watts!" Gabriella howled.

Joan turned to regard the intimidating woman. "What?"

She knew Gabriella would not let her walk away like this, especially since this chance

encounter itself presented the latter with an unmissable opportunity.

Joan smirked.

"What's the rush? It's not like I'll eat you up. Besides, the two of us haven't really been in

touch for a while." Gabriella's tone was peculiar.

Is that what she wants? To catch up?

Ridiculous!

"So?" Joan asked.

"Let's have dinner together. Surely you haven't forgotten that it's the fifth anniversary of our

friendship," Gabriella replied softly.

Joan was stunned that she actually remembered.

That somehow made her feel a little embarrassed. Perhaps Gabriella was not such a bad

person. Maybe she just loved Larry too much. Joan was processing these thoughts for herself.

"Come. Let's celebrate!" Gabriella said.

If that was what she sincerely wanted, perhaps she should not be so petty.

Joan straightened her own attire and returned to her seat.

“Do you remember how we used to eat, sleep, go to class, and play together when we were schooling? How happy and blessed we felt back then. But one day, everything changed. I never understood why.” Gabriella’s voice was permeated with sentimentality. That profoundly moved Joan. How could she forget those good old days? It was so nice to have someone stand shoulder to shoulder with oneself through those tough times. “Yeah. I remember on one occasion when I’ve forgotten to complete my assignment, and the professor wanted to perform a spot check. I would have been penalized had you not lent me yours...” Joan said with a laugh. Very soon, another round of orders was tabled. “Hey, another two bottles of reds for us!” Gabriella yelled. “No going back sober!” Joan chorused. It had been a while since she last dined with Gabriella. That made her nostalgic for the days past quite out of the blue. “You know, Gabriella, I really had no idea you fancied Larry back then. Had I known, I wouldn’t have dated him...” Joan was red to the ears at this moment, and a little tipsy.

Chapter 1938 Best Friends

Gabriella’s brows furrowed hard against the woman opposite her, and the corner of her lips curled as though she had her opposite number exactly where she wanted. “I don’t believe that with us being so close and having known each other for so long, you couldn’t sense that I liked him?” Gabriella held nothing back. Since the other woman was drunk anyway, she found no further need to continue masking her own motives. “No really, Gabriella. You know what? I’ve always thought of you as my best friend. But you

kidnapped me. Did you know how much that hurt? We're best friends..." Joan lifted her own glass and emptied it.

Best friends? Was that why she poached my man?

Gabriella glared at Joan with one fist clenched tight inside of her other hand.

"Come on. Bottoms up!" she declared.

Very soon, Joan was slumped over the table.

"Joan! Joan!" Gabriella prodded at the unconscious woman with her foot.

But Joan was totally out of it.

She really thought I was making peace with her. The foolish woman!

Gabriella then pulled out her own cellphone.

"Get yourselves over here, pronto!" she bellowed into the phone before she hung up.

Joan, oh Joan. Don't blame me for being heartless. I'm doing this today because you stole my man!

Gabriella's demeanor had only gotten more chilling since.

"Ms. Ward!" A few men came bursting into the scene.

"Take her away and deal with her as you deem fit. And remember. Stay off Larry Norton's radar."

The men gazed at Gabriella and then regarded the unconscious woman.

Each and everyone of them smiled slyly.

"Thank you, Ms. Ward!" And off they went with Joan.

This is payback, Joan!

Gabriella narrowed her malicious eyes as she watched the silhouettes of the men fade into the distance.

"Hello, Ms. Young. Is Joan home yet?" Larry's voice was mired in anxiety and dread.

"No. Where did she go? I've tried calling too, but no one picked up."

Delilah asked in return.

Sh*t!

Larry promptly hung up and dialed Caspian's number.

"Round up all your men to find Joan, and hurry!" Larry barked.

Caspian was taken aback momentarily, but recovered just as quickly.

"Understood!"

“Dismissed!” Larry grabbed his coat and dashed out of the meeting room.

“What’s up with Mr. Norton? Why is he in such a rush?”

“Beats me. Look like something major is up...” Two managers discussed between themselves

when they witnessed Larry’s consternation.

When Joan came to, she found herself locked in a small, dark room.

“What shall we do with the chick inside?” A man’s voice was heard saying.

“Don’t you remember what Ms. Ward said? It’s up to our own discretion,” another sneered.

The voices outside sounded muffled to Joan’s ears.

Who are they about? Who are these men outside?

“Ah...” The only thing that was obvious to Joan was the throbbing in her head.

The woman shut her eyes and attempted to recollect what had transpired prior. She was

having dinner with Nancy and Dustin came along, then she ran into Gabriella...

Gabriella Ward! Suddenly, it all came back to Joan.

She must be out of her mind to dine in that woman’s company. Joan thumped her fist

against her own head, quite upset with herself.

Thud! The door was kicked wide open.

She promptly shut her eyes and pretended that she was still out.

“Hey, get up!” One of the men booted Joan.

That yielded no response from her.

“That’s not right. The effects of the drug should have worn off by now,” another commented

as he regarded the woman on the floor with suspicion.

“Someone get a bucket!” the man hollered.

Splash! Joan was completely drenched to the skin.

“Mm...” she slowly got to her feet and rubbed her eyes.

“Finally awake, huh?” The man looked as though he meant to kill her.

Chapter 1939 The Tears Burned

“Where am I?” Joan asked, in feigned ignorance.

The corner of the man’s lips curled up wryly as he sneered.

“Don’t blame us for this, miss. Just doing our job!” With that, he threw Joan into the corner

of the room.

“What do you want with me?” She shrank and wrapped her arms around herself.

“Sorry to say that you just pissed off the wrong person. We have to answer to her too,” he said in a low voice before he approached and squatted down in front of her.

A pair of grubby hands reached out.

“Get away from me!” Joan screamed in horror.

The man’s eyes darkened at her resistance.

“The rest of you, out! And close the door!”

His posse of followers promptly made themselves scarce.

“Please let me go. I can give you money. Lots of it!” Joan was terrified.

The man sneered as he lifted the woman’s chin. He looked straight into her eyes as he

stroked her face with his right hand.

“I don’t care about money. It’s you I’m interested in!” He proceeded to pry at the buttons on her blouse.

“Help!” Joan screeched at the top of her lungs.

The man dragged her over to him. He slid a seeking hand underneath her top and fondled

her thigh relentlessly with the other.

The tears burned as they streaked down her cheeks.

“No, please! Stop!” Joan cried as she struggled.

“Quit your f*cking whining. You should be flattered that I’m showering you with all this

attention!” The man then sent a stinging swipe across the left of her face and then the right.

Blood trickled down the ends of her lips.

“Ah!”

The man flung her to the other corner of the room before he pulled out his whip and lashed

it mercilessly in her direction.

“How dare you bite me, you stupid b*tch. I guess you’re tired of living. Fine. In that case, I’ll

kill you when I’m finished!” With that, the man tore off his own clothes and threw his entire

weight upon her.

Joan no longer had the strength to resist. She closed her eyes and let the tears flow at will.

She had completely given up hope.
Boom! The door was kicked open forcefully.
“What the hell, I’m not done yet!” the man riding on top of Joan roared while his lips still nibbled away at her collarbones.
With a resounding thump, the thug was sent sprawling to the side.
“Joan. Joan!” Dustin shook at the woman on the floor.
But she was unresponsive.
“Who are you? How dare you interrupt me!” The man who was struck retaliated with his whip in hand.
Dustin pivoted on one foot before delivering a spinning kick, which laid his attacker low and left the man writhing in pain.
“Joan!” Dustin yelled. He then put a finger under her nostrils.
Okay, she’s alright! Dustin removed his own coat and wrapped it around her.
“Someone, get him!” The man waved his finger at the target that he wanted his men to sort out on his behalf.
But there was no movement beyond the door.
“Are all of you deaf! Did you not hear me...” He was stunned when he looked outside.
Past the door, his boys were on their backs, clutching at various parts of their limbs in agony.
“How about it? Would you like to join them too?” Dustin snorted.
The man responded by scrambling out of the room.
After ensuring that they were in the clear, Dustin immediately picked Joan up in his arms and sped to the hospital.
“Hurry, doctor. Disinfect her wounds!” he shouted.
That got the doctor quizzical.
How did he know that was the first step?
“I used to be a doctor myself, so please hurry. I can assist,” Dustin explained.
“Okay, get me a pair of scissors,” the doctor replied staidly.

Chapter 1940 Death And Separation

The duo worked in tandem and had the wounds on Joan properly cleaned and dressed in

short order.

Dustin felt a restlessness and an ache in his heart when he looked at the woman lying in the hospital bed.

Damn that Larry. Damn fine job he's doing, taking care of Joan!

Dustin drove a fist into the wall. Blood oozed out between his fingers.

"No, don't touch me. Please..." Joan muttered. Her brows frowned in deep distress.

"Joan, wake up. No one's touching you," Dustin said.

She quietened down very quickly.

"Here's some saline. After the drip has emptied, swap these up for her," the nurse

approached and said.

Dustin looked over and saw four of them. His eyes dimmed in an instant.

Ring, ring, ring...

A look on the display showed that the call came from Jory.

"Hello Dustin. I heard Joan disappeared..."

"Don't tell anyone that she's right here with me." Dustin hung up immediately.

Jory stared at the phone, a little perplexed.

"How is it? Did Dustin see Joan?" Nancy inquired desperately.

Jory paused and decided to go along with Dustin.

"No, but don't worry. I'll go look for her. Stay put, and don't go anywhere," he replied solemnly.

Nancy was fretting and was in no mood to sit still. The minute Jory stepped away, she too left the house.

"Larry..." muttered Joan as she laid in bed.

Hearing what she said in her unconscious state drew a rueful smile from Dustin.

When would there be a place for him in her heart if that scumbag Larry was all she cared

about? There was a glint of despondence in the man's eyes.

"Wake up, Joan." He rocked at the woman's shoulders.

She slowly opened her eyes to a familiar shade of white.

Is this... the hospital?

Joan surveyed her surroundings warily. When she turned to the side to face Dustin, a light lit

up in her eyes momentarily before it faded away.

“How are you feeling?” The look in Dustin’s eyes mirrored the anguish he felt for her plight.

“I’m okay,” she shook her head and replied weakly.

“The doctor said that you may need to have your brain examined. Shall... shall we head

overseas for that?” Dustin asked cautiously.

He knew that the chances of her agreeing to this were next to zero. How could she possibly

bear to leave Larry behind here by himself?

Joan rubbed her own head. Indeed, she had been knocked around quite a bit when she was

kidnapped.

“Okay,” she replied in a low voice.

A rush of delight ran through Dustin.

“I’ll go book the air tickets right away, but...” Dustin intentionally pretended to be in a

dilemma.

Joan knew what he wanted to ask and waved him off.

She needed to have her head injuries attended to and thought it better not to inform Larry

for the time being. If everything went well, she would return and live out the rest of her days

alongside Larry. Otherwise, she would stay away overseas for good.

Rather than endure the pain of death and separation, it might be better if she quietly

vanished.

The sheets twisted inside Joan’s grip as she wrestled with her own crushing emotions.

She had suffered the infrequent bouts of pain for the longest time without anyone knowing.

She feared that uncovering the truth of her condition might mean that Larry and she would

ultimately be torn apart.

“Alright. Let’s finish up this round of drip. I’ll start packing up,” Dustin said.

“Alright.” The tears ran hot from her eyes as she looked outside.

Don’t blame me for this, Larry. You know I love you!

Joan’s eyes were filled with despair.

Fate had a twisted way of toying with kindhearted people. Those who took it seriously

missed out on what was meant for them, and those who waited foolishly would see their destiny return to them.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1941

The duo soon checked out of the hospital and were swiftly on their way to the airport.

A dead silence filled the car. Joan looked out of the windows, trying to take in as much of this city as she could etch into her memory.

Ring, ring, ring... She cast a glance at the display but did not pick up.

Beside her, Dustin's lips curled up in satisfaction. In his opinion, leaving quietly this way was not necessarily a bad thing.

"Where's she?" Larry howled when he arrived in the room where Joan was held captive.

Caspian approached the men lying on the floor and regarded them coldly.

"Start talking. Where is the woman?" He grabbed one of the big boys and asked.

"I don't know. Our boss was in there, then some random guy showed up and gave us all a good whopping. He then stormed inside and took the woman away..." that boy hastily explained.

Larry's eyes brightened up. Had Joan been rescued?

"Who took her?" Larry hurried over and pressed him.

"I've no idea. Anyway, he's the one who has her," the big boy explained.

Larry narrowed his eyes in the window's direction as though deep in thought.

"Why weren't we informed when Joan was rescued?" Caspian looked doubtfully at Larry.

The latter motioned with his hand, and his bodyguard immediately held his own tongue.

More importantly, who was it? A cold glint flashed across the man's eyes.

He was concerned that the other party was no friend of his.

Larry rubbed his hands as anger mounted inside him.

"Lock down all the major hospitals, Caspian. We've to locate Joan!"

Larry bellowed.

At the same time, he pulled out his phone and made a call.

"We're sorry. The number you've just dialed cannot be reached..."

Larry's eyes darkened in the same instant.

"Come, Caspian. Let's go find Joan!" he said as he hopped into the car.

Caspian was stunned momentarily before he recollected himself.

He knew that Larry never did anything without rhyme or reason. The worst case scenario

was Dustin had abducted Joan. Caspian gnashed his teeth as he stared into the distance.

Ring, ring, ring...

"Hello, Lars. Have you found Joan?" Nancy's voice trembled slightly as she spoke.

"Not yet."

Had she not pestered Joan to meet up for a meal, her friend wouldn't be missing till now?

"What shall we do..." Nancy started crying.

Unwilling to hear any more from her, Larry hung up outright.

They had checked the café, the restaurant, the mall and all the places that the women

frequented, but there was no sign of Joan. Nancy sat slumped on the floor and bawled her eyes out.

"Where are you, Joan? Could you please stop scaring me?"

Since her pregnancy, Nancy had lost her usual haughtiness and aloofness, and became more timid than she was before.

"Get up, Nancy. The floor is cold." Jory went over quickly and helped her onto her feet.

"What should I do, Jory? It's all my fault that Joan's missing..." The woman was inconsolable as she embraced him.

Jory was heartbroken at the sight of this.

"Go on back to the car first. I'll keep looking, alright?" he said to her.

"No, I must find Joan!" Nancy shoved him away and made straight for the car.

Less than a few steps in, she lost consciousness and collapsed on the floor in a heap.

"Nancy!" Jory ran over and picked up the woman. He then sent her to the hospital.

“What the f*ck are you doing, Dustin? Nancy’s been hospitalized because of Joan!” Jory was heard yelling into the phone along the hospital corridor. On the other end of the line, Dustin reacted in astonishment. One look at Joan enabled him to recover his composure.

“I’d explain it to you in due time, but right now, I’ve got a plane to catch.” He ended the call.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1942

“Hey! Dustin!”

Thud! A nurse who walked past Jory was taken aback when the man smashed the phone on the floor in exasperation.

Damn it! Jory gritted and punched the wall with his clenched fist. Between his wife and buddy, he had ended up opting for the latter again, and just like the previous time, there was a price to pay for his option. Gosh! Dustin, you’d better pray nothing happens to Nancy!

“Doctor, how’s my wife’s current condition?” he asked apprehensively, grabbing hold of the doctor’s arm tightly.

“Her emotions are still not very stable at the moment. If this condition persists, it might lead to miscarriage. Thus, you’d better try to console and calm her down,” the doctor advised him patiently before he headed toward the ward.

“Joan, you’re not planning to give Larry a call?” Dustin looked at the woman in front of him with his eyes full of doubt.

Joan hesitated. Should I call him?

“I think you’d better give him a call. They’ve all gotten into a bunch of nerves looking for you. If I’m not mistaken, Nancy passed out due to extreme anxiety while in search of you.

She’s currently pregnant, isn’t she?” Dustin stole a glance at her and added deliberately.

At that reminder, Joan’s eyes widened in an instant. Oh, no! Please don’t let anything happen to Nancy!

"How's she now?" she asked anxiously.

"I heard from Jory that she's in the hospital at the moment..." Dustin lowered his voice as he replied tactfully.

Nancy will be considered the last person who saw me since the both of us were having a meal together at that time. In this case, Larry will surely blame her. Poor Nancy! She must be feeling really guilty and upset now! In a split second, Joan's eyes darkened, her heart filling up with complex emotions. I guess I'd better give Larry a call so he won't misunderstand Nancy.

When Larry's phone buzzed, he reached to take it out immediately. He caught a glimpse of the caller's name blinking on the screen and answered the call at once. "Joan, where are you now?" he asked nervously, trying to keep the quiver out of his voice.

Mustering up her courage, Joan tried to speak up for Nancy. "Larry, I'm fine. It's nothing serious, but I just can't go back yet. It has nothing to do with Nancy. Don't blame her for anything..."

This silly woman! Why can't she answer my question directly?

"Joan Watts!" Larry raised his voice and cut her off impatiently.

In an instant, the woman on the other side of the line fell silent.

"Joan, where are you now? Please tell me!" Larry repeated his question, trying hard to appease his frustration.

He had never been a patient man, yet he had been treating her with utter patience all this while.

"Larry, can you please just give me some time? If possible, I will go back a few days later,"

Joan requested warily.

If possible? What does she mean? Taking a deep breath, Larry tried to cool his head off.

"Joan, what's the matter with you? Is anything troubling you at the moment? Don't worry

about it... You can pour out everything to me. I love you so much! No matter what, I'll be by your side forever and overcome whatever obstacles that you're facing together with you,"

he pleaded, trying to coax the woman by lowering his voice.

Joan was so touched by his genuine words that tears started to well up in her eyes.

She loved him very much too, yet she could not resist doubting whether she still had the

chance to spend the rest of her life with him.

"Larry, no matter what, bear in mind that I loved you in this lifetime!"

Joan ended the call at

that.

Larry was dumbfounded and at a loss for words. What on earth was she talking about? She

sounded weird... It was as if she was emphasizing something. She's

loved me before? Wait a

minute! Was she hinting that she has fallen for another man? No way! I

can't accept that! I

won't!

Thud! He threw his phone out of the door, venting his anger.

"Larry!" Caspian, who was outside the door, cried out, startled. When he saw Larry's grim

face, a feeling of intimidation crept up to him. The temperature around the man had

dropped significantly as well.

"Larry, we couldn't manage to locate Joan's whereabouts," Caspian

lowered his head and

said timidly.

"Don't waste any more time looking for her anymore!" Larry bellowed

as he slammed his fist

onto the table, a glint of ferocity in his eyes.

Caspian shuddered and moved backward instinctively. He had never

seen Larry as hot-tempered as how he was at the moment. My

goodness! He looks exactly like an erupting

volcano!

In the meantime, Nancy's phone buzzed. Her heart leaped with joy the

moment she saw the

name blinking on the screen.

“Joan, where did you go? I really had a scare! I thought something terrible had befallen you!” Nancy burst into tears of relief.

“Nancy, calm down. I’ve already called Larry and explained everything to him. I’m fine, so neither of you should worry so much. Don’t strain yourself now since you’re pregnant. You must take care of yourself and your baby...” Joan advised sincerely. Upon hearing those words, an inexplicable sorrow started to well up in Nancy’s heart.

“Joan, have you encountered anything dangerous? What’s the matter with you? No matter what happens, remember you’re not alone. We’re with you all the time and will overcome any hardships together with you...” Nancy asked with great concern as she wiped her tears away.

Somehow, her instinct told her that Joan seemed weird. The woman seemed to be keeping mum about something and acting as if they would not have the opportunity to meet each other again.

“I’m fine. Don’t worry. I just need to settle some personal matters these few days. I’ll inform you about everything once the matters are resolved.” Joan pressed her lips together to form a tight smile and tried to sound casual.

If I don’t manage to resolve the matters, I’ll make myself disappear. I won’t appear in front of you anymore! Nancy, I’m sorry I can’t tell you everything now. When she was on the brink of tears, Joan sniffled, trying to hold the tears back.

The moment Nancy’s ear caught that faint sound, she was momentarily stunned. Sensing that Joan seemed to be trying to hold back her tears, the woman’s heart flinched.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1943

“Joan, you must come back at once after you’ve settled your things. You promised to be my

baby's godmother, didn't you? You must keep your promise!" Nancy said softly as she stroked her belly gently.

Do I still have the chance to be her baby's godmother? Joan pondered and decided to avoid giving Nancy any response on that matter.

"Nancy, I'm sorry, but I need to hang up now to settle something!" Joan hung up at once before Nancy could react.

In the office, Larry instructed coldly, "Caspian, try to trace the addresses for all the other residences owned by Dustin!"

The moment he knew that someone had rescued Joan, Dustin's figure flashed across his mind in an instant. Nevertheless, when Larry reached Dustin's residence with Caspian, his neighbor informed them that the man had moved away long ago.

"Larry, do you think Jory will have any idea about the matter?" Caspian asked Larry warily, fearful of intensifying his frustration.

"Let's go and ask him!" Larry picked up his phone and strode out of his office without hesitation.

"Get out of my way!" Larry growled at the receptionist, who was blocking his path.

"I'm sorry, Sir. You can't enter without an appointment!" the receptionist tried to stop both of them.

"I don't need an appointment!" Larry grimaced as he enunciated every word loudly.

"I'm sorry, but it's our policy here. Whoever wishes to see Mr. Synder must make an appointment in advance..." Caspian straight away dragged the receptionist aside to let Larry get through.

Bang! The door of Jory's office flew open.

Jory raised his head and gazed at Larry placidly.

Ah! He's finally here as expected! Jory seemed to have foreseen that Larry would come and question him about Dustin's whereabouts.

“Where’s Dustin Silverman?” Larry looked at Jory sternly and asked coldly.

Jory put down the document and snickered.

“Mr. Norton, are you joking? Dustin is one of the main shareholders of Norton Corporation.

As the president of the company, you don’t even know about his whereabouts. If so, how do you expect me to have a clue? How ridiculous!” Jory replied mockingly at him.

Larry glared at Jory with blazing eyes as he approached him slowly.

“Stop wasting my time by beating around the bush! Just tell me where he is!”

Jory stood up and looked into Larry’s eyes with a snort.

“I have no idea,” he replied casually.

In an instant, Larry’s fury rose once again.

“You’d better be frank and tell me where he is now. If he’s really the one who abducted Joan and hid her somewhere, he could be charged with his heinous deed,” he said coolly, warning lacing his tone.

Dustin will be charged with abducting Joan?

Jory glanced at Larry disdainfully and sat down again.

“That’s none of my business,” the former replied with a glint of coldness in his eyes.

Larry immediately boiled with rage upon seeing Jory’s nonchalance.

What a cunning fellow...

He sure is good at lying!

Clenching his fists, the man continued to glare at Jory with his eyes that were becoming

vicious at the moment. Instantaneously, Jory could feel the drastic drop in the temperature

around them as he stared into Larry’s eyes which were as cold as the abyss.

“Tell Dustin Silverman, if he doesn’t send Joan back soon, I won’t let him off easily!” Larry

warned in an icy-cold tone and stormed out of the room.

Jory heaved a sigh of relief when the man’s figure was out of his sight.

I really wonder what’s going in Dustin’s mind! He sure is a troublemaker! If not because of him, I would not have to face Larry!

“Dustin, Larry was here a while ago. He’s highly suspicious of you now. You’d better bring Joan back immediately. If not, you might meet your end at any time for infuriating him,” Jory warned him coldly.

“Ah! I was kind enough to bring Joan here for a checkup. Yet he’s even thinking of striking me? Don’t you think he has overreacted?” Dustin laughed scornfully. “How do you expect him to stay calm? After all, his wife is in your hands at the moment,”

Jory lowered his voice and replied sarcastically.

Dustin sneered. He had been scheming on all these to spur Larry’s anxiety, drive him crazy and strain his relationship with Joan! Larry Norton, do you like the surprise I’ve prepared for you? Are you having a great time at the moment?

“Dustin, you promised to bring me for a body checkup today, didn’t you?” Joan looked at the man in front of him quizzically.

Dustin was seated idly on the sofa, flipping through a magazine leisurely when she popped her question.

“The director of the hospital called me a while ago to inform me that there’s been a blackout in the hospital. Thus, it’s closed temporarily as they’re in the midst of fixing the problem. It will most probably only be reopened in two days.” He tried to convince Nancy by explaining the situation solemnly.

What nonsense! It doesn’t make sense for a blackout to occur in the hospital all of a sudden till it has to be closed for up to two days!

“A blackout? How can the hospital be closed temporarily all of a sudden? How about the other patients there...” she asked suspiciously.

“Joan, don’t you trust me? After all, don’t forget we are overseas now. Hence, it’s normal for them to have different methods of implementation and problem solving,” Dustin explained patiently with a smile.

He knew well that there was nothing awry about Joan's brain. To spend some time solely with her, he had actually lied to her and intentionally brought her overseas.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1944

Seated on the sofa next to him, a sense of disappointment flashed across Joan's eyes.

Now that her checkup had been postponed due to the temporary closure of the hospital, it also indirectly meant that she would need to stay overseas longer. Larry will surely be more worried! Rubbing her hands nervously, she was in a daze.

"Joan, let's go out for some fun. We haven't had fun together for quite a long time," Dustin's

voice cut into her thoughts abruptly.

Joan looked at the man in embarrassment and rejected him nicely.

At that moment, Larry's good-looking face kept floating in her mind. She was not in the

mood to entertain Dustin at the moment.

Dustin's heart throbbed with pain at the sight of the helpless look on her face.

Maybe I shouldn't have lied to her... His face darkened at once when he found himself in a dilemma.

After a while, pin-drop silence ensued in the place. Dustin continued to flip through the

magazine casually, whereas Joan was seated on the sofa, staring off into the distance out of

the window. The man looked for a chance to start a conversation with her once more, but

he changed his mind as soon as the thought of interrupting her came to mind.

The atmosphere became awkward as both of them were in utter silence.

Dustin was in bewilderment. What's the point of me planning everything and bringing her all

the way here if we just end up doing nothing? What a waste!

At that moment, Joan was gazing sorrowfully at the cloud in the sky with a glint of sadness

in her eyes.

What's Larry doing now? Is he also staring at the same cloud in the sky?

She clenched her fists, lost in her own world. At that very moment, she really missed the

man who had promised to protect her for the rest of her lifetime.

Dustin patted her shoulder and called her over, "Joan."

"Ah?" The woman was stupefied.

"Let's go out for a meal," he suggested gently.

"Alright," Joan agreed and rose immediately.

The two of them went to have a meal in a grand restaurant. The background music there

was soothing and melodious, and the scent of roses hung in the air.

However, Joan seemed

oblivious to everything around them as her mind was occupied.

She cut the steak with her head lowered, her mind not focused on the task she had at hand.

"Ouch!" Suddenly, the woman felt a slight pain in her finger and gasped aloud.

"What happened?" Dustin raised his head to look at her the moment he heard it.

The blood oozing out of Joan's finger caught his sight at once.

He quickly rose and moved swiftly to sit next to her. The next moment, he sucked her finger

to stop the bleeding.

Joan was flabbergasted by his sudden action.

"I'm fine. It's just a tiny wound," she uttered, intending to pull out her finger hastily.

Nonetheless, her strength was far too small compared to the man. He tightened his grip on

her hand as he stared at her sternly, hinting her not to move an inch.

After quite a while, he finally let go of her finger.

"Is it painful?" he asked gently. His heart ached at the sight of the tiny cut on her finger.

Joan turned away to avoid having eye contact with him, pretending to be unaware of the

profound affection pouring out of his eyes.

"It's not really painful now. I'm fine," she replied casually.

"Miss, here's a plaster." A waitress approached them at that moment and handed her a band

aid courteously.

"Thank..." Before Joan could finish her words, Dustin took the plaster from the waitress and

stuck it cautiously on her injury.

"Miss, your boyfriend is so caring," the waitress commented with a smile.

The moment the stunned Joan was just about to clarify that Dustin was not her boyfriend,

the waitresses had turned and walked away. On the other hand, Dustin was on cloud nine;

his mouth curved into a big smile as he recalled that comment over and over in his head.

"Alright, the wound is covered properly." He inspected her finger once more before he

placed it down on the table.

"Thank you," Joan replied awkwardly, flitting her eyes anywhere but the man in front of her.

Dustin looked at her with a smile and returned to his seat.

He teased. "You're still as reckless as usual." He tapped on her forehead lightly, a sense of

affection in his eyes.

"I was just thinking about something," Joan refuted.

Was she thinking about Larry? A glint of coldness flashed across his eyes without the

woman's knowledge.

"Take this." Dustin cut the steak on his plate into even slices and placed them onto Joan's

plate.

Her cheeks flushed a deep red, and she quickly said, "Oh! I can cut it myself."

"Don't worry. I haven't taken any mouthful of my steak yet, so don't be worried about

swallowing my saliva," he said jokingly, hoping to calm her down.

Despite his efforts to make her comfortable, Joan couldn't help but still feel a little awkward.

"Ah! I'm so envious of that woman for having such a caring boyfriend."

"Yeah, he's really good looking too!"

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1945

"They're really a perfect match for each other. What a stunning couple!"

A few waitresses were whispering excitedly among themselves, apparently mesmerized by

Dustin's stunning looks.

Joan turned even more embarrassed when she overheard the waitresses gossiping about them.

“Joan, what’s the matter? Are you not feeling well? You look pale,” Dustin asked with great concern and touched her forehead to check her temperature.

“Nothing, I’m just a bit tired.” Joan forced her lips into a tight smile. I’m actually emotionally exhausted! Can you stop treating me affectionately as if you are my boyfriend? This is so awkward! She let out a silent sigh, not knowing what she was supposed to do.

“How about we go back for a rest after this?” the man asked gently. At that, Joan nodded in agreement silently.

If Larry happens to see how caring Dustin is being toward me, I’m sure he will burst a blood vessel... A sense of guilt started to creep into her heart at that thought. Her main intention

had been to go overseas for a thorough checkup of her brain. She planned to make a further decision after the root cause was detected. Nevertheless, it seemed as if she was on a vacation with Dustin at that moment.

Once they reached back at the hotel, Joan flung herself directly on the bed. Staring off into the distance out of the window, she gradually sank into contemplation. I wonder what Larry is doing now. What about Lucius? What’s he doing now? Is Ms. Young busy with anything right now?

Joan’s eyes were welled up with tears as she thought of her loved ones. Oh! I really miss all of them so much!

Holding her phone, Joan looked at Delilah’s phone number hesitantly. In the end, she could not hold herself back any longer. Her finger clicked the particular button to make a call.

“Hello, Joan! Where are you now? We’re all worried about you... Especially Mr. Norton. He’s looking for you so frantically!” Delilah sounded a bit incoherent; she was too anxious.

“Ms. Young!” Unable to suppress the suffocating sorrow any longer, Joan broke down and cried.

When Joan had lost her memories previously, she had treated Delilah as her own mother.

Whenever she felt depressed, the woman had always embraced her affectionately. Her grief

would be soothed after crying her heart out in Delilah’s arms. Joan was now so far away

from her motherly embrace when she needed to seek solace desperately.

Delilah remained silent as Joan wept.

She could only console her in this way since they were currently apart from each other.

After quite a while, Joan finally stopped crying and wiped away her tears.

“What’s the matter? Are you feeling troubled by anything?” Delilah asked worriedly.

“Ms. Young, I’m really scared. If I die now, I will not be able to meet all of you anymore...”

Joan mumbled out, a sense of utter bitterness in her tone.

What on earth is she talking about? It sounds as if she thinks she will be gone at any

moment! A glint of coldness flashed across Delilah’s eyes instantly.

“Joan, what do you mean? Explain yourself!” Delilah requested sternly.

“Ms. Young, would you mind doing me a favor?” Joan asked sadly with a sense of weariness

in her voice.

“Larry hasn’t found out that I’m having a checkup on my brain overseas.

Please keep it a

secret from him. I don’t want him to be upset and troubled, so I’m

waiting for the result of

the checkup before telling him. I’ll be able to make a decision then,” she explained, her tone

silently pleading with Delilah to not tell Larry anything.

Even though Delilah truly felt for her, she still hesitated for quite a while before agreeing

with her reluctantly.

Time flew by as Joan and Dustin waited for the date of the checkup to be finalized.

Meanwhile, Larry never stopped trying to track down Joan's whereabouts by all means. Joan held herself back by not giving the man any calls all this while. She only occasionally sent Delilah messages, updating the woman on her condition. She also asked about how things were going on with Larry and Lucius from time to time. In the nightclub, beams of colorful lights were emanating from the twirling disco light ball above the dance floor. The people on the dance floor were moving around excitedly alongside others to the deafening beat of the pop music being played. Scantly dressed dancers were swaying and twisting their bodies seductively, matching the tempo of the pop songs on the dance floor. Meanwhile, the men were either fixing their blazing gazes on the alluring women or indulged themselves in the passionate flirting session with other flirtatious women who approached them. A man was seated alone in one corner of the pub, drinking strong liquor continuously in despair. A reflection of the lostness and sorrow in his eyes could be seen under the dim lights. He did not have the courage to overcome the suffocating guiltiness growing within him. The intense desire to see his beloved woman was driving him crazy. At the same time, he could not forgive himself for not being able to shield her perfectly against any risk. "Joan Watts, where on earth did you go? Why don't you give me a call? Are you hiding somewhere with Dustin Silverman? Did you elope with him?" he snarled out, frustration evident on his face. Smash! He smashed a wineglass in desperation, shattering it into tiny pieces. A waiter approached him at once and cleared the mess on the floor in silence. He had gotten used to the scene all this while.

Larry had been patronizing the pub lately and was drunk all the time. He was apparently in a bad mood and not his usual self lately. Even though they were all curious about what had happened to him, none of them had the guts to approach him to show their concern. They were fearful of infuriating the man who was a fabled public figure in the business sector.

Meanwhile, a woman dressed in a revealing dress was gazing meaningfully at the lonely man. Her lips curved into a wry smile as something played in her mind. Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1946

He looks really cool! Twisting her waist seductively, the woman slowly made her way toward

Larry.

She leaned closer to the man and flipped her hair alluringly. "Hello, handsome! Are you all by yourself?"

Larry lifted his head slowly and tried to focus his gaze on the woman with squinted eyes.

"Joan Watts, is that you? You've finally come back to me?" Larry rubbed his eyes and asked excitedly.

The woman's face fell within seconds.

Who the hell Joan Watts? Looks like he's badly hurt from a relationship. Joan must be his girlfriend.

"You look so lonely. Do you need a companion?" the woman asked languorously as she

took the wineglass and finished the wine in one gulp.

Larry pulled her into his arms with a sudden yank.

"Joan, I missed you so much!" He nuzzled his nose into the woman's collarbone, mumbling

Joan's name non-stop as he did so.

"I'm not Joan watts!" the woman yelled in anger.

Even though she was keen on flirting with Larry, she was reluctant to be a substitute for his woman.

"Joan!" Larry continued to mumble that name as he tightened his arms around the woman.

“Let me go! I’m not Joan! This is nonsense!” The woman struggled and slapped on Larry’s chest constantly, anger and irritation rising within her. The strong fragrance from her body caused Larry to come to his senses out of a sudden. He realized at once that it was not Joan who was in his arms at the moment and pushed the woman away instinctively.

“You’re not Joan Watts! You’re a woman without any sense of shame!” Larry pointed at her and snapped.

The woman’s face turned grim. Fury burned in her eyes, and she had to resist the urge to pick up a wine bottle and smash it on the man’s head!

“Have you gone nuts? You know what? Continue dreaming of your Joan! I’m not interested in a crazy man like you!” She then scoffed and strutted off in her platform heels, her hips swaying from side to side as she did so.

The liveliness of the nightclub was not the least bit affected by the dramatic moments between Larry and the woman a while ago.

At the same time, another woman dashed into the nightclub hastily. She grabbed hold of a waiter’s arm and asked anxiously, “Where’s Larry?”

The waiter shook his head, saying, “I haven’t seen him.” Gabriella’s eyes hardened upon hearing that.

Tonight’s indeed a golden opportunity for me! I mustn’t let other women latch their claws onto him before I can!

After scanning every corner in the nightclub, she finally spotted a familiar figure in one of the corners.

“Lars, why are you here? You’ve already drunk so much!” she asked coyly.

Gabriella tactfully worded her question, wanting to double-check if the man was really drunk.

Intoxicated by the alcohol, Larry’s mind had drifted into dizziness. He continued to take

mouthfuls of wine without sparing any glance at her. She snatched the wineglass from Larry coquettishly. "Lars, you're drunk. You can't drink anymore."

He finally looked up at her with a slight frown on her face.

"What are you doing here?" Larry's frown deepened into a scowl as he raised his voice.

Huh? He can recognize me? Is he not drunk enough yet?

"Lars, it's a bit late now. Don't drink anymore. Let me send you home," she probed gently

and reached her arms out toward him, intending to help the man up from his seat.

"Get out of my way!" Larry scowled, inflamed as he forcefully pushed her away.

"Gabriella Ward, you must think I'm drunk enough to not be able to recognize you, right?

Let me tell you this! I'm repulsed by your disgusting body odor! It stinks!" Larry growled

after taking another sip of the wine.

Gabriella immediately felt overwhelmed. She sniffed hard at a few spots on her body with a puzzled look on her face. Body odor? I can't smell anything except my perfume!

Fine, since you're making a fuss that I have got a disgusting body odor, I'll go for a change in perfume to suit your taste.

"Waiter!" she called out loudly.

"Get me this a bottle of perfume. I only want this brand." After jotting down the brand on a piece of paper, she handed it to the waiter.

That is the exact brand of the perfume Joan uses. Larry Norton, I'm sure you won't be able to differentiate between her and I later.

Clenching her fists, a sense of maliciousness flickered in her eyes.

I don't believe you can escape from me this round.

"Joan, please come back to me. Oh! How I miss you! Lucius misses you, and Ms. Young

misses you as well," Larry murmured as he put his head on his hands on the table.

Gabriella leaned closer to him and listened attentively.

Where did Joan Watts go?

She gazed at the man with a quizzical look on her face.

"Lars, where did Joan go? Why's she not back yet?" she asked tactfully.

"I've no idea. I've spent so much time looking for her, yet she has been hiding from me..."

Larry continued to grumble.

Upon hearing his words, the woman's lips twitched into a smirk.

Here comes my chance! The lucky star is obviously shining on me! Larry Norton, I finally

have you in my hands tonight! Her sly smile widened, and she ended up laughing cunningly

at the thought.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1947

"Miss, here's your perfume." The salesperson hurriedly passed the bottle over.

Gabriella looked at the bottle in her hand before glancing at the man in front of her with a

sinister smile.

Poof!

Instantly, the air was permeated with Joan's scent.

Larry seemed to wake up at the smell of Joan's familiar warmth, but his cloudy gaze

betrayed his true state.

"Joan, is that you?" His deep voice was almost painfully hopeful.

"Yes, Lars. It's me." Gabriella wrapped her arms around Larry's neck.

Larry suddenly frowned.

"Since when did you call me „Lars“?" He asked as he looked at the woman in front of him

suspiciously. He started blinking frantically in an attempt to get a closer look at the woman

in his arms.

"Just trying to spice up our relationship," Gabriella said coquettishly as she patted his chest.

"Let's have some drinks!" Gabriella suddenly said in an attempt to change the conversation.

"We're almost there, Lars. Try to stay awake, okay?" she said as she tried her best to help the

man walk.

Larry's eyes were almost completely closed at this point. He had to lean against Gabriella

heavily so he could actually walk into the room.

"I'm so happy, Joan," he murmured in a daze.

Happy? You can't even tell who I am, Gabriella thought with a cold glare at the man in front

of her. Looks like you'll finally be the hero for once, Joan.

Smack!

Larry collapsed onto the large bed. Gabriella quickly turned on the lights and closed the

door and windows before walking toward the bed.

Finally! I've waited for you all this while and now you're finally mine.

Gabriella stroked Larry's hair gently while the corner of her mouth quirked up in a sly smile.

Who would ever call a man loyal when they were still willing to cheat while drunk?

Suddenly, Larry pulled Gabriella into his arms and breathed her scent in deeply.

"I missed you so much," Larry murmured as he nuzzled his nose into Gabriella's collarbone.

She stroked his face gently. In that very moment, everything that Larry had ever done to her disappeared into nothingness.

"I missed you too, Lars," she replied softly.

"I'm going to go shower." Gabriella walked toward the bathroom with her pajamas in hand.

Larry continued to lie on the bed with his eyes closed, looking completely worn out.

Ring! Ring!

His phone kept ringing, but no one picked up.

"Ms. Young, do you know where Larry is?" Caspian's gaze was riddled with anxiety.

"No, he hasn't picked up any of my calls," Ms. Young answered hurriedly.

Caspian's gaze darkened immediately.

Goddamn it!

He slammed his fist onto the wall next to them, sending Ms. Young stumbling back in surprise.

"Has he been to the bar?" Ms. Young asked.

Caspian's dark gaze suddenly brightened.

Larry had mentioned that he would almost always go to the bar and get drunk after an argument with Joan.

The bar was almost empty. Caspian wormed in and out of all the booths without a single glimpse of Larry.

"Was Larry here just now?" he asked a passing waiter fiercely.

"He left with a woman just now," the waiter answered frantically.

Caspian's gaze darkened coldly once again.

"Let me check your security cameras."

He wanted to get a good look at the woman who dared to seduce Larry.

Soon enough, the waiter showed him their security footage. Caspian's glare was darker than

a black hole.

This b*tch again?

He slammed a hand on the table, scaring the waiters next to him.

"You can see that they went upstairs in the footage," one of the waiters suddenly said.

"Shut up!" Caspian barked.

"All of you better keep your mouths shut about this. None of you saw anything, hear me?"

he hissed toward all the waiters.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1948

He didn't believe for even a second that Larry would ever cheat on Joan.

He left the security control room and went upstairs.

Knock knock!

"Larry?" Gabriella started shaking Larry.

However, he was already fast asleep.

Whoever was outside the door continued to knock relentlessly, and Gabriella started to smirk devilishly.

Oh, Larry. Since you're dead asleep, I guess I'll have to take matters into my own hands.

She picked up a towel and wrapped it around herself, making sure to reveal her alluring

décolletage and smooth legs before going to open the door.

The moment the door opened, Caspian almost couldn't believe his eyes.

"What's up? Are you looking for your brother in arms?" Gabriella asked seductively.

Caspian's gaze sharpened at the sight of the shameless woman in front of him.

"Screw off!" he barged his way into the room and slammed the door shut, shoving Gabriella aside.

"Larry!" Caspian called anxiously as he shook Larry back and forth. Perhaps due to Caspian's intense shaking, Larry finally started to come to.

"What are you doing here so early, Caspian?" Larry yawned.

"Early? Why don't you take a look at what you've done?" Caspian's tone was laced with both helplessness and frustration.

Larry looked around him and sat up in a flash.

His clothes were strewn all over the floor and were tangled up with some woman's clothes too. He hurriedly threw the comforter away only to realize that he was naked.

With a glance at Gabriella, who was still clad in just a towel, Larry started to feel like something was wrong.

"What are you doing here?" he asked fiercely as he jabbed a finger in Gabriella's direction.

"Did you forget, Lars? You brought me here last night," Gabriella said in a deliberately bashful tone.

Larry felt like he had been struck by lightning.

He had simply been drinking his stress away at the bar when some woman had approached

him. He remembered shoving that woman away, but when did Gabriella come into the picture?

He looked at Gabriella suspiciously, but his gaze betrayed his confusion.

"Put on your clothes." Caspian nudged Larry's arm.

Larry finally remembered his situation and quickly put his clothes back on.

"Gabriella, what the hell did you do to me last night?" Larry asked the evil woman in front of him urgently.

She scoffed and looked at Larry in disdain.

“Lars, why would you say that? To be fair, you’re the one who was doing stuff to me last night,” Gabriella said mockingly.

Slam! Larry slammed his fist into the wall.

Gabriella stumbled back in sudden fear.

What’s he going to do to me? He’s not going to kill me, is he?

She finally started feeling afraid.

“I’ll ask you one last time: What happened last night?”

Larry’s eyes glinted dangerously.

He knew there was no way he would have done anything out of line to such a devious woman.

Gabriella tried her best to calm down and put on a nonchalant front, looking at the man in front of her solemnly.

“Exactly what you’re thinking of,” she responded.

She wanted to find out once and for all what Larry would do. Is he finally going to divorce Joan or will he find a way to hide it from her?

“What do you want from me?” Larry asked straightforwardly.

“Larry!” Caspian shouted in dismay.

Gabriella finally opened her mouth after some thinking.

“Lars, have you forgotten? You’ve always been the only person I’ve ever wanted,” she said as she looked at Larry pitifully.

How disgustingly fake can she be? Larry thought as he clenched his fists.

What does she mean? Does she want to marry me?

Larry looked at the woman in front of him, his glare was both cold and suspicious.

He knew someone as calculative as Gabriella would definitely find a way to harm him. His gaze darkened considerably.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1949

“All I want is to become your wife, Lars. I know Joan is the woman you love, but I won’t hold that against you. I’ll respect your decision no matter what it is,” Gabriella said, still looking at Larry pitifully.

Caspian’s glare immediately brightened.

“Let’s go, Larry.” Caspian nudged Larry again.

Gabriella's gaze clouded over momentarily with panic. He's not going to actually leave just like that, is he? What kind of man would do that? That's not the Larry I know! Gabriella dug her nails into the flesh of her palm. "Gabriella, if I truly did anything to you, then I will take full responsibility. However, if I never did anything, then I hope you're ready for the consequences of lying to me." Larry approached Gabriella, his glare as sharp as daggers. Is that so? It's not like he would ever know what actually happened. He was blackout drunk. Gabriella raised her chin and met his gaze with a haughty stare. Joan, oh, Joan. You'll know what it feels like to be left behind soon. "You better think it through. Don't think for a second that you can fool me like that. When you have your answer, let me know. Let's go," Larry said with a glance at Caspian. Gabriella was left alone in the room. Her gaze became frosty. My answer won't change, not even if you give me a century to think about it. Don't you dare think of ever getting rid of me, Larry! Gabriella walked toward the window and looked down at the parking lot. Larry happened to enter his car right then. "Ms. Ward?" a man's voice suddenly called out. She turned back and smiled at him. He shut the door and approached Gabriella before pulling her toward him by her waist and kissing her. "Let's have a baby," Gabriella whispered into the man's ear. The man's body immediately heated up in lust and he picked Gabriella up bridal-style before walking to the bathroom. Back in the car, Caspian turned to look at Larry in the backseat. "How should we deal with her?" he asked. Larry's gaze was dark as he looked out of the window. With a troubled expression, he thought to himself, As expected, what you're worried about will really happen to you.

If anything actually happened between him and Gabriella, it would end up hurting three people.

But why can't I remember going up to the room with Gabriella? Larry held his head with both hands, his expression twisted with stress.

"The security footage only showed you and Gabriella going into the room together,"

Caspian said in a low voice.

That meant that no one could prove what happened in the room last night because there

were no security cameras in the room.

"You're both finally back. What happened? Is everything okay?" Ms. Young asked the men in front of her worriedly.

"What's wrong, Dad? Why do you look so mad?" Lucius rushed into Larry's embrace, looking at him with an innocent expression.

"Sorry, Lucius. I'm a little tired." After that, Larry walked straight into his room.

Delilah looked at Larry's retreating figure slightly worriedly.

She had never seen Larry so down in the dumps before. He was always the one who

suffered the most whenever something happened to Joan.

"Uncle Caspian, is my dad not feeling well?" Lucius tugged on Caspian's shirt.

Caspian knelt down and stroked Lucius' head gently.

"Don't worry, Lucius. He'll be fine very soon," Caspian assured him.

After explaining everything to Delilah, all she could do was sigh.

If only Joan had told Larry everything from the very start, maybe none of this would have

happened. Her eyes dulled with that thought in mind.

"Joan, when are you going to come back?" Delilah asked worriedly.

"I still need some time away. Things are getting kind of busy here," Joan answered.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1950

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1950

"How's Larry? Is he doing alright?" Joan continued asking.

Delilah hesitated before deciding against telling Joan about what just happened.

After some more small talk, they hung up. Larry was tossing and turning in his bed, unable to fall asleep. He felt like something was wrong, but he wasn't sure what it was.

He turned on his phone and called Joan, but it went straight to voicemail.

When it came to relationships, betrayal was something that truly couldn't be forgotten.

Usually, it was already too late to fix things at that point.

—

Dustin glanced at his phone. Some stranger had texted him. He opened the message only to see a video clip and some pictures attached.

"What a scoop!" Dustin smacked his own thigh in excitement.

Damn, Larry, I didn't know you were such a guy!

Dustin smirked devilishly.

So much for your „forever“ and „one and only“. You're still just a cheater!

Dustin looked at Joan, who wasn't far off.

"Joan!" he suddenly called out.

She turned back and looked at Dustin curiously.

"Let's go to the hospital." Dustin grabbed Joan's arm and started pulling her away.

She immediately shook his grip off and looked at him awkwardly.

"I-I'll go grab my jacket." She ran toward her room.

Joan, you will be mine one day.

Dustin's eyes glinted coldly and he dialed someone's number.

"Hey, Jory, I need a favor."

"No can do. I'm busy taking care of my wife," Jory turned him down heartlessly.

Nancy had collapsed and almost gotten a miscarriage because he had taken Joan away at

that time. Jory hadn't even brought that up with Dustin yet.

"I really need your help. I need you to keep an eye on Larry for me, and let me know the

minute he does anything suspicious," Dustin said coldly.

What's he up to? First Joan, and now Larry. Will he ever stop?

"I already told you, I'm busy. There's a bunch of company stuff that I'm still waiting for you

to deal with. Get someone else to track him. I'm done with whatever this mess is about."

After that, Jory hung up.

Dustin smirked at his phone.

He knew Jory would definitely help him out.

"Hey. I need you to track someone down for me." At that very moment, Jory was placing his own call.

"How is it, Dustin?" Joan looked at Dustin anxiously, waiting for his reply. He glanced at Joan and back at the report when his gaze darkened.

"Joan, I think you need to stay here to get proper treatment for a while.

There are some

issues with your report, but they're small fry. Still, we still need to go for another checkup

later on to confirm your overall condition."

Truthfully, there was nothing wrong with her brain. All she had to do was rest more often.

Dustin was the one who was purposely dragging the time.

He wanted to see what Larry could get up to while Joan wasn't there.

With that in mind, Dustin clenched his fists tightly.

Joan's expression changed to one of slight sorrow. She wasn't sure if she should feel good

or bad about the news.

"Dustin, tell me honestly. Is it serious?" Her voice trembled slightly with fear.

How much gentler and more loveable can she get? Dustin's eyes glinted with pity for Joan.

"Don't worry. I'll be here with you no matter what. As long as we try to get everything back

on track, you'll be fine." Dustin approached Joan and wrapped her in a tight hug.

She didn't push him away. Perhaps Joan really did need a warm hug right now.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1951

Despite Dustin being the one hugging her, Joan's mind was full of Larry.

"Larry..." Joan murmured.

Dustin's eyes darkened.

Why is she still thinking about him? Well, too bad. He already found someone else. He

doesn't deserve Joan's love!

Larry was flipping through some files in his office when his door suddenly swung open.

"Lars!" The intruder's voice grated annoyingly against Larry's ears.

He looked up and glared at the woman in front of him. There was nothing he hated more

than someone barging in and disrupting his work environment.

"What is it?" he asked coldly.

"Nothing. I just miss you and wanted to see you," Gabriella said flirtatiously as she

approached Larry.

If only things were actually that simple. Larry was immediately on high alert.

Gabriella walked toward the sofa after noticing that Larry was basically ignoring her.

Good luck getting rid of me, Larry. I will stick to you until you take full responsibility of me!

Gabriella's eyes glinted coldly.

"Hey, what's up with that Gabriella recently? She's been coming over an awful lot."

"I don't know. She's always had a thing for Mr. Norton, but it's not like she doesn't know

that he's married."

A couple of women were gossiping outside his office.

Gabriella knew they'd be curious and smiled cunningly.

Suddenly, she started to retch.

Larry stopped what he was doing and looked at the woman in front of him in shock.

"What's wrong with you?" he asked, looking at her suspiciously.

"I don't know. I've been feeling like throwing up all the time recently," she replied.

Sh*t!

Larry suddenly felt a sense of dread.

She's not pregnant, is she? He scratched the back of his head worriedly.

Did I really do something to her that night? How am I supposed to explain everything to

Joan when she comes back?

"Ouch! Ugh, my stomach hurts so bad!" Gabriella purposely clutched her stomach and bent

over as if she were really in pain.

In the hospital, she was finally laying down in a hospital bed.

“You young“uns really know no boundaries. You should have come sooner, not only now after she“s been pregnant for so long,” the doctor said as he looked at Larry coldly.

Sh*t! Larry put his head in his hands, completely at a loss for what to do.

“Larry!” Caspian suddenly came running toward him.

“What“s wrong? Is she pregnant?” Caspian asked in a low, breathless voice.

Larry turned and looked out the window with a dark expression on his face.

What the hell did I do to deserve this?

“Lars?” Gabriella mumbled pitifully.

“Larry, are you sure the kid is yours?” Caspian looked at Larry suspiciously.

He still refused to believe that Larry would do anything to that woman. He knew Larry too well, after all. If Larry didn“t like it, he wouldn“t lay even a finger on it.

“I don“t know,” Larry answered softly.

Caspian“s eyes darkened.

Knowing Gabriella, she would probably have found a way to cause a scene even if Larry hadn“t laid a finger on her that night.

“Here“s some medicine. Make sure to keep her happy, alright? She is pregnant after all,” the doctor said with a serious look at Larry.

Larry reached out and took the medicine with an expressionless face.

Ring! Ring!

Gabriella glanced at the caller“s name on her screen before looking at the two people outside. She finally decided to pick up the call.

“Baby, are you pregnant?” The voice on the other end of the phone sounded slightly sensual.

“Keep your voice down,” she whispered back.

“I can“t believe I“m going to be a father.”

Gabriella scoffed coldly. Why are you so happy? It“s not like I“m going to marry you anyway.

After stringing him along for a couple more minutes, she hung up the phone.

“Lars?” Gabriella called out.

Larry walked in and looked at the woman on the hospital bed a little helplessly.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1952

"I want dumplings." Gabriella looked at Larry pitifully.

"I'll go buy them." Before Larry could even react, Caspian had already run out the door.

"When did you get pregnant?" Larry asked carefully.

Gabriella paused for a second before smiling.

"Huh? So I am actually pregnant? Did the doctor already tell you?"

Gabriella caressed her

belly in feigned disbelief.

Of course, I know I'm pregnant. I just wanted to make sure you knew too.

Larry's face soured immediately and he fell into deep thought.

How am I going to explain to Joan? He scratched the back of his head with an exasperated

frown on his face.

Gabriella felt both glee and pity at the sight of his stress.

"Here are your dumplings." Caspian passed them to Gabriella.

Suddenly, she yelped.

"Oh no! Would you look at that? How did you manage to spill all that sauce? You got oil all

over the blanket," Caspian mocked on purpose.

God damn you!

Gabriella clutched the sheets tightly, trying to keep herself from punching him in the face.

After a deep breath or two, she finally calmed down.

Disgusting whore. How dare you try and seduce Larry? Caspian's gaze turned into one of

disdain.

"Can you step out for a second, Caspian? I need to talk to Gabriella for a second," Larry

suddenly said.

Larry and Gabriella were finally left alone in the room.

It became so quiet, one could hear a pin drop.

"Gabriella, tell me the truth. Who is the father?" Larry glared at Gabriella sharply.

Her eyes teared up instantly.

"Did you forget everything you did to me, Lars?" she asked in a trembling voice.

It doesn't matter who the father is anyway. I'll still have you wrapped around my finger

whether you like it or not!

"You better tell me the truth. If I find out that it's not mine, you know what will happen to

you." Larry's tone was sharp enough that Gabriella knew he wasn't joking.

She knew Larry had a reputation for being harsh and definite in whatever he did, much less

something like this.

"What's going on with you, Lars?" Gabriella asked pitifully.

She was clearly avoiding the topic since she had never admitted who it was.

"What do you want from me?" Larry asked. It was obvious that he was already feeling

beaten down by Gabriella's antics.

He had never imagined that he would ever lay a finger on anyone but Joan.

"This is my first baby. I don't want to lose it just like that," Gabriella continued caressing her

belly, looking both pitiful and as if she was trying to hold it back.

Larry's glare blazed with anger after watching Gabriella acting all innocent. He clenched his

fists, trying to hold back his anger.

No. That baby has to die.

"The baby shouldn't come to life. Get rid of it." Larry turned around and looked out the

window.

Gabriella was taken aback.

He's actually willing to kill his own kid? What a monster! Larry, Larry. Is Joan the only woman

you'll ever love?

"No! Lars, I can't get rid of my own kid. If you won't take care of my baby, I will!" Gabriella

yelled at Larry.

The child might not actually have been Larry's, but Gabriella still didn't want to kill her own

child.

"No."

She scoffed coldly and walked toward Larry with a frigid expression on her face.

“What? You don’t want Joan to know? She already eloped with someone else. Why are you still hanging on to her?” Gabriella hissed.

I want that woman’s reputation ruined! I want her to be left behind forever. In fact, I hope to

God she dies and never comes back!

Larry’s gaze was darker than coal at that point.

He hadn’t heard from Joan for what seemed like forever. He didn’t know if she was doing

well, nor if she was getting hurt. Now, this new situation was like salt on his wound.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1953

Slam! The door closed heavily.

Gabriella watched Larry leave with a sinister glint in her eye.

I have to give birth to this kid!

She clenched her fists tightly, digging her nails into the flesh of her palms.

Knock! Knock!

Gabriella looked at the door again, her eyes excited at the thought of Larry turning back for her.

“What’s wrong, baby? Are you okay?” Another man hurriedly rushed toward Gabriella.

She immediately frowned in exasperation.

“What are you doing here?” she asked fiercely, her eyes blazing with annoyance.

“What do you mean? Of course, I’m here to see you.” He pulled her into his embrace.

“Didn’t I already tell you? I don’t want to meet you again. Besides, I’ve already given you the money,” Gabriella said coldly.

“How could you say that, baby? I didn’t do that with you just for the money. I like you, can’t you tell?” he said gently as he caressed Gabriella’s head.

She just scoffed coldly in response.

She no longer believed in love or romance. She had already gone through enough. All she

wanted at this point was to get Larry and get rid of Joan. Even if it was out of spite, she wanted to get what she wanted for once.

"If you really love me, then never let me see you again," Gabriella spat coldly.

His gaze darkened instantly.

What a b*tch. She's really burning her bridges, huh?

"Don't you miss me, Gabriella?" he smirked dangerously.

"Did you forget how much fun we had that day?" His sneaky hands started slipping up her shirt.

Gabriella started to panic.

"Get out. We can't be seen together like this. Also, I don't ever want to see you again,"

Gabriella said harshly in a slightly louder voice.

How can this woman be so cruel? His eyes flashed coldly and he clenched his fists.

"Joan, are you okay?" Dustin patted her shoulder and asked in a low voice.

"I'm fine," she said with a wave of her hand.

For some reason, Joan had kept feeling nauseous ever since yesterday.

The doctor said she

had eaten something that had gone bad.

"What did you even eat?" Dustin said as he looked at Joan tenderly.

They only emerged from the restroom after a long time.

"Miss, here's your soup." A waiter suddenly approached with a smile.

"I didn't order this though," Joan said with a confused glance at the waiter.

"This man ordered it for you."

Joan looked at Dustin with an awkward smile.

"You should drink more soup. It's good for you," Dustin said.

Joan had been feeling uneasy for the past few days, but she hadn't been able to put her

finger on it exactly and it made her feel even worse.

After the two of them finished eating, they arrived at the beach.

"The doctor said that the beach is good for your recovery," Dustin said in a low voice.

"Come on, let's start," he continued.

Joan looked at Dustin both awkwardly and hesitatingly. She felt like it wasn't a good idea.

She was a married woman after all.

"What? Are you embarrassed?" He approached her slowly.

"I'm not embarrassed! I just..." Joan trailed off, looking as if she found it hard to speak.

"It's okay. Everyone here is a stranger. They don't know who we are, so no one's going to spread any gossip about you," Dustin said as he pushed Joan onto the sandy beach.

Joan looked around and failed to find a face she recognized, so she decided to lie down and relax so she could recover quickly.

"Look at those two. They're so sweet. He's actually feeding her."

"Yeah, he's so handsome, too!"

"How sweet. I wish I had a boyfriend like that."

The women next to them kept gossiping loudly. Joan couldn't hear what they were saying exactly, but their heated stares were already telling her everything she needed to know.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1954

"Look how blessed you are! They're envious that I'm giving you a massage," Dustin murmured deliberately.

Without a word, Joan gave him an awkward smile.

Did I ask him to massage me? No, I didn't, but he forced me to accept it.

Larry is going to get jealous if he ever finds out about this.

A hint of worry appeared on the woman's face.

"Joan?" Suddenly, a familiar voice sounded.

Opening her eyes quickly, she saw a woman in front of her.

"It's you! Are you here for a vacation?" The short, young woman asked excitedly.

Joan got to know this woman when she went shopping together with Larry. It was a comical encounter.

At that time, the woman went shopping as well. Unfortunately, a snatch thief stole her

wallet, and she broke her glasses too. Later, she ran into Larry and Joan.

Squinting her eyes

at him, she insisted adamantly that he was the snatch thief until the police caught the

culprit. Their friendship started with a misunderstanding.

"What? Oh, yeah." Joan answered with embarrassment.

She couldn't reveal the fact that she was sick.

"Where's your husband? Or are you..." The woman pointed at Dustin doubtfully.

"I wish I were her husband." The man smiled faintly.

Amused, the woman chuckled at his words.

"Larry has been busy recently," Joan explained in a low voice.

"Oh, I see. But he should take a rest sometimes, no matter how busy he is."

"Come here, Mom!" a kid shouted from some distance away.

"Excuse me, my son is calling me. See you again." The woman patted Joan's shoulder. While

walking away, she mumbled to herself, "How strange. Why would her husband let another man takes care of her?"

Staring at her retreating back, Joan knew that the woman had a misunderstanding again.

Whatever. Her opinion doesn't matter to me. This time, I probably won't be able to return to my country.

"Come on, let's continue." Dustin rubbed her temples.

"Are you guys together?" An adorable lady appeared out of nowhere and stood in front of them.

"No." Joan denied right away.

Instantly, her answer thrilled the woman.

"Can... Can I take a photo with you?" The lady gazed at Dustin bashfully.

Finally, someone is here to flirt with Dustin! The corner of Joan's lips curled into a satisfied smile.

Actually, it's about time for him to get a girlfriend.

Dustin glanced awkwardly at the lady. His gaze darkened.

Where did she come from? Why does she want to take a photo with me out of the

blue?" He eyed the lady beside him suspiciously.

"Is there anything wrong? What do you think about this photo?" the lady asked in a low voice.

"Yeah, it looks great," Dustin replied half-heartedly.

A chilly, refreshing sea breeze blew her way. Joan stood up facing the ocean, glancing at the woman who greeted her just now some distance away. The woman showed her a „V“ sign with a smile. In an instant, Joan came to the realization that the woman was the one who asked the lady to come over and take a photo with Dustin. What a meticulous and thoughtful woman. In the office, Larry was staring at the computer screen solemnly, but his mind was occupied by Joan“s face. “Larry.” Caspian knocked on the door and ambled in. “Gabriella insisted on keeping the baby, or else...” He hesitated and bit his tongue. “Or else? What is she going to do?” Lifting his head, Larry looked at the man with a brow raised. “Or else she would be gone together with the baby.” Bang! He pounded the desk with his fist. Who on earth does she think she is? How dare she bargain with me! “Larry, it“ll be troublesome if anything happens to her. After all, Gabriella is the only daughter of the Ward family.” Larry“s gaze appeared gloomy. Of course, I know I can“t act impetuously. “Is there any news about Joan?” Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1955 “I just spotted her in a surveillance footage of the airport. But...” Caspian paused for a second. “But she was with Dustin.” I knew it! It’s that scumbag! Larry“s gaze grew frigid at once. When is he going to stop clinging onto Joan? But why is she willing to go overseas with him? After a small talk, Caspian left the office. At night, a crescent moon and a few twinkling stars hung in the pitch-black sky. Staring out the window at a lighthouse nearby, Larry was deep in contemplation. Ring! Ring! Ring!

Glancing at his phone, the man answered the call immediately.
“Dad, when is Mom coming home? I miss her so much.” Lucius’s voice sounded weary.
“Your mom is busy these days. Don’t worry, Lucius. When she’s free, I’ll bring her to see you,” Larry comforted him.
Everyone misses her a lot. Why didn’t she call us?
Hanging up the phone, the man scrolled through the contact list in his phone, found Joan’s number, and called her.
“Hello?” She picked up the phone.
A gleam of hope flashed across Larry’s eyes.
“Joan, where are you?” the man murmured with much concern.
“I...” Joan’s voice trailed off.
Can I tell him that I’m abroad together with Dustin? Should I let him know that I came here to check on my brain? No, I can’t tell him.
“Larry, don’t worry, I’m fine. Perhaps I’ll be back after some time,” she said gradually.
She would rather be with Dustin than tell me what is going on.
A look of disappointment crossed on Larry’s face.
She’s my wife. Why does she hide things from me? We’ve been together for so long, but she still doesn’t trust me.
“Joan, Lucius and Ms. Young miss you,” he said slowly.
So what? The woman’s eyes glinted with a twinge of grief.
I can’t be with them anyway.
“Joan, have some fruits.” Suddenly, Dustin yelled beside her.
“What? I’m sorry. Something came up, so I have to hang up now.” With that, she hung up on him straight away.
That voice was Dustin’s!
Larry felt as if a knife stabbed into his heart, cutting it into pieces.
“Who were you talking to? You look sad just now,” Dustin asked gently.
Putting a piece of apple into his mouth, he feigned ignorance.
In fact, from the moment Joan first spoke on the phone, he already guessed that it was Larry who called her. Therefore, he took the chance to sow discord between them.

Oh Larry, if you had believed in her, you wouldn't have doubted her. Above all, you shouldn't have abandoned her. I bet you're busy handling your relationship with Gabriella now.

An impish smile broke across Dustin's face.

"Why are you smiling?" The woman gave him a nudge.

"Huh? Nothing. Eat some fruits." Handing a plate of sliced fruits to her, he stood up and walked away.

Looking at his departing back, Joan felt puzzled.

Is he's happy because the lady took photos with him just now?

"Lucius, wake up!" Delilah shrieked desperately.

However, the boy on the bed didn't move an inch.

"Hello, is this 911? I need an ambulance!"

In the hospital, Lucius was on a drip as he lay on the bed with his eyes closed. In the

meantime, Delilah was sitting beside him with a troubled face.

"What happened?" Larry stormed into the ward.

"I don't know. I just couldn't wake him up this morning..." She choked back her tears.

"Ms. Young, don't worry. Let me ask the doctor." He quickly headed to the doctor's office.

"The child is too young. After his last surgery, he was recovering well.

However, he's been

feeling down lately, and that is detrimental to..."

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1956

At his words, Larry was bewildered.

Lucius' daily life has been revolving around his school and home. Why does he feel

depressed then?

"Ms. Young, have you noticed anything strange with Lucius lately?" He glanced at the woman with concern.

Delilah hesitated for a moment. "Every day during mealtimes, he always asked when Joan

would come back. He said he was worried about his Mom, that she might be bullied

outside..." she said softly.

Hearing that, Larry's gaze turned grim.

I see. It's because of Joan.

The man promptly fished out his phone and dialed her number, but the call didn't get through. Out of agitation, he took two photos of the boy on the bed and sent them to her.

Ding!

Joan swiped to unlock her phone, and she was stunned by what she saw. Without hesitation, she called him back straight away.

"What's going on? What happened to Lucius?"

Her anxious voice and hasty tone gave him an illusion that she was right next to him.

"He's hospitalized. The doctor said he has been depressed recently," Larry answered slowly.

Is it because of me?

A panic overtook Joan. Her eyes were filled with remorse.

"Ms. Young said that he often asked when you're coming back every time he eats. He called

me many times too," the man said in a husky voice.

The woman's eyes turned red-rimmed as her body quivered.

"Joan, please come back, if you will. The boy really needs you now."

She could no longer hold back her emotion. Hanging up the phone, she huddled up on the

couch with her arms around her knees, sobbing in anguish.

Lucius is admitted to the hospital because of me. It's all my fault!

Tears trickled down her face and soaked the pillow under her head.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

Someone knocked incessantly on the door, but she showed no response at all, as though

she didn't hear it.

"Joan!" Dustin bawled outside the room, but no one answered the door.

The man grew restless and sprinted to the reception counter.

Boom! The door was kicked open forcefully.

What came into sight was the woman who fell asleep with swollen eyes after crying her

heart out.

"Joan..." He shook her arm gently.

She was completely unresponsive.

Glancing around, the man didn't see any pills or medicine.

Thank God she didn't hurt herself.

He tiptoed into the bedroom, took a blanket, and gently covered her with it. Squatting

down beside her, he studied her face.

What happened to her? Why did she cry so sadly? Is it because of Larry?
Or...

At these thoughts, Dustin's gaze darkened.

After what seemed like decades, the woman on the couch gradually opened her eyes. Only

then she realized that Dustin was leaning against the side of the couch with his eyes shut.

"Dustin..." Joan nudged his arm.

She wanted to tell him that she was going to return to her country, so Lucius would get well soon.

Staring at the man who was in a deep slumber, she sat up quietly, draped the blanket

around his shoulders, and sauntered toward the bedroom.

"Joan!" Suddenly, the man behind her called out loudly.

"Did something come up?" Dustin put the blanket on the couch and marched toward her.

"I'm going back."

Her unflinching gaze and her resolute expression caught him off guard.

"But you have yet to do the final checkup." Dustin hurriedly tried to convince her.

However, this was not important to her anymore.

"Dustin, I can't thank you enough for bringing me here for medical checkups, but I have

something urgent to attend to now." Turning around, she started packing her luggage.

Unexpectedly, the man stepped forward and stopped her, gazing at her with a stern face.

"What is so important that you're risking your life for it? Is it because of Larry? Is it him?"

Dustin clutched her arms.

"Let go of me. It hurts!" She struggled against him.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1957

In the next second, he felt a pang of heartache and promptly loosened his grip on Joan.

"I'm sorry. I forgot myself."

"It's Lucius. He's admitted to the hospital..." she explained in a soft voice.

So what? Why should she care about the child? He is only her adopted son, and they're not related by blood.

Scratching the back of his head, Dustin couldn't wrap his head around what she was thinking.

Watching the woman bustle around the room, he knew that there was no way he could stop her from going back.

Fine, I'll let her be.

"I'm going back with you." With that, Dustin turned around and headed back to his bedroom to pack his luggage.

Joan froze at his words. A second later, she recollected herself. Is he not angry with me?

In the hospital, Lucius was lying on the bed, while looking out the window. His gaze was

bleak and melancholic. Exasperated, Delilah's heart ached for him.

Ring, ring, ring...

Delilah took a look at her phone and promptly picked it up.

"Hello, Joan."

Lucius swiftly tilted his head to look at the woman beside him.

"Really? Okay, I got it. I'll pass the phone to Lucius now." She swiftly handed the phone to him.

"Mom!" The weariness in his voice couldn't conceal the excitement in it.

"Lucius, I'm coming back soon..." Joan spoke in a low voice, as she was afraid that she might

not be able to suppress her emotions and broke down in tears when she heard his voice.

"I miss you so much," the boy protested.

"Dad and Grandma miss you too."

Joan was at a loss for words.

I miss them too, but I don't know how much time I have left to live. I'm afraid I might not be able to stay by their side for long.

"Hey, Lucius is awake. You look happy today." Larry came into the ward with some fruits.

The man's voice tugged at her heartstrings and made her miss him even more.

“Dad, it’s Mom!” Lucius pointed at the phone enthusiastically.
Larry was stunned for a split second. His lips quirked up into a smile.
“Mom is calling you, huh?” he asked slowly. Surprise flickered in his eyes.
“Ah!” Running hastily, Joan tripped over herself and fell onto the floor.
Her right hand
rubbed her bleeding knee. Despite the pain, she got up on her feet and staggered forward.
Behind her, Dustin saw it and felt for her.
Why must she make herself so miserable? Why can’t she just live for herself?
His fists balled up, and his gaze grew cold.
“Lucius!” The woman darted into the ward while calling out loud.
But there was no sign of anyone.
Have I come to the wrong ward?
“Mom!” Suddenly, Lucius wrapped his arms around her from behind.
“You scared me! I thought I came to the wrong ward. How are you? Are you feeling better now?” Gazing at the boy with much concern, she caressed his head.
Holding onto her leg, Lucius refused to let her go, even after a long while.
Snuggling up to
his mother, he suddenly felt aggrieved.
“Mom, where have you been recently? Dad said you’re too busy to see me.” He gazed
pitifully at her.
Joan’s eyes misted over at his words.
I’ve done wrong. I shouldn’t have gone overseas so abruptly and made everyone worry
about me.
“Lucius, are you getting better?” Dustin reached out to stroke his head.
With all of his might, the boy flung his hand away with an annoyed face.
It must be this man who took Mom away. He gave Dustin a death stare.
When did this rascal become so rude? He eyed the boy speculatively.
“Mr. Dustin, aren’t you busy? Why are you here again?” Lucius emphasized the word „again“
intentionally.
I bet he can hear the displeasure in my tone.
The boy turned around and hugged Joan tightly.
Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1958
Dustin was overcome with embarrassment.

How dare this brat humiliate me this way! The man clenched his hands firmly as his gaze grew icy.

"I have to visit Lucius, no matter how busy I am," he murmured.

Hmph! Who cares about him if it isn't for Joan?

"Joan, you're finally back." Delilah strode into the ward with a worried look.

"Ms. Young." Joan stood up and pulled Delilah into her embrace.

In the meantime, Dustin glanced around the ward and felt curious. This is odd. Where is

Larry? Isn't that jerk supposed to stay at the hospital and take care of Lucius?

"Joan, we were so worried. Do you know how long has Larry looked for you? He suffers from

insomnia for a period of time..." Delilah babbled on.

Standing beside them, Dustin pursed his lips in disdain.

Why does he still mess around with other woman then? His gaze turned scornful.

Is he hiding because he can't bring himself to face Joan?

The corner of his lips curved into a mischievous smile. I can't wait to see how Larry is going

to explain to her about the things that happened between him with Gabriella.

In the office, Larry was flipping through a magazine with a solemn look.

Ring! Ring!

"Hello, Larry. Joan is back," Caspian mumbled.

In an instant, the pen in Larry's hand dropped on the desk.

"She's still at the hospital. You..."

"No need. I'll be there after work." The man hung up right after speaking.

Caspian stared at the phone, confused yet curious. Doesn't he yearn for Joan's return?

Standing up, Larry strolled toward the window and glanced at the sea far away. Uneasiness

and trepidation welled up in his heart. I have yet to settle the things between me and

Gabriella. What will Joan think if she gets to know about it? Distress was written all over his

face.

When she was not around, he couldn't stop thinking about her. Now that she was back, he felt fearful.

A human's psychology worked in an enigmatic way. Most of the time, people longed for things that they couldn't have. But once they had it, they would despise it for no reason.

Ring! Ring!

Glancing at the caller ID, Larry paused for a moment before picking up the phone.

"Hello, I'm back." Her deep voice sounded strained.

"Thank you," the man spoke slowly.

Both their tones were impassive, devoid of any emotion. Joan waited for the man to go on, but he fell silent.

In the end, they hung up the phone in less than two minutes.

Perhaps it was out of guilt about leaving him, or she was upset to see Lucius

condition. Joan hung her head, and her eyes dimmed with sorrow.

"Ms. Ward, Joan came back."

Hah! She still remembers to come home? Is she here to snatch Larry away from me? This time, she's bound to lose.

A trace of malice gleamed in her eyes.

"Since when did she come back?" Gabriella asked in an icy tone.

"She just came back today, together with Dustin. They went to the hospital right after that. I

heard the boy named Lucius has been admitted."

"Okay, I got it. Keep a close eye on Larry." With that said, she hung up.

She came back on the dot. It's time to let her know the truth. Larry, just you wait! You're definitely going to marry me.

With a frigid gaze, Gabriella clenched her fists tightly.

"Ms. Young, why isn't he back yet?" Joan was slightly uneasy. Her eyes flicked between

Delilah and Lucius, who was in a deep slumber on the hospital bed.

It's been a while since I last met him. I wonder how he is doing now.

A sense of anxiety spiked in the woman's heart.

"That's weird. He isn't working overtime these days. He usually comes here right after work."

Delilah cast a puzzled glance at the door.

Is he still mad at me? A glint of dejection was in Joan's eyes.

"Why isn't Larry here yet? We've waited for so long. Is this how he takes care of the child?"

Dustin scoffed deliberately.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1959

If it were not for his call, Joan would not have considered to come back.

"I am here!" At that instant, a familiar voice echoed from the door.

Joan walked over excitedly and wanted to hug Larry. However, Larry ignored her and walked

right to Lucius's bed.

"Ms. Young, how is he today?" he asked gently.

At that moment, Joan could not feel more awkward.

It seemed like Larry was still mad at her.

Looking at this scene, Dustin's lips curled into a sarcastic smile. Why?

Are you feeling too

guilty to hug your wife?

"The doctor says he just needs a few more days of rest," Delilah replied hurriedly.

Larry nodded at her and turned his gaze towards Lucius who was lying on the bed.

Just then, his phone rang. He took a glimpse at the screen and hung up abruptly.

Seconds later, the call came in again. Feeling annoyed, Larry picked it up and scolded, "What

exactly do you want?"

Joan was stunned by his reaction. Who is it that makes him so angry?

A few days had passed. Ever since Joan came back, Lucius was extremely joyful. He was no

longer depressed, whereas his appetite had considerably improved.

"Mom, I want to go home," Lucius said suddenly.

Joan smiled at Lucius, who was still lying on his bed. Without hesitation, she stepped

towards the doctor's office.

"I can discharge him, but you have to keep an eye on his emotion," the doctor answered

slowly.

Soon after that, all of them were back to the village with their stuff.

"Dad, I want to eat fruit."

"Alright, there you go!"

"Mom, let's have some dumplings tonight, okay?"

"Sure." Joan caressed Lucius's hair gently before she walked into the kitchen.

Gazing at the happy family of three, Delilah displayed a wide satisfied grin on her face.

The most important thing for a family is health and unity. Such happiness could not be bought with wealth. It is my blessings to be able to meet with this family. Right then, there was a knock on the door.

Who will still come over during this hour? Delilah stared at the door curiously and then walked over slowly.

"Who are you looking for?" She was a little startled to see a gorgeous lady standing at the door.

"I am here for Larry." The lady deliberately touched her pregnant belly as she said this.

At that instant, Delilah's gaze darkened. She could sense something terrible was about to happen.

"Ms. Young, who is it?" Joan asked from the kitchen in a loud voice.

Hearing the familiar voice, Gabriella's eyes flashed with coldness.

Arrogantly, she walked

into the tiny living room before Delilah could stop her.

"It's me!" Her haughty voice echoed through the entire house.

This voice... could it be...

Joan immediately raised her head, and her heart petrified the moment she saw Gabriella.

How does she find this place?

Lucius observed Joan's reaction and instantly knew it was an unwelcomed guest. He turned

his head and continued to watch his show, ignoring Gabriella, who was standing right

beside him.

"What the h*ll are you doing here?" Larry showed up suddenly before Gabriella and glared at her ferociously.

"What? Why couldn't I come? I come to visit all of you." Gabriella cast back a cold smile.

Such a ludicrous joke! She has just set me up not long ago. How dare she come to our place now?

"You are not welcomed here." An unexpected phrase came out of Lucius' mouth.

Hearing this, a dark expression loomed over Gabriella's face.

Who the h*ll is this rude kid? He didn't greet me, and now he dared to talk to me like this!

"Whose kid is this? Doesn't he have any manners?"

Listened to Gabriella's accusation, Lucius stood up and walked steadily towards her.

Even though he was still young at age, he understood a lot about the adult world. He might

not fully know the intention of the woman standing in front of him, but at least, he could

see that she had a poor character.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1960

"Hello, Madam. May I ask why do you come into our house?" Lucius gave a full bow towards

Gabriella.

With that, Gabriella's face was flushed red with anger.

Delilah, who was standing from afar, did not say anything while she observed Gabriella. She

gave a long sigh and shook her head repeatedly at this situation.

"Leave now!" Larry grabbed Gabriella's hand forcefully.

"Why should I leave? I have done nothing wrong. What's going on, Lars? Am I an

embarrassment to you here?" Out of a sudden, Gabriella grabbed back Larry's arm and

leaned tightly on him.

All these were being witnessed by Joan from the kitchen.

What is it between the two of them?

She could not believe what she is seeing at the moment.

"Let go of me now! Please leave!" Larry was trying to push Gabriella to her way out.

"Lars, don't forget to come to find me ya..." Gabriella coaxed in a loud manner.

Right at that moment, there was an awkward silence among the other parties at the scene.

Anyone could see that Larry had a complicated relationship with that lady.

From what Joan knew, Larry never behaves like this. If Gabriella were to touch him like this

before, he would have pushed her away mercilessly.

“Come on, Joan. Lucius just came out from the hospital. Let’s make a few more dishes for

him.” Delilah attempted to distract Joan.

“Huh? I see. Okay.” Joan seemed a bit reluctant, but still, she submissively walked to the

fridge to get some more ingredients.

“Gabriella, get lost now!” Larry glared daggers at the ridiculous woman. Never did he expected that Gabriella would have crossed this line and came here.

“Lars, are you really mad at me? You don’t like me to be here, do you? Then I won’t

anymore. I am worried about you as you didn’t pick up my call. That’s why I came. If

anything happens to you, what am I gonna do?” Gabriella acted pitiful while again touching

her belly.

At that moment, Larry felt as though his head was going to explode.

“It is too soon to make any assumption. We can’t even confirm if the baby is mine. Please go

back and rest well.” Upon finished speaking, Larry turned to leave.

“Lars!” Gabriella suddenly hugged him from behind.

“This baby is yours. Regardless of whether you want to admit it or not, it is yours, and I will

never abort it.” Upon saying this, she let go of him and left.

At that moment, Larry’s face was devoid of expression.

After all, this is a life we are talking about here. Moreover, it is my child.

How could I be so

cruel? But Joan...

Larry gave a punch on his own head. He was devastated as the whole situation had gotten

out of his hand.

“Dad, who is that woman?” Lucius asked indifferently while both his eyes were still locked on

the television screen.

"Nobody. She is just a friend of mine." Larry tried to pull himself together.

"What kind of friend?" The kid continued to ask.

Larry was agitated by his son's persistence, but he still trying to act calm.

"She is... just an ordinary friend."

Lucius smiled and did not further question. As long as Dad does not have another woman, it would be fine.

On the other hand, Joan, who was still in the kitchen, seemed utterly dispirited.

"Joan, the water is boiling." Delilah reminded with a gentle tone.

Joan did not respond to Delilah's voice, as she was still deeply troubled by the scene that just happened.

"Joan?" Delilah patted on Joan's shoulder.

"Yes? What is it?" Joan raised her brows in shock.

"Are you okay? The water is boiling already." Delilah pointed at the pot on the stove.

Joan gave an awkward smile and hurried to proceed with the cooking. Larry saw this from the living room, while his eyes filled with guilt and helplessness.

The dinner on that day was extraordinarily quiet. Four of them just looked down on their own plates and ate, with no one willing to start a conversation.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1961

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1961

"I am full. I will go to my room first." Lucius stood up and walked to his own room.

"I'm almost done too." Delilah wittily stood up and left too.

Now there were only Larry and Joan left in the dining room with an extremely awkward atmosphere.

"Here. Eat some more meat. You have lost weight recently." Larry grabbed some meat and put on Joan's plate.

"Thanks," Joan said in a soft voice.

Her gentleness left Larry in slight astonishment, as she was usually not so courteous towards him.

“Why did Gabriella come?” Joan asked while eating from her plate. There was a deep sorrow within her eyes, but she still tried to act unconcerned. “Yeah? She heard that you are back. So she came over to see you,” Larry replied with a low voice.

What a hilarious excuse. Gabriella longs for me to leave Larry. She even wishes me dead. How could she possibly come to see me? Obviously, she came to see Larry.

“I don’t think she was here to see me, right? I was nearly killed by her not long ago,” Joan responded with disdain.

Even though she had not found any evidence to back this thought, there was no one other than Gabriella who had so much hatred towards her.

“Let’s not talk about her anymore. How about you? Why did you go overseas so suddenly? You didn’t even tell me,” Larry asked gently.

Is he trying to change the topic? Plus, how can he be so calm now? The last time when he found out I was with Dustin, he almost lost his mind.

“I went to have a check on my brain,” Joan replied faintly.

“What? Are you okay?” Larry immediately put down his fork and sat beside Joan. He touched her forehead and looked straight into her eyes. Why didn’t I know about her brain illness?

“It’s fine. I just wanted to check on it. There is no problem.” Joan smiled.

Right at this moment, she was secretly elated and touched. He cares for me so much. Why should I suspect him and Gabriella? It must be me who overthink.

Joan shook her head several times, trying to clear her thoughts. She was indeed a typical woman who got touched easily by small gestures.

Ring... Ring... Ring...

Joan stared at her phone, apparently reluctant to pick it up.

But the phone kept ringing until she had no choice and finally put the phone by her mouth.

“Dustin, what is it? I am still in bed.”

Dustin did not mind her temper as he was the one calling at this weird hour.

“Wake up and come out. I have something really important to tell you.”

Dustin sounded

utterly serious on the phone.

Joan could clearly sense the urgency in Dustin’s tone.

“What exactly is it? Just tell me on the phone,” Joan said while rubbing her eyes.

“See you at ten. Same old place.” Dustin abruptly hung up on her.

Without much thought, Joan jumped out of bed and rushed into the washroom to freshen

up. She had to find out what Dustin wanted to say. In a blink of an eye, she was on her way

to the mentioned venue.

Inside the restaurant, the lights were dim while the atmosphere was rather quiet with low

music in the background. The air was filled with the fragrance of flowers.

Joan pushed the

door open and noticed Dustin sitting in a corner.

“What’s so important that you have to tell me in person?” Joan placed her handbag on the seat.

“Come. Let’s eat first,” Dustin responded in a low voice.

What the h*ck is this? Joan stared at him skeptically.

Looking at his utterly displeased expression with a bitter aura, she had a bad feeling about

what was awaiting her. From what she knew, Dustin did not like others to talk when he was

angry. Thus she lowered her head silently while cutting the steak on her plate, waiting for

the former to start the topic.

“Do you really love Larry?” After a short moment, Dustin abruptly put down the fork in his

hand and stared at her solemnly.

What an absurd question. If I don’t love him, why would I marry him?

Joan was stunned

momentarily.

“Dustin, what’s wrong with you? Of course, I love Larry,” Joan answered firmly.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1962

Knowing Larry was the best thing that had ever happened to Joan. He was the reason that she learned about love, and he made her feel that she had no regret in this life.

“Okay then. Does he love you?” Dustin asked again.

Of course, he loves me! Whenever I am in trouble, he always risks himself to protect me.

And when I am sad, he is always there to cheer me up.

“He does... Why?” Joan could not wrap her head around it.

“Joan, this is merely an assumption. What if Larry has another woman? What will you do?”

Dustin observed Joan while anticipating her answer.

Will she leave Larry and choose me?

With this at thought, Dustin became a little emotional.

“That’s not possible. Larry will never do that.” Joan waved her hand and continued eating her steak.

On the other hand, Joan did notice Larry’s strange behavior lately.

Whether eating or

sleeping together, she could feel that Larry was somehow anxious, if not depressed. She

assumed it was the massive company workload that had been exhausting him.

Could it be for real? But it’s really quite impossible. He said he would always be loyal to me,

and I would be the only woman he ever loved.

“Dustin, did you hear any rumors?” Joan stared at Dustin cautiously.

Yes, I did. I had heard about this when I was overseas. And I found out after I came back that

Gabriella is even pregnant with his child. This is unacceptable.

“Nope. I am just doing a small survey about this topic. It is common for men to have affairs.

After all, who could be sure to only love one woman forever.” Dustin took a sip of coffee

while hesitating if he should tell Joan the truth.

But right at that moment, Joan was about to lose herself.

Joan, I can only tell you this much today. I hope you can be ready mentally.

Dustin's heart twitched in pain as he stared at the vulnerable woman in front of him.

He had always thought both of them could be together in the end. Even though they had been through ups and downs together, the reality turned out to be cruel.

Dustin let out a long, despondent sigh.

"Is it busier in the company recently?" Joan suddenly changed the topic. Since Dustin was currently the second-biggest shareholder of Norton Corporation, he should more or less know about the business in the company.

"So far, so good. It has always been busy. But I seldom stick my nose into it as most of them are managed by Larry." Dustin smiled faintly.

Initially, he entered Norton Corporation for the sake of Joan, but it looked like a redundant move right now.

"Is it? No wonder Larry seems strange recently. I bet he is too tired," Joan mumbled to herself.

Dustin sneered and stretched his body.

In the living room, Joan played games with Lucius while Delilah was gardening in the backyard. At the same time, Larry was sitting alone in his office, going through piles of documents.

Ring... Ring... Ring...

Joan took a glimpse at her phone and threw it aside on the couch.

"Mom, why don't you pick up the phone?" Lucius glanced at his mother with a confused look.

"That's just a marketing call from some promoter," Joan replied with a low voice.

In fact, it was a call from Gabriella, but Joan did not want anything to do with that cunning woman.

Joan had never had any bad intention towards Gabriella, but the latter kept betraying her

again and again. Therefore, Joan no longer had any fantasy to rekindle her friendship with the latter. Instead of bearing the risk of being betrayed again, she would rather cut off this toxic bond once and for all.

Yet the call did not stop coming in, so Joan bluntly turned off the phone for a moment of peace.

D*mn it!

On the other end, Gabriella threw her phone on the floor and stomped her foot in exasperation.

How dare she not pick up my call!

Bam! Gabriella rammed her fist into the surface of her desk. Instantly, fresh blood streamed down from her fingers.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1963

“Get the car ready now! I am going out!” Gabriella could no longer suppress her rage.

Bang! Bang! Bang! There were loud knocks on the front door.

Lucius who was watching television in the living room was shocked by the loud noise.

“Who is it? Sounds like they are trying to break the door down.” Lucius whispered to himself while staring at the door.

Whoever it is, I am sure it is without good intention!

Joan and Delilah were also staring at the door, with their eyes flashed in cold glint.

“What are you doing here?” Delilah asked rudely as soon as she opened the door.

Gabriella ignored her and tried to walk past her.

“Ms. Ward, this is my house. I am sorry, but you are not welcomed here.” Delilah stretched both her arms and blocked Gabriella’s way.

What a stubborn old lady. Is she still trying to act hero at this age? I guess I’ll have to do it the hard way!

“I am looking for Joan!” She did not hold back her volume, acting like a b*tch.

I will not let her run wild in my house!

“Joan is busy.” Delilah tried hard to push Gabriella out while closing the door.

“Joan, come out now! I have to talk to you! Joan!” Gabriella began shouting out loud.

What is she up to? She comes all the way here just because I didn’t answer her call? Joan bit

her lips while trying to ignore the indignant woman outside.

“Mom, is it the lady from the last time? Don’t go out there. I am sure she is an evil woman,”

Lucius nudged Joan gently.

Even a kid knows how to differentiate between good and evil. Gabriella, you ought to be

ashamed of yourself. Joan could only shake her head and sigh.

There is such a huge difference among human.

“Joan, it is about Larry!” Gabriella was still shouting persistently outside.

Upon hearing this, Joan’s eyes lit up.

What has Larry done?

Joan could not control herself from standing up abruptly and walking towards the door.

This is not good!

Delilah quickly stepped in front of her to stop her.

“Joan, don’t listen to her lies. She is just trying to lure you out. Just ignore her.” Delilah

cautiously stared at Joan.

What then? Should I just stay inside and do nothing?

Joan stared at Delilah frigidly.

Is Ms. Young hiding something from me too?

Joan chose to follow her own heart as she pushed open the door forcefully and stepped

towards Gabriella.

“What do you want to say?”

Finally, she is willing to come out, just because she heard Larry’s name!

But what a shame

that he will no longer belong to her!

Gabriella curled her lips into a cold smile while touching her own belly carefully.

“Let’s find a place and talk in private.” Gabriella sneered internally but projected a calm face.

Fine. There is nothing I should be afraid of. And I doubt she would dare to harm me in this

broad daylight.

"Let's go." Joan agreed right away.

In a café, both of them sat down facing each other, while both were having deep thoughts within their heads.

What exactly is it about Larry?

Joan skeptically looked at Gabriella as she could not wait for the latter to tell her story.

"Joan, I remember you said before, that you love Larry, and he loves you, right? But do you know the truth?" Gabriella took a sip of coffee.

"He is only pitying you. He chose to be with you out of his guilt. When you were receiving treatment overseas, he found out and felt that he wronged you. That's why he tries his best to make it up to you by taking care of you..." Gabriella fabricated her own imagination.

At that moment, Joan gazed at her frostily.

Joan had no doubt about Larry's love for her. But she was befuddled as to how Gabriella could talk so confidently as though she was an insider.

"Gabriella, I am not interested in listening to your story. If this is all you want to talk about, I am sorry, I still have other stuff to do. Bye." Joan intended to stand up and leave.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1964

"Hold on a second!" Gabriella shouted.

Such an impatient woman. Why couldn't she wait for me to get to the point?

"Don't you want to listen till the end? Are you sure you won't regret this?" Gabriella provoked sarcasm while stirring her cup of coffee.

"Then please get to the point. I know better than anyone how he feels for me!" Joan had lost her cool.

Gabriella did not hold back her temper either as she threw her spoon harshly on the table.

"Since you are so impatient, I will get straight to the point. Please divorce Larry, as I am

pregnant with his child. I know he hasn't told you about us and I understand that it is hard for him to explain to you. But sooner or later, we all have to face this reality," Gabriella spoke ruthlessly.

At that instant, Joan felt as if she had lost everything and hit rock bottom.

Is she kidding me?

Joan stared at Gabriella in bewilderment and kept shaking her head.

How could Larry possibly touch her!

"Why? Do you not believe me? Alright. Take a look at this."

The next second, Gabriella placed in front of Joan a document from the hospital.

She is indeed pregnant!

"That's right, and the baby is Larry's. You can go home and ask him directly," Gabriella added.

Joan was devastated by Gabriella's confidence and pride.

No wonder the last time Gabriella came to Ms. Young's house, Larry acted so strangely. And

no wonder he is always in a bad mood recently.

"When was this?" Joan tried hard to hold herself together as she needed to know all the truth.

"When you were overseas, Larry went to the bar almost every day, and I accompanied him..."

"

Joan was still struggling to clear her thoughts.

Gabriella is a cunning woman. I should not believe naively everything she said. At least I

should confront Larry about it.

"Gabriella, do you really expect me to believe you?" Joan cut Gabriella with a cold stare.

Regardless of what the truth might be, Joan figured she should not lose her ground at least.

Gabriella snickered for a second, and her expression returned to normal.

Even at this stage, she's still pretending to act calm! I am sure she is anxious and in pain

inside. What a hypocrite! Joan, why are you so hard on yourself?

"I am not lying. You can ask Larry for more details. That's all. I got to go." Upon saying that,

Gabriella grabbed her handbag and left the café.

The second after Gabriella left, Joan let down her guard, and her eyes started brimming with tears.

Now she began to comprehend why Dustin asked her out and told her those words. He was warning her.

Joan closed her eyes and took a deep breath, trying to relax.

"Miss, please wake up..." Just then, A waiter gently patted Joan's shoulder.

She opened her eyes and realized she had dozed off.

"I am sorry. Could you please bring me another coffee?" Joan responded meekly while rubbing her sleepy eyes.

Outside the window, the night was starting to consume the world, as the neon lights

remained as alluring. Citizens on the street were in such a hurry, as though every single of

them were rushing back to their own beloved family.

Is Larry home yet?

Joan took a glimpse at her watch, her eyes full of sorrow. She had no idea how to approach

Larry with that matter even if she went home.

"Miss, this is your coffee. The gentleman at another table had paid for it." The waiter

appeared suddenly with her order.

"Wait a second." Joan grabbed the waiter's wrist when he was about to leave.

"Who is that gentleman?" Joan asked cautiously.

Due to the dim lights, she failed to recognize the man who was sitting at a distanced table.

"It is his first time here, so I am not sure. But I heard he just came back from overseas. A

seemingly powerful businessman." The waiter smiled politely.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1965

"In that case..." Joan loosened her grip and continued, "Send over some desserts to him.

You can put it on my tab."

She never liked owing favors to others, much less receiving gifts from strangers.

A lively crowd gathered outside. Several couples embraced on the roadside as if they were

whispering sweet nothings to each other.

"Is this seat taken?" A man's voice sounded from behind.

She turned around and saw the person who had bought her the coffee earlier.

"Go ahead." Joan responded almost immediately.

"Thanks for the dessert." The man smiled at the plate in his hands.

His dimpled smile was mesmerizing. It reminded her of the first time she met Larry, who

stood out with a gentlemanly charm at the time.

"Thanks for the coffee," Joan mumbled.

"Are you here on your own?" the man continued.

She nodded. A trace of sorrow lingered in her gaze.

After chatting for a bit, they shared pleasant impressions of each other and exchanged

numbers before heading their separate ways.

"Mom, you're back! I thought you were going to leave me again." Lucius propelled himself

into Joan's arms.

"Now, why would I do that to my little man?" She caressed the boy's head.

"Let's eat now that you're back. Larry won't join us for dinner since he's working overtime,"

Delilah explained.

Is he really? Or is he at Gabriella's place?

A cold glint flashed across Joan's eyes.

She then pulled out her phone and dialed Larry's number.

"Hey Joan, I'll be working overtime tonight. There's a lot to deal with in the office, so I'm not

coming back for dinner," Larry muttered.

He only ever speaks like this when he's lying.

Joan snorted grimly.

Larry had always been indifferent and ruthless with the business side of things, but this cruel

mask of his would fade away before Joan. He couldn't bear lying to the woman he loved.

“Lars, what are you doing? Who are you on the phone with?” a familiar feminine voice sounded from the other end.

Joan wasn’t an idiot. She instantly recognized who it belonged to—Gabriella.

“Are you busy now?” Joan probed.

“U-um, about that. Yeah, I have to go. Bye.” Then he abruptly cut off their call.

Busy doing what? Taking care of Gabriella? And the child in her stomach?

Joan’s eyes reddened at the thought of this.

Delilah noticed and scrambled over to her. “Joan, are you okay?”

“I’m fine, Ms. Young. I think I’ll rest up since I’m not feeling too good. You guys go on with dinner.”

Seeing the grim expression on Joan’s face as she dragged herself to the room, Delilah couldn’t help but sigh. What a shame.

Some people are just destined to live difficult lives, like how it’s not always smooth sailing

for certain relationships. Perhaps this obstacle will reveal the value of their relationship. It all depends on how they resolve it.

Ms. Young paced back to the dining table and scooped some food into Lucius’ plate.

“Grandma, what’s wrong with Mom?” The boy’s face scrunched worryingly as he looked at Delilah.

“She is just a little tired, so you let her rest up and don’t disturb her after dinner, okay?” She gently tapped on the child’s forehead.

“Okay!” the innocent boy agreed with a wide smile.

Meanwhile, Larry stared daggers at the woman before him. “Gabriella!” Time and time again, she kept showing up at his office with her pregnant belly on show. It wouldn’t come as a surprise if anyone felt suspicious after seeing this recurring sight.

“Oh, come on, Lars. I didn’t even do anything wrong...” She pouted at him.

“You showing up in front of me is the biggest mistake!” Larry roared mercilessly as he

pointed at her.

Gabriella's eyes grew cold at this.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1966

So Joan is more than welcome at his office, but not me? What a jerk!

Gabriella's fists coiled taut and her gaze became piercingly cold.

Well, damn it all! I want every single employee at Norton Corporation to know that I'm

pregnant with Larry's child!

"I get insecure at times, Lars. You know I wasn't always this way. It's

just that I keep getting

worried about the child ever since I got pregnant..." Gabriella trailed off.

Larry sneered next to her.

She brought it upon herself! It's only natural that she gets punished for all the heinous

things she did.

"Lars... our child is kicking me. Ugh, it hurts..."

Larry finally went home late at night after sending Gabriella to the hospital and dealing with

her tussle. He opened his and Joan's bedroom door, then tip-toed in.

He gently closed the door whilst mentally shushing himself for fear of waking Joan, who was

sound asleep.

"You're back," she stated in a growl-like voice.

"Yeah." The tips of his ears burned a bright red from embarrassment.

I wonder if she misunderstood. He never expected Gabriella to butt in on their call earlier.

"Did your overtime shift go on until this late?" Joan asked. Her voice was eerily bland and

emotionless.

She really wanted him to tell her the truth, but it didn't seem like he was going to because

he kept dodging the topic.

"Yeah. It's really late now. Why haven't you gone to bed?"

"I couldn't sleep."

She had called Norton Corporation earlier. The receptionist informed her that Larry had left

the office long ago.

"What's wrong? Are you feeling poorly?" He took her into his embrace and tenderly kissed

her forehead.

But for some reason, Joan felt numbed by his actions. She couldn't feel the warmth of his hug. Despite laying against his chest and being circled by his arms, she felt like there was a huge gap between them—like she could no longer reach out to her husband anymore.

"I'm fine, maybe I slept too much in the day."

She gazed at the night sky outside her window. Despite being held in Larry's arms, she couldn't help but feel weighed down by a mixture of loneliness, helplessness, and disappointment.

"Any news about Gabriella recently?" Joan suddenly asked. Her dulled eyes bore into him.

Larry stiffened. It took a while before he could react as guilt flitted across his eyes.

"I'm not sure. It's been a long time since we've been in contact," he lied in a whisper.

Upon hearing this, Joan snorted inwardly. You were obviously together earlier. Yet, you dare to deny it? Why is he hiding it from me if nothing really happened between them?

Should I just let him go?

Joan's chest tightened with sorrow as she held her tears back.

The two of them remained in their absent-minded hug as they waited for night to pass. Joan

gazed at the crescent moon that lingered alone in the night sky. It seemed like she was

brooding over whether she should let go of her marriage. Meanwhile, Larry shut his eyes as

if he wanted to escape from reality. They stayed this way until the crack of dawn.

The following day's morning sun crept into their room. However, Joan didn't feel the least bit of warmth.

"I'm off to work," Larry announced. He then picked up his briefcase and left.

Sadness flickered in her eyes as she watched him leave.

"What's wrong, Joan?" Delilah hurriedly asked when she noticed how upset Joan looked.

The latter took a glance, then shook her head without saying anything. Love is perhaps the one thing that puts people through hell; people face dilemmas and torture themselves with worry and frustration for love. Even the most perfect-looking marriage may, in reality, be torn and battered at the seams with hidden problems.

Delilah's heart sank as she left for the garden with a sigh. She had witnessed Joan and Larry's relationship blossom, so it was natural that she wanted them to grow old together. Yet, now it seemed like trouble was brewing in paradise.

"Mom, what's wrong? You don't seem happy these days..." Lucius ran up to hug Joan on the knees. He looked up at her with round eyes full of concern.

"Maybe I've just been feeling a little tired... Come on now, let's get you to school before you end up being late." Joan stroked the boy's hair.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1967

Joan didn't return home, nor did she go to the garden after dropping her boy at school. She wanted to be alone to collect her thoughts on whether she should end her marriage.

It seems extremely unlikely for our marriage to continue like before. Disappointment crept into her bleak eyes.

"Oh my goodness, Joan! When did you get back?"

"Yeah, it's been so long! We've missed you!" Suddenly, a group of women swarmed towards her.

It turned out to be her colleagues from the supermarket.

"Why aren't you guys at work? Are you slacking off again?" Joan recomposed herself and put a smile to joke with them.

"What do you mean, slacking off? We're going to visit Freya today. Do you want to come along?"

That's right! Isn't she still hospitalized?

"Count me in," Joan responded eagerly.

It really had been a while since they last met, so they chatted and giggled as they made

their way to the hospital.

“Oh, right, how are you and Mr. Norton? You’re literally so lucky for nabbing a rich hunk like him!”

“Yeah, he never once gave up on finding you even though you went messing for that long...”

Embarrassment was evident on Joan’s face as she gave them a thin-lipped smile.

We might break up soon.

“That’s enough.” Joan chuckled to brush off the topic. “Come on, how is my love life related

to us visiting Freya? If you guys ask another question about my life again, I’m gonna apply

to go back to work and annoy all of you every single day!”

“That would be great! You have no idea how much we miss your presence!”

They all guffawed at the idea of that.

A metallic tang of antiseptic filled the hospital’s air whilst the corridors were overly crowded

with patients. Doctors and nurses were constantly buzzing in and out of wards, as well as

operating rooms. With the seasons changing, more people were feeling under the weather.

“How is she doing, doctor? Is she getting better?” Joan asked worriedly as she looked at

Freya.

The doctor stayed silent. He sighed and shook his head before leaving.

It was clear that there was zero chance of her opening her eyes, let alone ever speaking

again.

Fate could be cruel. One second, a person could be on top of the world, and the next, they

would get knocked off to the very bottom. Although Freya got on everyone’s nerves, she

wasn’t that hateful enough for someone to put her in a coma.

“I can’t believe this... I wonder who Freya pissed off to end up like this.”

“Yeah. She had a whole future ahead of her, but now she’s stuck in this vegetative state.”

The women's moods spiraled into despair as they collectively mourned in the ward.

I have to find out who's behind this.

Joan clenched her fists whilst casting a determined look at Freya.

I have to make sure justice is served, for Freya's sake!

It must be Gabriella's doing. That malicious witch! How could she harbor so much hatred in

her to lay hands on an innocent life?

"Joan, let's go now." One of her colleagues gently nudged her.

"What? We're leaving so soon?" Joan asked.

"Her mom will be here in a bit, so we should give them some space. It's never easy for her

mom to see us crying all the time. That's why we've been sneaking over instead."

That's understandable. All parents love their children.

Given Freya's current state, her parents must be at a loss for how to feel.

I bet they don't

even know the truth about what happened to their daughter.

"Come on." The colleague held onto Joan's arm and gently led her out of the ward.

"Oh, my!" a familiar voice suddenly called out.

It sent a chill down Joan's back. What is she doing here?

She slowly turned around, dreading to see who was behind her.

"Well, if it isn't Joan. What are you doing at the hospital?" Gabriella approached her with a

face full of disdain.

Oh, pitiful little Joan. I bet you didn't expect Larry to spend the whole night taking care of

me here before going home to you.

Gabriella clenched her fists tightly at the sight of her arch enemy.

"Joan, who's this pompous person?"

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1968

"Do you need us to step in?" Another colleague rolled up her sleeves.

Although the village women were not highly cultured or educated, they knew the basic rules

of etiquette and would never initiate trouble. Folks here lived simple lives and were kind to

one another in a united manner.

Some believed that men valued honor and loyalty, but this was not the case with the village

women, who were nobler than city men.

"Why I'm here is none of your business," Joan spat. Then she turned to leave with her colleagues.

"Oh, you're running away like some rat? Haven't you figured out where Larry was yesterday?"

Well, I'll spare you the trouble. He was here taking care of me all night," Gabriella snarled.

Her words reeked of sarcasm.

At this, something chipped inside Joan as sadness washed over her.

That was obvious enough, but why did you have to announce it to the world?

She shot a fiery glare at Gabriella. She retorted through bare teeth,

"There's no need to

sabotage mine and his relationship. He already told me everything that happened last night,

so you don't have to remind me again."

That's my best friend, huh? The best friend that stole my husband and somehow blamed me

for stealing him from her in the first place. How ridiculous.

Well, she got what she wanted now. They're officially together, and with a child, too.

The worst possible ending is if I remove myself from this equation to allow them to be

together. That doesn't sound too bad.

Joan mentally reminded herself, Be strong. There's nothing to be sad about. There are

plenty of other fish in the sea, so why stick around Larry? Besides, he already cheated on

you!

"What on earth is going on, Joan? What does Larry have to do with this? Isn't Larry

your boyfriend? What relationship does he have with this b*tch? Don't worry. We've got

your back since you're one of us now. We won't let anyone get away with hurting you." Her

colleagues patted reassuringly on her shoulder.

A warm, fuzzy feeling swelled in Joan's chest at this.

Having friends like them was her greatest blessing in life.

Meanwhile, Gabriella snickered at Joan and the village women.

“Oh, Joan. You’ve fallen so far from grace to hang out with a bunch of villagers. You guys

really are an embarrassingly sore sight to watch!”

Both her arrogant gaze and harsh words offended the women,

prompting furious stares

from them.

“What’s wrong with this bunch of villagers? You city folk think you’re so much better than

us; well, why don’t you spit out all the foods that we, villagers, grew?

You clearly have the

word “shrew” written all over you. Before you go around calling us

names, why don’t you

look in the mirror and see what you look like now? What a shameless

b*tch!” One colleague

pointed out straightforwardly.

They couldn’t stand city people who acted all high and mighty whilst

looking down on

villagers.

White-hot steam came from Gabriella’s ears as she grew utterly livid.

However, the group of

women didn’t seem the least bothered with her.

It was never their fault to begin with. Hence, there was no reason for

them to be frightened

of her.

“Forget about her. Let’s go,” Joan growled in a low voice.

She knew Gabriella wouldn’t let them go easily after they insulted her so badly. She would

eventually try to get even if they stayed any longer.

“Where do you think you’re going?” Gabriella shouted in disbelief.

What a ridiculous woman. A colleague snorted inwardly. Does she think that we have to

report our every action to her?

“I’m wondering if you’re deranged. Why does it matter to you where we’re going? We’ll be

on our way, so you should mind your own business.” The colleague spun on her heels and

led Joan away.

“You can’t leave!” Gabriella called out at once.

She lunged towards the colleague who had rudely dismissed her and

gripped tightly onto

the latter's arm.

"Let go of me! What do you want?" the colleague protested.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1969

Ugh! I must be the world's unluckiest person to encounter this psycho b***h today.

"Absolutely not. You can't leave!" Gabriella shrieked.

I haven't even settled the score yet, and she wants to get away clean? Over my dead body.

"Miss, have you no shame? A pregnant lady like yourself shouldn't behave this way.

Otherwise, you'll bring humiliation upon your poor husband. Or... do you not have a

husband at all?" the colleague deliberately taunted.

Anger broiled in Gabriella, whose palm landed on the woman's cheek in a slap.

How dare she slap me!

"I got this," Joan interjected. She threw herself between them to prevent a vicious catfight

from happening.

"Gabriella, whatever problems we have should be settled between us two. Don't drag my

colleagues into this. And you should watch your temper. Else, it might affect the child in

your belly." Joan stood before her colleagues, defending them.

The women knew Joan had her reasons for that, so they withdrew from the conversation

altogether.

Gabriella looked down at her bulging tummy, then back up at Joan. A viscerously satisfied

smile curved on her lips.

So you want to play it that way, huh? Okay then, I'll indulge in your little game.

"Argh!" Gabriella suddenly screamed in agony.

She clutched onto her tummy as she collapsed down to the floor.

At this, Joan stood dumbstruck.

"What's your damage? How could fake being in pain?" The colleagues stepped forward with

outraged expressions.

"Joan, why are you still being so merciful towards her? She's clearly taking it too far!" they

yelled in frustration.

“Ouch, my tummy hurts! Someone please help me! She’s trying to kill me!” Gabriella clung tightly onto Joan’s leg and yelled.

In mere seconds, a crowd gathered around them.

“Help me... this woman is trying to make me miscarry because she’s jealous that I’m pregnant. And she keeps clinging onto my husband...” Gabriella skillfully broke out in tears.

“That’s awful! How could she attack a pregnant woman?”

“Mistresses nowadays are getting far more brazen.”

Whispers erupted from the bystanders, whose faces darkened with disdain.

“Don’t believe her!” Joan’s colleagues jumped in and tried to explain, “She’s the mistress.

Joan, here, is the actual wife!”

“Help me! Please!” Gabriella deliberately made her voice louder to convince that she really was in pain.

Meanwhile, Caspian reported the fight to a wide-eyed Larry. “What did you say? Joan and Gabriella are fighting in the hospital?”

“Yeah. Everyone is blaming Joan and calling her the mistress. She looks really humiliated.

And Gabriella won’t stop wailing on the floor...”

That troublesome Gabriella! Why can’t she behave for once!

Bam! Larry rammed his fist into the wall. Fresh blood streamed down his fingers from the impact.

Looks like I’ll have to eliminate this problem. A cruel glint flickered in his eyes.

Back at the hospital, the nurses’ eyes rounded in awe at an approaching man.

“Oh my, that guy is really good looking!”

“Yeah! How could anyone look so perfect?”

The man approached the crowd, who were still commenting snidely at Joan.

“That mistress must be quite something to attack the pregnant lady in public.”

“How could someone so ruthless go unpunished? It’s a miracle that she managed to stay alive till now.”

“That’s enough!”

The familiar voice of the man boomed closer to Joan.

Sharp gasps suddenly sounded from every person there.

Many sets of eyes sparkled in admiration for the man.

Dustin! What’s he doing here? Gabriella immediately stopped crying and gawked as Dustin came closer.

“Joan.” He gazed worryingly at her.

“Gabriella, if you’re not afraid of the bigger consequences that might follow, then by all

means, keep doing what you’re doing!” Dustin challenged coldly.

After hesitating for some time, Gabriella stood up whilst frowning with disappointment. Jerk! Why did you have to show up now and ruin the scene I set up!

Regardless, Gabriella knew she had to leave. She squeaked out an excuse before scurrying

off. “I’m going to get my medicines.”

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1970

“Are you okay?” Dustin asked in a worried tone.

Joan kept silent and only shook her head. Tears of sorrow blurred her vision.

“Joan, who is this? Aren’t you going to introduce us?” her colleagues chimed in eagerly.

Dustin knew she wasn’t in the mood to indulge in such pleasantries, so he took the initiative

and introduced himself instead.

After that, he patted lightly on her shoulder. “Come on. I’ll give you a ride home.”

“Yes, please do!” Joan’s colleagues exclaimed in approval.

“Larry may be handsome and rich, but he’s too much of a playboy to be with Joan. I think

this man is much better suited for her,” one of them whispered.

“I agree. Did you see how he literally swooped in to rescue her from humiliation earlier?

There wasn’t a trace of hesitation.”

The women approved unanimously that Dustin was far more reliable than Larry.

Whilst driving, Dustin stole a glance at Joan. He parted his lips, but immediately shut them.

An awkward expression then showed on his face.

Joan's bleak eyes looked outside the car window, but she could sense his conflicted

motions. Without looking at him, she spoke straightforwardly, "Spit it out."

"I actually knew about Larry and Gabriella... It's my fault for not telling you in advance." He

truly felt crushed by the weight of remorse.

"It's fine," Joan uttered. Her voice was devoid of emotion.

I already had a hunch about the truth, so none of today's events affected me much.

Larry may have heard about the commotion earlier. I wonder how he's planning to resolve

it.

Back at the hospital, Caspian's shoulders slumped with despair. "We're too late."

"Where are they? Where did they go?" Larry's gravelly voice thundered.

He then yanked over a nurse and demanded, "Where's the person who caused a ruckus

earlier?"

The nurse was so startled by his forceful pull that it took a while before she could react.

"T-They've left." Her voice trembled at the dangerous aura that emitted from Larry.

Larry disregarded this and immediately followed up with another question. "Was anyone

hurt?"

The nurse tilted her head and recalled that no one seemed to be hurt.

"I don't think so. We were really busy at the time, so I wasn't paying much attention."

He released her and marched straight for the security control room.

"Sir, you're not authorized to access our security footage!" the surveillance operator

declared firmly.

Within seconds, Larry shoved him onto the wall and headed towards the surveillance

monitors.

"Please, sir, you can't do this..."

“You should ask the hospital director who he is,” Caspian stated. He then yanked the guard by the collar and led him out.

Who on earth is that guy? How can he go through the hospital’s security footage as he pleases? The surveillance operator scratched the back of his head curiously.

Before he knew it, a young doctor approached him and patted his shoulders. “I suggest you let it go because he’s not someone you want to mess with. If I’m not mistaken, that man is one of our hospital’s wealthiest donors.”

In a flash, the surveillance operator’s face paled.

Oh, no. Did I accidentally offend that big shot?

“Larry, have a look! There’s Joan.” Caspian urged at the surveillance monitor with a rush of distress.

Larry’s chest tightened with anger as the monitor showed Joan leaving the hospital with Dustin.

This scumbag again! Why is he everywhere?

Larry balled his fists and glared piercingly at Dustin’s image.

“I’ve located Dustin’s car. He’s on his way to the village now,” Caspian reported.

He’s sending her home.

A sigh of relief slipped out of Larry’s clenched jaws.

Then Caspian’s voice sounded again, “As for Gabriella... I think she’s still in this hospital.”

Damn her! She’s got some nerve staying here.

Larry stormed out of the surveillance room to find that wretched woman.

“Lars, you’re finally here! I almost thought you didn’t want me anymore... You have no idea how frightened I was, being surrounded by all those people...” Gabriella tried her best to sound miserable. She even pouted and flashed a set of puppy eyes to garner his sympathy.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1971

Her pitiful act was for nothing, because Larry knew her well enough to see through her

facade.

"I met Joan earlier today, and she kept targeting me... She even tried to hit me! Look what she did to my arm, Lars! It's all bruised..." Big, fat tears rolled down Gabriella's cheeks.

"Quit acting, Gabriella. I'm well aware of Joan's character, as well as yours. I've tolerated you long enough. This ends today! I don't care whether you choose to abort the baby or give birth to it. However, I will compensate you with a large sum so you can take the money and disappear from my sight forever!" Larry unleashed all his pent-up anger and frustration.

He never wanted to see this woman again. Even if the child was really his, he knew he couldn't stand sharing a life with Gabriella. He could never tolerate having such a heartless and unscrupulous woman by his side. The thought of it brought a bitter taste to his mouth.

"N-No. I will never abort our child, Lars!" Gabriella howled furiously. Larry glared at the woman before him in disgust.

The biggest mistake he ever made was going to that bar when Joan was away.

Larry threw one last glare at Gabriella, who sat on the sofa before leaving her. He decided then and there to come clean to his wife. He didn't care if she refused to forgive him; all he knew was he had to tell Joan the truth.

"Lars!" Gabriella called out desperately from behind him.

However, he didn't even spare so much as a glance at her.

"Larry, what do we do now?" Caspian queried in a low voice.

He was worried about Larry and Joan.

Their love was something that he acknowledged greatly; those two had been through hell

and back. However, what happened with Gabriella wasn't any ordinary issue that happened

between couples. Hence, they couldn't turn a blind eye to her.

"I'm home." Larry sounded fatigued as he dragged himself through the door.

But Joan didn't respond at all. She sat in the living room and focused on watching a show with Lucius.

"Dad, you're home!" The boy pounced into his arms.

"There's my little man!" Larry stroked his head whilst quickly glancing in the sofa's direction.

Joan turned to face the other way and left for the kitchen where Delilah was. There, she

offered, "Let me help, Ms. Young."

"You two should talk things out. Sometimes all it takes is patience and communication to solve the problem." Delilah comforted softly whilst slicing the tomatoes. Joan hesitated for the briefest second before resuming with her neutral expression.

"Things have already happened. There's nothing more to say," she stated coldly.

Silly girl... there must be something more to it. Why on earth would Larry do something so dumb?

Then again, I suppose that's just how stubborn we women are. We refuse to hear others out

after assuming they're bad people.

"I still think you should talk to him," Delilah mumbled.

Meanwhile, Larry stared at the television screen whilst Lucius sat in his lap. However, his

mind flooded with images of Joan's face.

She must really be mad at me.

Disappointment crept into his darkened face.

"Dad, what's wrong? Why do you look so upset?" Lucius whispered as he looked up at Larry

with a pair of narrowed, inquisitive eyes.

"Mom was like this too. Did you guys fight? Because if you did, then you should give in to

Mom. As men, we must be responsible and compassionate." Lucius motioned a „V“ sign at

Larry whilst grinning.

When did this boy become so mature? He even knows how to navigate adult problems.

"Now, why would we fight? Your mom and I are as fine as ever, don't worry." Larry ruffled

the boy's head reassuringly.

Dinner was soon ready, but Joan didn't have an appetite. Regardless, she still forced herself to join them in the dining room since she didn't want Lucius to feel like something was wrong.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1972

"Come now. Your mom made these baked ribs herself, so make sure to have plenty, okay?"

Delilah cooed at Lucius.

"Okay! Thanks, Mom and Grandma, for the food!" Lucius said in a salute-like voice.

Without a word, Joan flashed an awkward smile at Larry.

"Uh..." Lucius suddenly made a distressed sound.

"What's wrong, Lucius?" Joan immediately rushed before the boy.

"Mom, your baked ribs..." Lucius faltered.

"Hmm...?" Joan's eyes shot suspiciously at the dish she made.

Is something wrong with it?

She immediately picked a chunk of the meat and placed it in her mouth.

Arrgh! She spat out the entire chewed-up chunk of meat. Her face warmed with

embarrassment as she apologized profusely, "I'm so sorry. I mistook the salt for sugar. It's

way too salty to eat. I'll get rid of it now."

Joan paced off without hesitation, ready to dispose of the dish.

"Hang on." Larry ran and blocked her with his arms. He blurted out,

"Let's not waste it. I like

salty foods, and salty ribs sound great to me."

Seeing this, a pleased grin spread across Delilah's face.

Good on Larry for being so quick-witted!

"N-No, quit playing around. This is literally inedible. I'll make it again for you tomorrow if

you really like it that much," Joan muttered nervously.

However, Larry refused to let her go.

"It will be fine. Lucius, your teacher taught you not to waste precious food, right?" Larry eyed

the boy.

To his delight, Lucius responded accordingly, "Mm-hmm! Dad's right, we shouldn't waste precious food."

Attaboy!

Larry raised a thumbs up at Lucius.

In the end, Joan placed the baked ribs back onto the dining table. The rest of the meal went on in silence. They would only play along by cracking a laugh or two whenever Lucius made a joke.

Then, everyone finished up some house chores before returning to their respective rooms

for the night. Joan lay on her bed, staring wide-eyed out the window in deep thought.

She wasn't sure how to ask Larry for a divorce. At the same time, she didn't understand why

he still hadn't told her the truth about Gabriella.

But some things have to be dealt with, eventually.

How long is planning to hide it from me!

A trace of melancholy blurred her eyes.

"Larry!"

"Joan!"

The two called out each other's names simultaneously.

"You go first."

"You go first."

They said the same thing at the same time again.

"It's alright. You can go first," Joan suggested softly.

If he comes clean about Gabriella, then at least I married the right man who faces his problems head-on.

"I heard about what happened at the hospital today, and there's something I need to tell

you." Anxiety and helplessness showed on his scrunched-up, frowning face.

"Back when you suddenly went missing, I found out that you and Dustin actually went overseas. That made me bitter inside. So I kept going to the bar, and one day, Gabriella appeared. She smelled of your usual perfume scent... I thought you had returned to me..."

Larry's explanation trailed off as he felt guiltier by the second.

So it really did happen in a bar!

And Gabriella didn't lie!

It was as if something snapped in Joan. Her eyes blurred with even more sorrow than before.

“So what now? Is the child in Gabriella’s tummy yours?” Joan’s words struck onto him like a whip.

“I don’t know. I remember nothing from that night. The next day, I...” Larry’s voice grew quieter.

He didn’t want to say any more.

It was painfully obvious what had happened between him and Gabriella.

“That’s enough.” Joan turned so that her back was facing him.

“Joan, I know I messed up. You can punish me however you see fit.”

Larry inched closer and wrapped his arms tightly around her.

What’s the use of punishing him? Joan mentally scowled. Will punishing him remove the

baby in Gabriella’s tummy? Will it undo everything that he did with Gabriella that night?

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1973

“Let’s get a divorce,” said Joan in a low voice as she held back her emotions.

She could not bear to see an unborn child being abandoned by its own father. Furthermore,

she did not want to see Gabriella’s face haunting her every day. She knew that whatever had

been done was done, and there was no going back.

“Joan,” Larry said pleadingly as he held her hand tightly, his eyes full of pain and affection.

However, at that moment, Joan did not feel even a hint of warmth.

Perhaps relationships

were simply that fragile sometimes. Once one party crossed the bottom line, there was no

way to salvage the relationship anymore.

“Larry, I don’t blame you. Really. I hope that you’ll be responsible for Gabriella’s child now,

just as you took responsibility for us before.” Joan’s gaze carried a hint of reluctance and

helplessness.

At once, the room fell silent and the air stilled.

We can't even verify if the child is mine yet. How am I supposed to take responsibility?

"We haven't got to the bottom of things yet, so don't jump to conclusions, okay?"

Joan sneered.

It's such an obvious, earth-shattering piece of news. Is it still not clear enough for you? The

child in Gabriella's belly was the biggest proof!

"I'm tired. Let's go to sleep," said Joan, ending the conversation there.

Then, she lay down and closed her eyes.

The next morning, sunlight shone into the room, warming up the place.

Joan rolled over on

the bed but noticed that the person next to her was gone. Did he go to work? Or did he go

to see Gabriella? Immediately, Joan's eyes dimmed with disappointment.

"Joan, the manager came by this morning and asked you to go back to work at the

supermarket. He wants you to take over the supervisor position. What do you think?"

Delilah said suddenly.

Joan was taken aback by that. She had already been thinking about going back to the

supermarket to find some work but did not expect that she would get promoted.

However, once she thought of Freya, a cold look flickered across her gaze. No matter how

fragile Gabriella currently was, she could not make up for her previous mistakes.

Knock, knock, knock! Gabriella, who was in the living room, frowned slightly when she heard

the forceful, urgent knocks on her door. It doesn't seem to be Larry's style but is also not as

violent as something Caspian would do. Who is it then?

The knocking continued relentlessly as she slowly made her way toward the door.

The moment she opened it, she was stunned.

"You... Why are you here?"

"I'm here to see you and our baby," said the man as he gently pulled Gabriella into his arms.

Her anxiety and panic were clearly reflected in her eyes, which was exactly the outcome that the man wanted.

Human nature was interesting at times. It could allow two people who only met once to

have feelings for each other, causing unexpected things to happen between them. Gabriella

had only used that man's body to get pregnant on the spur of the moment and had not

expected that her wishes would really come true.

"Baby, don't you miss me? I missed you so much," the man said as he pulled her into a tight hug.

As if. I can't wait to run away from you. Why would I even think about you every day? This

b*stard's really disgusting. That day, I'd clearly said that he should take the money and

leave. But now, he's here at my door.

"Well, you've seen me. You can go now," she replied coldly.

At that instant, his gaze became gloomy.

This b*tch really only sees me as a tool. She's throwing me away once she's done using me,

without even a word of thanks. You'd better not push my buttons,

Gabriella. If I get angry,

there'll be heavy consequences!

The man clenched his fists tightly, his gaze bitingly cold.

They say that once a man gets involved with a woman, she would become a drug that was

difficult for him to quit. Indeed, that man not only desired Gabriella's beauty but also her

overseas inheritance.

"Don't come looking for me again next time. I'm very busy." She then flicked his arm away

and walked toward the sofa.

Evidently, she was a stubborn woman that could never forget Larry.

However, it was a pity

that he only had eyes for Joan.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1974

“Gabriella, am I not good enough for you? If something about me makes you unsatisfied,

I“m willing to change,” he whispered into her ear.

Instantly, Gabriella“s body heated up.

This idiot keeps using this trick! She shook her head in an attempt to clear her thoughts and make herself more awake.

“You“re not the person I want. It“s as simple as that. Just go abroad. I“ll pay for it.” Gabriella

then took a sip of coffee.

Wow, is she trying to drive me away? She has to be the cruelest woman in the world.

“I“ll miss you. Why would you say that to me?” said the man coquettishly.

However, Gabriella hated men who acted coquettishly the most.

Naturally, she felt disgusted by his actions.

“Get lost. Don“t make me regret whatever I did with you,” she shouted, her gaze fierce.

Immediately, the man froze before he quickly composed himself again.

“What“s wrong, Gabriella? I“m here because I miss you...”

She sneered, for she knew what he was trying to do.

All men were bad and greedy. Just some time ago, she had witnessed him behaving

intimately with other women, but right then, he was saying that he missed her. Does he

really think I“m a three-year-old that only needs some coaxing?

“You should go. I don“t want to shout at you. You should clearly know what you did. I don“t

think you need me to list them out one by one.” She glared at him fiercely.

Suddenly, the man let go of her as a trace of anxiety flickered across his eyes.

Did she know about it? But so what? She“s just a b*tch who lies in bed like a starfish. If not

for her wealth, who would come looking for her? She“s really overestimating herself.

“What do you mean? No matter what I do, I only have you...”

Damn it! Why doesn“t he leave? What exactly does he want? Gabriella clenched her fist,

resisting a strong urge to strike across his face.

Only after a long time did the man finally leave. Before he left, Gabriella gave him a card.

“Pretty boy, you’re making yourself seem really great and loyal, but you’re not.”

Bam! Gabriella then slammed the door in his face.

My luck’s really like shit. I can’t believe I met such trash.

Meanwhile, Larry was in his office with his head lowered and his eyes focused on a file.

However, his mind was instead full of thoughts about Joan.

Was she serious about what she said yesterday? Is divorce really the only option? As he

pondered, he turned to look out the window, with a trace of sadness in his eyes.

He had originally thought that they would be together forever. However, right then, it

seemed unlikely.

Ring, ring, ring...

Larry glanced at his phone screen, then immediately picked up the call.

“What’s the matter?” he asked, his voice a little tired and languished.

Caspian hesitated for a while, then replied in a low voice, “Larry, something feels wrong.”

What’s Caspian up to again?

“What’s wrong?” he asked as he flipped through the document.

“While I was following Gabriella today, I noticed a strange man going to her house. She

looked very flustered when she opened the door, and he was there for a very long time

before he left...” explained Caspian.

Instantly, Larry’s eyes lit up.

Gabriella was not someone who would just allow any strange man into her home. Therefore,

there seemed to be a hidden secret behind it.

“Go investigate that man and what his relationship is with her. Maybe we’ll find some useful

evidence,” said Larry coldly.

Then, after they made some more plans, they hung up.

If they didn’t have some special relationship, there’s no reason for her to have such an

unusual expression. Gabriella, you'd better not let me find out anything. Otherwise, I can't

guarantee that I won't do anything to you!

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1975

A cold look flashed across Larry's eyes as he continued to contemplate the situation.

"Hey, Joan, why are you back again?"

"Yeah, did you miss us?"

"Look at you. You became the supervisor as soon as you come back..."

Several women had gathered around Joan when she arrived at the supermarket, chatting

happily about Joan's return.

Although they were all women, compared to those in the city, women in the village were

more enthusiastic and warmer, and there was no scheming and deception amongst

themselves.

Perhaps it was because people in the village rarely went to the city. Thus, they did not know

of such schemes and traps and only occasionally joked around with one another.

"Yeah, I've missed all of you," replied Joan.

The manager broke into a satisfied smile as he watched the scene in front of him. In the

past, he had already wanted to promote Joan since most store employees really supported

and liked her. However, she had rejected him. Therefore, right then, things were going great.

He was able to promote her, and work would be able to start normally again for everyone.

"Hey, remember the man from that day? Do you have his contact information?" asked a

woman in a low voice as she looked at Joan anticipantly.

Judging by the shyness in her expression, Joan realized that she must have fallen for Dustin.

"Come on, what are you doing? Why are you getting his contact number?"

He's Joan's

friend," said another older woman as she patted her shoulder lightly.

Instantly, the woman who had asked for Dustin's contact dulled, her face full of

disappointment.

"But Joan already has Larry," she replied, pouting.

Right away, sadness flashed across Joan's eyes.

Soon, he won't belong to me anymore. I wonder what's his decision about the divorce?

"You brat, come over here and start working!" the older woman said, walking over to grab the pouting lady.

"Don't overthink it, okay? She doesn't have any bad intentions," said another woman in a low voice.

Joan knew that none of them really had any malicious intent. She was the one who had overthought it.

Moreover, she also clearly knew that even if she divorced Larry, she would not choose to be

with Dustin. He was only suited to be a friend, not a lover. For this reason, she had

constantly refused his past confessions and was not about to accept it then.

"Do you know what happened the day Ms. Brooks had an accident?" asked Joan seriously as

she stared at the woman in front of her.

She would not let Freya suffer in vain, having to lie in bed in a vegetative state while the

culprit got away scot-free.

The older woman shook her head and sighed. "It was actually quite tragic. The manager

didn't even need her to go on a business trip, but she requested it by herself. We'd all

thought that she was dealing with something upsetting and wanted to take a breather, so

we didn't stop her either. Who would've known that she'd meet with an accident..."

Hearing the woman's words, Joan's eyes dulled instantly.

When it came to something like fate, unexpected things could happen since no one was

able to predict the future. Some people could be rich one day but end up a beggar the next.

Others could be beautiful but disfigured by the next day.

Maybe, as humans, we needed to have such experiences.

“Joan!” Suddenly, a familiar male voice rang out.

At the same time, everyone around her sighed in amazement.

“Wow! He’s so handsome. Where’s he from?”

“You only know it now? I’d already seen him when I went to the hospital that day...”

As the women spoke among themselves, Dustin slowly walked over to Joan with a slight smile on his face.

“Why are you here?” she asked softly.

She could not figure out why he had arrived at the supermarket at that time.

“I heard you were back at work,” he replied casually as he looked around.

How did he know about it? Was someone in the supermarket on his side?

Feeling curious,

Joan looked suspiciously at the man in front of her.

“How’s it going? How’s your first day of being a supervisor? Tiring?”

Dustin lightly patted her on the shoulder.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1976

He even knows about the promotion? What exactly is with this guy?

Just then, the several women standing around them covered their mouths as they giggled, their gazes filled with interest.

“Are you here for something?”

Dustin was stunned for a moment before he composed himself again.

“Nothing. I just came to see you,” he replied, shrugging.

“Hi there, handsome. Can you give me your contact number?”

“Yeah, me too...”

Suddenly, the women rushed toward Dustin, asking for his contact number with both shyness and courage.

“Sure, we’re all friends, aren’t we?” he replied with a smile.

Since when did they become friends? Joan watched the people as they interacted with Dustin.

“Okay, thanks, handsome!”

“Do you want my autograph?” Suddenly, Dustin turned around to look at Joan with a playful

smirk on his face.

He's really quite bewitching. He's handsome and has a good personality...

"No thanks, I have to get to work. You should go if you have no business here," she replied

bluntly, not wanting the others to misunderstand. At least at that moment, her husband was

Larry, not Dustin.

"I just arrived, but you're already trying to drive me away. You're so cruel."

"Don't leave. You can stay here as long as you like, handsome," a woman hastily replied.

Joan was stunned.

We're at work right now. Are you sure we should be doing this?

Just then, the manager walked over and said, "Mr. Silverman, I'll be heading off first. You can

take over from here."

The women, including Joan, were taken aback by his words.

Even the manager was speaking to him so politely?

"What exactly is happening?" she asked, nudging Dustin on the arm.

What else could be going on? The supermarket had to be his!

Originally, the manager had been extremely reluctant to hand over the supermarket to

Dustin. However, Dustin had made use of his own connections during the negotiations with

him. Therefore, since he was only a normal villager, he did not want to cause more trouble

and could only obediently invite Dustin in.

"Why don't you have a guess?" Dustin said with a smile, keeping her in suspense.

When the others saw that scene, they started to grin and gossip amongst themselves.

"He's so charming. He actually took over the entire supermarket for a girl."

"Of course he did. Who wouldn't do it for Joan?"

"He's handsome, rich, has a good personality, and is even responsible.

Oh my god, he's

basically perfect."

The women continued to whisper to one another, their eyes full of admiration as they stared

at Dustin.

"Don't be a fool, Joan. It's so obvious. Can you not tell?" a woman said as she stepped forward to pat her on the shoulder.

Of course, Joan could tell. However, she did not want to admit it.

"Dustin, come outside with me for a while," she said, pulling him out.

The crowd then slowly dispersed when they left.

"What's wrong?" The man gave her a suspicious look, not knowing why she had dragged him out.

However, Joan was only filled with anger then.

"Why did you come here?" she asked coldly as her eyes flickered with anger.

Upon hearing her tone, his eyes instantly dimmed with sadness. Does she not like me? Larry

had just cheated on her, and the pair were on the verge of getting a divorce. All Dustin

wanted was to care for her and accompany her when she felt the most helpless. But, she...

"You don't want me here, do you?" he asked in a low voice, with a hint of disappointment in his tone.

Having witnessed a confident man suddenly become so depressed, Joan instantly felt sorry for him.

Forget it. Let him do whatever he wants then. He's not hindering me anyway.

"It's fine. I was too impulsive just now. Don't mind me. But this is still a supermarket. It's our workplace. I hope you..." Joan looked as if she had something else to say but held herself back.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1977

Since Joan knew what was on Dustin's mind, it was all the more reason she could not let him show it in front of others.

"I know what you're thinking. Don't worry," Dustin said as he lightly patted her on the shoulder. Subsequently, they headed back into the store.

Soon, the workday had passed, and most of the supermarket employees had gone home.

Only Joan and Dustin were left behind, still busy. As it happens, the others had purposely left both of them some alone time. Ever since the incident at the hospital, they had been indifferent toward Larry and were instead anticipating Dustin's actions. "Joan, let me send you home," he suddenly shouted.

It was only then that Joan realized it was already time to get off work. However, she did not want to go home and face that man.

"You can go off first. I'll head home soon," she hurriedly replied.

At that moment, she wanted to be alone and have nothing to do and think about. She

wanted to stare into the sky, with only the moon to accompany her as she counted the stars.

"What's wrong? Are you feeling unwell?" he asked as he walked over to her.

"No," she replied coldly.

In reality, Dustin had known all along that she was in a bad mood. She was either constantly worrying about something or had her thoughts occupied with something else. The issue with Gabriella was probably a big blow to her, wasn't it? As he watched her, Dustin felt heartbroken.

Although the situation with Gabriella was considered a good thing for him, he did not want to see Joan disappointed and upset.

Sometimes, it was magical to fall in love with someone. When they laughed, so would you.

Similarly, when they cried, you would be sad too. Without rhyme or reason, one would be happy about their loved one's happiness and worry about their sorrows.

In the past, Dustin

had once thought that as long as he loved Joan, he had to have her for himself and would

not ever let her go. Only now then did he realize how stupid he was when he was young.

Over time, he had come to understand that as long as he could see her smile, it was the

greatest source of happiness and satisfaction for him. However, at that very moment, her face no longer held a smile.

It's all because of Larry!

He clenched his fist tightly, and there was a fierce look in his eyes.

If it weren't for that man, Joan wouldn't be this disheartened and wouldn't have been so

upset all day long.

"Let's go. It's getting late. I'll send you home," he said.

"I don't want to go home," she suddenly replied.

What does she want to do then? He looked at her curiously, waiting for her to continue.

"I want to go for a drink," she muttered.

"Sure, I'll bring you there." He then pulled her away.

She willingly followed along since she knew that regardless of whether or not she got drunk,

the man in front of her would not take advantage of her.

"Let's go to a bar," he said as he gently pushed her into the car.

With a trace of fatigue in her eyes, Joan quickly took out her phone to make a call.

"Hi Ms. Young, don't wait up for me tonight. I'll be out. Yeah, I have my keys. Right..."

After they exchanged a few words, Joan then hung up.

Throughout the car ride, none of them spoke. Dustin kept his focus on the road while Joan

looked out the window, enjoying the scenery along the way.

"Hey, are you going back today?" he suddenly asked.

A flicker of sadness crossed her face.

Go back and do what? Look at that man's face? I've looked at him for so many years. It's

about time I let go. There was a cold look in Joan's eyes.

"I'll see how it goes. If we have a good time, I'll stay out overnight. If not, we'll go home,"

she replied bluntly.

As Dustin sped toward the bar, several people on the roads were taken back by his speed

and cursed at his leaving car, calling him a lunatic.

The bar was filled with many people when they entered it. Everything looked exceptionally

energetic and exciting, from the flashing lights, colorful drinks, music...
However, Dustin had
found them a table near a corner by the wall. Since he knew that Joan
had never liked
crowds, he found them the most remote seat away from the main
crowd.

"Mister, bring me some alcohol!" Joan suddenly shouted.

"Coming right up!"

Soon, their table was filled with bottles and bottles of alcohol in various
colors, causing

Dustin to be dumbfounded by the variety.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1978

Wow, he even took out all his signature alcohols. How rare.

"Cheers, Joan. I know you're in a bad mood. You'll feel better after this
glass," Dustin said in

a low voice.

Immediately, Joan quickly raised her glass and downed the alcohol.

"Hey, hey, this is not how you're supposed to drink," he scolded, quickly
removing the glass

from her hands.

Has she gone crazy? No one drinks like this!

"Hey, Joan. Wake up!" Dustin shook her hard as he shouted.

However, Joan was already lying on the table, not moving at all. It was
impossible for her

not to get drunk so quickly from drinking alcohol as if it were water.

"Larry, you b*stard. How dare you cheat on me." Even in her dazed
drunkenness, Joan

continued to mutter endlessly.

Sometime later, even when the bar slowly began to clear out, the pair in
the corner still

remained at their table. Although Dustin wanted to send Joan home, she
refused to leave

the bar.

"It's time to go home," he said, gently stroking her hair. His gaze was
filled with distress and

heartbreak as he watched her.

For a very long time, he had been restraining himself and had to endure
everything silently.

However, at that moment, he no longer wanted to continue like that. He
wanted to be with

her forever.

“What on earth do you want, Larry!” Joan suddenly stood up, pointing her finger at the man in front of her as her eyes filled up with anger.

“Why’d you have to do such a thing with Gabriella? You even got her pregnant? Is it because I’m not good-looking enough?” she said as she staggered forward, grabbing onto his waist.

Instantly, he felt the heat rise in his body.

Her mind’s always filled with that man’s face!

“Look at me. I’m Dustin!” he shouted.

However, it was as if Joan had not heard anything, for she continued to lament about Larry.

Although Dustin longed to take her for himself, he knew that once she was sober, she would hate him forever.

“Hi, sir, do you need a room prepared?” a waiter suddenly asked in a low voice.

He hesitated, but eventually nodded.

“Joan, Wake up. Go back to the room and sleep,” he said, shaking her arm.

“No, I don’t want to go back!” she shouted, continuing to scold him. He felt heartbroken at the sight.

Eventually, he had to carry her bridal-style. As soon as she was carried, Joan immediately quietened down. Her hands hugged him, and she had a satisfied expression on her face.

Once they entered the room, he placed her gently on the bed and stroked her face. Dustin’s

gaze was filled with endless tenderness and sorrow as he stared at her.

Soon, Joan fell into a deep sleep.

Why are you still so obsessed over Larry? Because he’s handsome? Rich? Capable? Or is it

because he’s born into a good background? His eyes then flickered with coldness.

A long while later, Dustin tucked Joan into bed and left the room. He had never done

anything that Joan did not like, and he would continue that way. Although he loved her, he would only express his love the correct way. Sunlight shone brightly into the room when the next morning came. However, the woman on the bed still had her eyes closed, looking very tired. The rays of sunlight slowly shifted as time passed, eventually shining directly onto her face. Instantly, Joan felt the heat and woke up. She stretched, slowly opening her eyes with a content look on her face. Then, as she rubbed her eyes, she glanced around at her surroundings. Abruptly, she froze. Where am I? What happened yesterday? What time is it? Just then, she noticed the clock. It's already eight! Hurriedly, she threw off the sheets and ran out of the room. Ring, ring, ring... "I've helped you take leave for today. You don't have to come to work." Dustin's voice was clear when it rang out. "How did you... know that I'm going to be late?" she asked softly. Although the supermarket employees always reported for work at 8:30 a.m., it was already eight when she woke up, so she would definitely be late even if she rushed over. "You were so drunk last night. Did you forget?" he said, laughing lightly. Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1979 When she heard those words, Joan instantly recalled everything. Damn it! Why did I have to go to the bar for no reason? She then hit her own head in frustration. "Okay, I can't talk anymore. I have work to do. Take a break and relax today. I'll let you have a day off." Then, when he was done, he hung up. Joan understood that Dustin had wanted to let her relax and allow her to vent her worries and sorrows that she held in her heart. However, she was really bored. Unconsciously, she had walked over to Gabriella's house.

Yet, staring at the familiar house only caused her to feel more irritated and sadder.

What exactly was it that caused us to become like this? Men?

Joan laughed to herself coldly.

If she had known from the beginning that Gabriella liked Larry, she would never have associated herself with him.

Some people were able to give up love for friendship. However, others would sacrifice

friendship for love. For instance, Gabriella.

Relationships were the most fragile. A relationship of many years could perhaps end only

because of a single word or a look.

Gabriella, as women, why do we have to make things difficult for each other and set each up other?

A long time later, she slowly turned around and left.

This is it, then. Larry's going to give her everything. I hope she doesn't pester me ever again.

I want to live my simple life well and forget all about this.

Perhaps Joan had gone through too much, for she suddenly felt very tired. All she wanted

was to have a good rest and not have to struggle unnecessarily any longer. Spending time

together with Delilah and Lucius every day was what made her the happiest.

"Joan?" She suddenly heard a familiar voice, and looked up.

The man was standing on a pavement not too far away from her.

"Why are you here?" Caspian asked as he walked over. He looked at Joan, then at Gabriella's house.

"Oh, I'm just taking a walk. Don't mind me. Go do what you have to do," she replied, turning to leave.

"Joan!" Hearing her name, she stopped, waiting for him to continue.

"Don't blame Larry about the issue with Gabriella. There's something strange going on, and

we're still investigating. Don't worry about it for now," he said, patting her on the shoulder.

He knew that she must have been dealt a huge blow recently. Furthermore, she was looking haggard then.

"It's fine, Caspian. You don't have to comfort me. I'll be going off first then," she replied, then immediately left.

Caspian stood in place as he watched Joan leave, then shook his head and sighed.

Meanwhile, on a balcony somewhere nearby stood a woman. As she watched the scene on the pavement unfold, she smirked coldly to herself, her gaze filled with contempt.

You want to go against me, Joan? You're too weak! I'd told you long ago that Larry would be mine sooner or later, so why make yourself struggle so much? You still won't get anything in the end! Gabriella clenched her fists tightly as her gaze turned cold.

Was Larry not tired of sending people to track me every single day? It's already been so many days. What exactly have you found? As she continued to ponder, the cold look in her eyes never faded.

All of you are just messing around with me! She then turned around and walked into the living room to make a call.

"Hi, Lars. I need to have a pregnancy checkup soon. When are you free? Come with me to the hospital..." Gabriella said coquettishly as she chewed on a cookie.

What's she trying to do now?

Larry's gaze was full of disgust when he heard her voice.

"I'm not free. I'm busy with work," he replied, then immediately hung up.

What the hell! He's ignoring me just like that? I'm a pregnant woman! She threw her phone onto the ground as a flicker of coldness crossed her face.

They say that pregnant women had to regulate themselves and try not to get angry.

Otherwise, it might affect the fetus. However, at that moment, Gabriella was lying on the

bed and tossing around in anger.

Maybe I need to have a chat with that witch, Joan. She then tightened her clenched fists.

Gabriella knew Joan too well. She was soft-hearted, kind, and generous.

This time, she'll

probably finally let go!

Ring ring ring... Looking at the name on her phone screen, Joan immediately hung up.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1980

Since Dustin had let her take time off that day, she did not want certain people to ruin her good mood.

Damn it, Joan! How dare you not answer my call. I'll have to keep pestering you

then. Gabriella continued to call Joan.

After several calls, Joan had gotten very annoyed and eventually picked up the phone.

"What are you trying to do?" she asked coldly.

There's definitely nothing good about this.

"I want to meet you," replied Gabriella through gritted teeth.

What for? What do you want to talk about? The fact that you're pregnant with Larry's child?

Joan sneered and replied in a displeased tone, "If there's anything, tell me about it over the phone. I'm too busy to meet you."

Busy? As if. You didn't even go to work today, so why are you trying to pretend right now?

What a hypocrite. I bet you're afraid of facing me! Gabriella snorted coldly as a sly smirk formed on her face.

"It's about the three of us. I think we need to have a proper talk about it."

"Okay," Joan replied. Thereafter, she immediately hung up.

She was curious to see what Gabriella was up to.

Perhaps it was time for them to set things straight once and for all.

At the same time, Caspian was on a call with Larry. "What? Joan went to Gabriella's place?"

Larry asked, his eyes cold.

Did she get hurt? Gabriella's not an easy opponent to deal with. Once she gets an

opportunity, she won't give it up that easily.

"Larry, Joan's fine," Caspian hurriedly replied.

"Go find out what they're doing right now and where they are," ordered Larry before he hung up the phone.

At that moment, the two women in question were sitting in a café, at a table in the corner.

Their expressions made it clear that they were nemeses.

"Just say what you want to," said Joan as she took a sip of coffee.

What else could this be about? Of course, it's about me getting a divorce from Larry.

"Joan, considering that we used to be close friends, can you let Larry and I off this time?"

asked Gabriella, pretending to be pitiful.

Joan was instantly stunned by her words.

Exactly who's the one who needed to let go? She's the one that has been entangling herself

in all this and refusing to leave. She stole my husband and even got pregnant. Isn't that

something a mistress would do? Is she not embarrassed to say something this shameless?

"Resolve the matter between you and Larry by yourselves. I've got nothing to do with it." As

soon as she was done speaking, Joan turned around to leave.

However, Gabriella suddenly grabbed tightly onto her hand and threw her forcefully onto

the sofa. She gave Joan a cold stare, giving off a threatening aura.

"Right from the beginning, you were the one who stole Larry from me.

It's only natural that

you give him back to me now!" Gabriella shouted as she pointed at Joan.

Instantly, everyone else around them looked over, their gazes filled with doubt and

contempt.

However, Gabriella did not care about the looks they were receiving.

That day, her only goal

was to convince Joan to divorce Larry, regardless of whatever method she had to use.

"What exactly are you afraid of? Larry's a responsible man and will take responsibility for

you. But you've constantly been coming to me to make me get a divorce. What exactly are

you trying to do?" Joan replied fiercely.

Naturally, what Gabriella wanted was for Larry to return to her side as soon as possible.

She tightened her clenched fist as she glared at Joan with a furious look in her eyes. B*tch,

you still refuse to get a divorce?

"I know how Larry is, but you're still there in his heart!"

At that very moment, Joan scoffed at her words.

So what? He still cheated on me!

They then remained in the café for some time, and even when the sky had darkened,

Gabriella still did not let Joan leave.

Ring ring ring...

Joan quickly answered her phone.

"Joan? Why aren't you back yet? They said you didn't go to work today," asked Delilah with

a hint of worry in her tone.

"I'm still out now, Ms. Young. Don't worry. I'll be back soon," she hurriedly replied.

"Um..." Delilah wanted to continue, but hesitated.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1981

"Larry has a fever. Do you want to come home and care for him?"

Fever? He never learns how to take good care of himself! For a fleeting moment, Joan's eyes

were filled with sadness.

However, she was in a dilemma when she saw the woman in front of her.

"We'll talk again when I'm back. For now, I have something to attend to. Bye." Joan ended

the call.

Meanwhile, Gabriella's phone never rang. Perhaps, no one in this world really cares for me.

How ironic! My family disowned me because of the incident with Larry.

After leaving the

family for so long, I've not made any significant success... Now that I am pregnant, yet the

child isn't even Larry's!

"Do you have anything else? I need to go home." Joan sipped her coffee.

She was puzzled as to why Gabriella was holding her up for such a long time. No matter

what her agenda was, Joan was certain it wasn't good.

"Joan, after so long, don't you ever feel the least bit remorseful?"

Gabriella glared at her.

Joan was dumbfounded.

What did I do wrong? Why should I be remorseful? If there was anyone who should be

apologizing, that's you!

"I'm not the one in the wrong. If there's nothing else, I'll take my leave first." Just as she

spoke, Joan stood up to leave.

"Joan, if you dare leave without my permission, you will regret it,"

Gabriella asserted coldly

before taking a sip of coffee.

Despite pausing for a few seconds, Joan continued her way out.

The moment she arrived at the door, danger approached.

It appeared that Gabriella was stalling for time until her henchmen arrived. They were

occupied earlier and could only come when night fell.

"Wow, look who we have here. She's really gorgeous!" A man suddenly appeared in front of

Joan.

"Excuse me, I don't know you." Joan tried to distance herself from the men.

"Come on, it's not safe at night for a lady like you. Why don't I send you home? Come with

me. Don't be afraid." Just as he spoke, the man grabbed her waist as he breathed in her

bodily scent.

Meanwhile, Gabriella watched intently what was unfolding before her.

Joan, oh Joan, today will be the end of you.

"What are you doing?" Joan glared at the group of men.

They surrounded her in a tight circle, leaving no room for her to escape.

"Us? We just like to have some fun with you." One of them lifted her chin and let out a

devilish grin.

This can't be a coincidence, can it? Is this what Gabriella was planning?

Turning around, Joan

looked in Gabriella's direction and saw her sipping coffee as if nothing had happened.

"Who are you? Did Gabriella send you?" Joan demanded.

The man in front was stunned but collected himself quickly. As he approached Joan slowly, a cold glint flashed in his eye.

"We're just inviting you to have some fun and yet you're just spewing nonsense about some Gabriella or whoever that is. We don't know her," the man hissed with disdain.

However, the momentary change in his expression had confirmed her suspicions that

Gabriella was the mastermind.

She is really ruthless. Even at this time, she isn't willing to let me go.

Gabriella, when will you even stop?

"There isn't any grudge between us and I don't want any trouble. I may be a woman but for those who do harm me, I will have my revenge. If you lay a finger on me today, Larry's men will be knocking on your door tomorrow. Of course, you can choose not to believe me."

Joan pretended to be calm.

Is this the last time I use Larry's name to protect myself?

Suddenly, the group of men exchanged glances, unsure of what to do next.

Given how famous Larry was, everyone was aware of how ruthless he could be. However,

Gabriella's instructions were as good as those of their boss.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1982

The group of men were in a dilemma.

"How long more do you need to think about it? If I'm not home on time, Larry would send

his men out in search of me. If you don't believe me, let's just wait and see," Joan asserted.

"Bro, let's just let her go, it's not worth the trouble. We can just give Ms. Ward an excuse.

However, if we offend Larry, it would really be the end of us," one of the younger men

within the group suggested to the older man.

Meanwhile, the rest of the men furrowed their eyebrows slightly, deep in thought.

"Mrs. Norton, I'm sorry. We have made a mistake thinking that you were a thief. Why don't you let us send you home as an apology?" the older man suddenly asked.

At that moment, Joan heaved a sigh of relief.

Fortunately, Larry's reputation was still powerful enough.

"There's no need. I can go home myself. Don't worry, I will keep what happened today a secret."

Watching what happened at the entrance, Gabriella noticed that something was amiss. She

had ordered them to capture Joan by whatever means necessary. But she was surprised to

see Joan leaving. What's going on?

Gabriella quickly stood up and headed for the entrance.

Damn it, what is Joan up to!

By the time she reached the door, Joan was already nowhere to be found.

"Where's Joan?" Gabriella screamed aloud.

"Ms. Ward, that woman wasn't feeling well and looks to be in pain.

Hence, she has gone to

the hospital." One of the men tried to cover up.

"All of you are useless!" Gabriella scowled.

At that moment, Joan had hopped into a cab and ordered it to drive to the village.

"Miss, are you alright? Do you need to call the police? I just saw that group of men

surrounding you," the driver suddenly asked.

"It's fine, don't worry. Let's go." Joan was breathing heavily.

Luckily I managed to escape. Gabriella is truly capable of anything.

Ring! Ring!

"Hello? Joan, where are you? Why aren't you home yet?" Dustin sounded concerned.

"I'm on my way. I'll be home soon," Joan quickly replied.

However, she didn't expect the driver to be one of Gabriella's men.

Gabriella knew that Hubert's men were not reliable. Realizing that they were cowards, she

had a backup plan.

As Joan leaned back into the seat and closed her eyes to rest, an insidious smile appeared on the driver's face. Sensing that the journey was taking longer than expected, Joan suddenly awoke and looked at her surroundings. That's strange. Why am I not home yet? Furrowing her eyebrows, she looked out the window. Oh no! This isn't the way home. Suddenly, fear seized upon Joan. Who is this driver? Is he also one of Gabriella's men? Does she really hate me so much that she had to keep setting up traps repeatedly? No, I can't let the driver know that I have realized his agenda. Clenching her fists, Joan began to rack her brains. "Mister, can you stop the car, please? I need to use the ladies," Joan suddenly asked. A cold glint flashed in the driver's eye. Has she realized what's going on? "Miss, we're almost there. You can ease yourself at home as there are hardly any toilets along the way," the driver coldly asserted. "Argh, Mister, I can't hold it anymore. My stomach really hurts." Joan held onto her stomach, pretending to be in pain. Why is she so much trouble! The driver banged the steering wheel forcefully. He wouldn't be paid if he didn't take Joan to the destination. "Miss, please bear with it. We will be reaching soon. I'll drive faster," replied the driver anxiously.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1983

"No, Mister, I don't think I can hold it..." Joan slumped on the backseat. Finally, the driver stopped the car. "Quick! I'm charging you more for this!" The driver glared at her. After scanning her surroundings, Joan ran into one of the washrooms. Taking out her phone, she quickly made a call. "Hello, Dustin? Come and get me, hurry." Joan kept her voice down.

“What? You have been kidnapped? Where are you? Send me your location now!” Dustin roared.

He was almost driven crazy by anxiety.

“Quick, come out right now!” the driver yelled fiercely as he banged on the door.

“Alright, almost there!” Joan turned on her GPS at once.

Ring! Ring!

Suddenly, her phone rang again and it was Larry.

“Come out right now! If you don’t, I’ll barge right in!” the driver roared when he heard her phone ringing.

It’s over! This time, it’s really over.

Joan gradually got up and walked out of the washroom awkwardly.

Caspian was previously following Joan to protect her. However, he was called back after

receiving a call from Larry. Hence, he wasn’t aware of what had happened to her.

Slap! The driver hit Joan on the face forcefully. Immediately after, Joan’s eyes reddened as she glared angrily at the driver.

“How dare you make a call!” The driver kicked her in a fury.

What do you expect? Am I to do nothing in the face of death? Joan sneered in response.

At that moment, all hope seemed to have been beaten out of her.

“Did Gabriella send you? How much is she paying you? One million? Two million?” Joan bellowed.

The driver didn’t reply as he dragged Joan toward the car.

Thump! Suddenly, she tripped and fell to the ground. Landing on her knees, blood began to ooze out of them. Hugging her knees tightly, Joan was in excruciating pain.

“Stand up right now! Hurry!” the driver roared again.

At that moment, she refused to comply with the driver’s instructions no matter what, just

like a rebellious child. That was the first time she was so defiant.

“Damn it! Stand up!” The driver grabbed her arm violently.

Sensing how defiant she was, he bent down to carry her instead.

“Joan!” Suddenly, a familiar voice rang out.

A smile broke out on Joan's face in response. He is finally here.
"Stand right there!" Dustin pointed at the driver and shouted.
At that moment, the driver panicked.
"Put me down and I'll guarantee your safety," Joan coldly declared.
"Also, who sent you?"
The driver hesitated for a moment before putting Joan down and dashing toward his car.
However, before he could start the engine, Dustin had got in with him.
"Who ordered you to do this?" Dustin grabbed the driver by the throat.
"Wait, it was a lady," the driver replied meekly.
"What's her name?" Joan asked at once.
"I don't know her name. She only paid me to take you to the agreed venue." The driver pointed at Joan.
What the hell? Dustin looked at the driver skeptically.
"I'm telling you the truth."
Bam! Right when Dustin wasn't looking, the driver threw a punch at him, causing him to stagger toward the ground.
"Dustin!" Joan yelled.
Holding his head, he could feel it spinning while his vision turned blurry. What's going on? Fumbling around, Dustin tried to steady himself, but his body just wouldn't listen.
"Are you alright?" Joan quickly supported him.
"Joan?" That was the last thing he said before losing consciousness.
By the time Dustin awoke, it was the next day afternoon. Joan was sprawled on the bed beside him, looking haggard and exhausted. As Dustin gently stroke her hair, a smile of relief broke out on his face. All that matters is that she is safe.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1984

Sensing Dustin's movements, Joan gradually opened her eyes.
"You're awake. I'll go get you some water." She stood up.
Suddenly, Dustin grabbed her hand forcefully, not allowing her to leave.
"I'm not thirsty. So, don't go."
Joan could feel the compelling strength behind his words. As she gradually took her seat, she stared at him with a sympathetic expression.

"I'm really sorry about yesterday. Luckily, your injuries weren't serious. Or else, I wouldn't know how I'll ever be able to face you again." Joan gave him a guilty look.

However, he had hoped that something bad actually happened to him so that she would remember him for life.

"I'm fine, don't worry. As long as I'm here, no one will dare harm you." Dustin's voice was raspy.

Joan looked at Dustin without saying a word. Larry is the man I love the most. However, Dustin is the one I'm supposed to treasure. He has changed a lot and is now more matured.

"How are things between you and Larry?" Dustin asked.

How else can it be? In the end, the only choice is divorce. She had made up her mind. Once they were divorced, Larry could move out of Ms. Young's house and they would never see each other again.

"Joan, perhaps the matter isn't what we imagine it to be. I used to detest the fact that both of you are together because of my feelings for you. But now, I feel that you will only be happy when you're with him. There must be a misunderstanding," Dustin replied softly.

He had long accepted that Joan only loved Larry, but he still held a grudge over the car accident previously.

Suddenly, a cold glint flashed in Joan's eyes.

The truth was right in front of her in the form of Gabriella's bulging stomach. How is that a misunderstanding?

"Let's drop the topic. Don't worry, the matter will be resolved soon. I know you are concerned about me. However, some things are beyond our control." Sometimes, all we can do is resign ourselves to fate. If it's meant to be, then there will be no point defying fate. Just go with the flow. Every day is filled with surprises. They can either be

good or bad. As time goes by, we will just be desensitized to all these shocks.

When her phone suddenly rang, she ended the call after she saw who it was. Looking at her,

Dustin wanted to say something but decided against it.

Forget it, I'll just let her be. He then looked away and out of the window.

"Haven't you found her yet?" Larry roared as if his eyes could spit fire.

"Larry, don't worry. Joan will be fine," Caspian quickly reassured him.

"Mr. Norton." Suddenly, a man barged into the room with an anxious look on his face.

"Yesterday, Mrs. Norton was seen with Ms. Ward," the man reported softly as he looked at

Larry fearfully.

"Where?" Larry turned around and walked up to the man.

"At the restaurant. Both of them met for a long while before Mrs. Norton left."

Gabriella again...

Bam! Larry slammed his fist into the wall, causing his knuckles to bleed.

"Larry, give Gabriella a call." Caspian handed Larry his phone.

"Hello, Lars?" Gabriella's coquettish voice sounded.

"Gabriella! What have you done to Joan? She better be safe or else I'll never forgive you!"

Larry's thundering voice stunned Gabriella.

"Lars, what are you talking about? Both of us only shared a meal and reminisced about old

times. What can I possibly do to her?" Gabriella explained in an innocent tone.

"Joan, where have you been? You've frightened us!" Delilah grumbled.

"Oh, something came up." Joan smiled awkwardly.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1985

When she went into her room, there was no sign of Larry. After checking the bathroom, she

didn't find him there either.

Isn't he back yet?

"Larry had a fever yesterday. The moment he reached home, he lay on the bed without even

having dinner. This morning, when he realized that you hadn't come home, he headed out

quickly in search of you. Hence, you'd better give him a call," Delilah plainly explained.

Joan took out her phone and called him.

"Hello, let's meet up for a talk and get it done." Joan sounded disappointed.

At that moment, Larry's eyes darkened. He didn't expect Joan to be calling him first thing in the morning over that issue.

"Joan, it's not what you think. Give me some time and let me get to the bottom of this,"

Larry pleaded.

Joan scoffed. What else is there to investigate?

"Larry, I don't want to see either of you anymore. Let's just get it done and over with." Joan ended the call at once.

As Delilah watched on, she couldn't help but sigh.

Love is a torturous feeling. No matter what one does, it will never be perfect, especially when it involves a third party.

"Joan, have you really thought it through?" Delilah asked softly as she looked at Joan in a probing manner.

She didn't want to interfere in their affairs, but neither did she want Joan to make a decision she would come to regret.

"Mmm-hmm. What I want is simple. I'll work at the supermarket in the day and spend the evenings with you and Lucius. That's all."

Such a life was more than enough to satisfy her. Delilah turned around and walked into the kitchen.

All that matters is that she is happy.

But is she really? She has only chosen to live a simpler life.

Ring! Ring!

"Joan, come to the hospital quickly. Ms. Brooks is awake!"

Joan widened her eyes in delight when she heard the news.

"Ms. Young, I'm heading out!" Joan quickly grabbed her bag and ran out of the house.

Inside the hospital ward, a few other colleagues surrounded the bed, looking relieved.

“Ms. Brooks, please take plenty of rest. Don’t worry, we’re all here with you.”

“That’s right, Ms. Brooks. Get well soon.”

As the ladies comforted Freya, she was moved to tears.

“Joan is here!” one of them exclaimed all of a sudden.

Freya was visibly excited at the sight of her.

“Cough...” Freya wanted to say something but choked.

“Calm down. It’s alright. We have time.” Joan gently patted Freya on her shoulders.

She wanted to tell Joan that someone ruthless wanted to harm her, but the words just

couldn’t come out.

Nevertheless, she had made a significant recovery. When Freya was first sent to the hospital,

the doctor advised that she might not regain her consciousness for life.

Nevertheless, her

mom stayed by her side every day, telling her stories and talking about their lives. She did

everything she could to help her daughter wake up.

“Doctor, there’s something I need to discuss with you,” Joan whispered to the doctor.

“Let talk outside.” The doctor ushered her aside.

“My friend became paralyzed because someone sabotaged her. It was definitely not an

accident. Hence, I hope that you can protect her...” Joan gave the doctor a stern look.

“You have to tell that to the police as we are only responsible for treating her. Other than

that, there’s little we can do about it,” the doctor replied apologetically.

“What I meant was I hope you can keep the fact that she is awake under wraps. I will liaise

with the police,” Joan explained.

If news got out that Freya was awake, there might be a second assassination attempt. After

all, Gabriella was as vicious as a demon.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1986

The girls from the village were all extremely loyal. Hence, they would definitely keep their

mouths shut. After all, they were constantly visiting Freya at the hospital. Hence, their

actions would not raise any suspicions.

"Don't worry, Joan. We know what to do."

"That's right. We must bring the culprit to justice," the girls chorused.

To prevent the news from being leaked, Joan arranged for Freya's ward to be changed.

Leveraging on Dustin's connections, Freya was moved to a luxurious VIP room on the top floor.

"Ms. Watts, I don't know what else to say other than thank you."

Freya's mom held her hand tightly.

Joan's gaze darkened in response. In truth, she was partly responsible for what happened to

Freya.

"Mrs. Brooks, don't worry. This place is safe. If you need anything, I'm just a phone call away.

Also, if anyone asks, it's better that you tell them Freya has gone back to her hometown to

recuperate. Or else, I fear..."

"I understand. Don't worry," Freya's mom replied resolutely.

Everyone knew how important this was to Joan. Hence, they didn't want her efforts to be in

vain.

Ring! Ring!

"Hello? Joan, are you alright? I heard that you're in the hospital." Dustin sounded concerned.

"Oh, I'm fine. I'll explain when I'm back." Joan ended the call right away.

Before that, the police had discovered that there was more to the case than it met the eye.

However, it was subsequently suppressed by someone influential.

Nevertheless, there were still some honest policemen who would pursue the truth and bring

the perpetrator to justice.

"Don't worry. This is our duty anyway. As long as she is in the hospital, we will guarantee her

safety."

Now that everything was in place, all that was left was for Freya to recover.

Joan could not allow her to be hurt again. Clenching her fists, a cold glint flashed in her eye.

“Again? They must be really free to visit the hospital every so often. I don’t even know

what’s so wonderful about Ms. Brooks. She obviously has a terrible temper and yet, many of

them still care about her,” Gabriella grumbled in the living room.

“I heard they were going to bid farewell to the vegetable...”

Suddenly, Gabriella’s gaze became alert.

“What happened?” she asked coldly.

“Oh, the vegetable’s mom has run out of money. Hence, she has decided to take her back to

her hometown to recuperate. Given that they aren’t rich, they would likely have spent all

their savings after such a long stay in the hospital.

Is that all there is to it?

“Go to the hospital and verify it. Pretend to be a relative while doing so.

Also, remember to

dress less conspicuously,” Gabriella instructed.

“Hi, Ms. Watts. She has a visitor today that claims to be a relative,” the doctor reported

carefully.

“I’ll be right over.” Joan got up at once.

At the hospital, the doctors and nurses were all busy while the corridor was filled with

patients. They all had helpless looks on their faces.

“When did he come?” Joan asked the doctor with a serious expression.

“He just left a short while ago. You can check the security footage.” The doctor led her to

the security control room.

The police and doctor she was in contact with were people whom she could trust. Hence,

she believed that they wouldn’t leak the matter out.

After watching the screen for a long time, she was sure she didn’t know the person as she

couldn’t recognize who it was.

It seems she has found someone new. A cold glint flashed across Joan’s eyes.

Gabriella’s modus operandi is to only use someone once.

She really is a sly one indeed. Clenching her fists, Joan's gaze turned icy cold.

Someone new will most likely appear next time.

"Alright, doctor. Thanks for all that you've done." Joan patted him on the shoulder.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1987

"No problem. I will try my best to help." The doctor smiled cordially.

After all, there was nothing to fear in helping the police.

After chatting a while longer, Joan left the security control room.

"Well, well, isn't it Joan?" Suddenly, a familiar voice rang out from behind her.

There was only one person she knew that spoke with such a domineering tone. Joan turned

around and squinted her eyes at the woman approaching her.

She didn't believe that it was a coincidence for Gabriella to be there right after the man who

came to see Freya had just left.

"What are you doing here?" Joan glared at her suspiciously.

Gabriella pretended to rub her stomach while her eyes were filled with contempt.

"Why can't I be in a hospital? I'm here for a checkup."

Joan glanced at the doctor beside her, signaling him to leave. The man quickly understood

and returned to his office.

Joan couldn't allow Gabriella to harm anyone else.

"In that case, I'll be taking my leave." With that, Joan turned and left.

"Hey, Joan, when are you going to divorce Larry?" Gabriella's icy tone caught everyone's

attention.

What a joke. Larry is the one who is unwilling to go through the divorce.

Instead of looking

for him, she...

"Gabriella, let me tell you. Whenever Larry is free, we can file for divorce anytime. I'm not the

one holding it up." Not wanting to hear her voice further, Joan left right away.

Gabriella slammed the medication in her hands onto the floor.

"Hey Baby, who has gotten on your nerves? Why are you angry?" the man quickly

approached and asked softly.

Damn you, Joan. How dare you treat me that way!
Gabriella clenched her fists tightly as flames burned in her eyes. When the man saw her expression, he instinctively retreated a few steps. What happened? Who infuriated her? He looked at her quizzically. "Alright, Gabriella. Don't be angry. It's bad for the baby. Let me send you home." The man held her hand and walked out of the hospital together. As it was easy for a pregnant woman to feel insecure, Gabriella called for the baby's real father to accompany her when she didn't receive any assurances from Larry. "Next time, just get me to take care of whatever you need. After all, it's getting increasingly difficult for you to move around," the man suggested with concern. Suddenly, Gabriella leaned her head on his shoulder while her eyes were filled with sadness. At that moment, he was suddenly stunned. But, he quickly regained his composure. In truth, all Gabriella wanted was a husband that loved her, an adorable child, a day job, and a loving family to return to. However, the husband had to be Larry. In contrast to her feelings for Larry, the resentment she felt against Joan for stealing Larry away from her was even stronger, to the extent it was now about revenge. No matter what, she just had to steal Larry back from Joan. "I'm so tired," Gabriella murmured. That was the first time the man heard Gabriella sound disheartened. At that moment, he was filled with sympathy for her. She was just an ordinary woman, who also needed love and protection from a man. "Gabriella, do you want a complete family?" the man lifted her chin and asked seriously. How can I not? Who doesn't want to have a happy family? "What are you trying to say?" Gabriella asked softly. "What I mean is that if you're willing, we can..." "I'm tired. I just feel like sleeping for a while," she interrupted him. Naturally, she wasn't willing.

The man didn't understand why she was being so stubborn. Larry doesn't love her and yet, she desperately tries to cling onto him, to the extent of fabricating such a lie.

In life, there are many sorts of people. There are some who would choose to let go for the sake of love, while others that go astray in their pursuit of it. As time passed, the love they have would lose its purity. Gabriella is the best example of this.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1988

Perhaps, she just doesn't fancy me.

Turning his head away, the man looked out the window with his eyes filled with anguish.

Once upon a time, he too had wanted to be with Gabriella because of her wealth and status.

But as time went on, he had subconsciously fallen in love with her. Until then, he still

couldn't believe how things had turned out. With that thought in mind, he sneered at himself.

Ring! Ring!

When Joan saw who it was calling, she quickly answered.

"Please help me tidy up my office as I will be coming back tomorrow,"

Dustin remarked softly.

"You should rest for a few days as there's nothing major going on at the supermarket," Joan replied.

"I'm fine. Don't forget, I'm a doctor myself," Dustin quickly reminded.

After relaxing for a few days, he was beginning to feel bored. He would prefer to do some

work at the supermarket and perhaps chat with the employees.

"Alright, I understand." Joan ended the call.

Ever since the incident with Gabriella, she had changed into a different person. Her actions

were now a lot more efficient and decisive. After all, she wanted to busy herself with work so

that she could forget that pain that she was going through.

"Hey, did you notice that Joan seemed to have changed recently?"

“Mmm-hmm, she seems a lot quieter and is smiling lesser. Nowadays, all she does is work.”

“Can it be that Larry bullied her again?”

The group of women stared at Joan and discussed with concern.

“Mmm, I can see that all of you have been working tirelessly recently.

Hence, I will treat

everyone to dinner tonight. Please bear with it for another then minutes and we will be able

to get off work,” Joan proclaimed suddenly.

At that moment, the supermarket went into a frenzy.

“Wow, Joan, what are we going to have tonight?”

“I want to have pizza!”

“I want grilled fish!”

“Joan, what’s going on? You don’t seem to be in a good mood recently,” one of them asked

all of a sudden.

At that moment, the other ladies turned to stare at her. Realizing her mistake, she quickly

held her palms to cover her mouth.

“Come, have some more food, or it will go to waste.”

“That’s right, let’s eat...”

Only then did the atmosphere ease significantly.

“Let me explain,” Joan suddenly remarked.

Instantly, everyone became quiet as they turned their attention to her with concerned looks

on their faces.

“I am planning to get a divorce,” Joan remarked nonchalantly.

The silence that ensued was terrifying as no one knew what to say in response. A few of

them sighed sympathetically, while others clashed their fists in anger.

“Joan, did Larry do something to you? Tell us if he did, we will help you.”

“That’s right, we will teach him a lesson. Don’t be afraid. Anyway, you’re so pretty. You

definitely wouldn’t lack suitors at all!”

Bam! Suddenly, the door to the private room opened and a dashing man entered.

“Oh? What’s going on? Why am I not invited to the dinner treat? Are you discriminating

against me?”

A familiar voice rang out behind their ears, causing an uproar within the private room.

Although Dustin had just joined the supermarket, his character and looks had charmed everyone there.

"Mr. Silverman is here. Quick, take a seat. We've just begun."

"Mr. Silverman, please sit here."

"Hey, why are you trying to steal him? You're already married."

At that moment, the private room's atmosphere livened up. After glancing at Joan, Dustin gradually took the seat beside her.

"Oh! It seems Joan is really popular." Her colleagues began to gossip.

"Come, Mr. Silverman, we want to make a toast to you for being the knight in shining armor who saved Joan."

That night, everyone had a blast. They chatted happily about their kids at school, debated

the latest TV dramas, and argued who the most handsome actor was.

Joan beamed in satisfaction, knowing that everyone had enjoyed their time. She liked the

feeling she had then. At work, everyone would put their best foot forward. After work, they

would then gather happily and chat over a meal, just like a family.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1989

After wiping her mouth, Joan walked out of the private room.

"Hey, what's wrong?" Dustin gently patted her on the shoulder.

With her dreamy eyes, Joan looked up at the pitch-black sky.

"Dustin, do you think I should go through the divorce?" Joan sounded lost.

After so many years of being together, wouldn't it be a waste? However, if I don't let go,

how will Gabriella ever stop? Joan suddenly sneered.

It appears that love can be very fragile. Just one thought alone can end a bond that lasted for years.

"Joan." Dustin turned her around and looked straight at her.

"All that matters is that you are happy. But don't do something you will regret. If you need

me by your side one day, I will gladly be there for you." Dustin looked at her tipsy

expression intently.

"Gabriella is pregnant with Larry's child. The child cannot be without a father. That just won't do," Joan mumbled.

The only reason she tolerated Gabriella was that Joan was a kind woman. Dustin sighed in response.

"Ah..." Suddenly, Joan staggered into his arms.

"Larry," Joan murmured.

"Joan?" Dustin gently shook her by the arms.

As a cold breeze blew past them, Dustin hugged Joan to keep her warm.

However, Larry was

watching from afar and saw everything that had happened.

Clenching his fists tightly, rage filled his eyes.

What's the real reason she wants a divorce? Is it really because of Gabriella's child? Or has it always been about Dustin?

He had arrived exhausted to pick Joan up from work but ended up seeing them in such a shocking scene.

As his expression darkened, Larry turned away and left.

"Oh, did I fall asleep?" Sounding exhausted, Joan suddenly awoke and rubbed her eyes.

"I'll send you home." Dustin gently stroked her hair.

"What about them? Have they left?" Joan quickly returned to the private room.

"Joan, we're here. We're about to leave as we don't want to be in the way," one of the women yelled from downstairs.

Joan quickly ran to the balcony and saw that they had gone downstairs.

What sort of friends are they? Why didn't they tell me they were leaving? Joan gave them the side-eye and pretended to be upset.

"Come on, don't be angry. You should continue sleeping in Mr.

Silverman's arms. We're

going off now. Bye!" With that, the group of women left hand in hand.

At that moment, Joan was suddenly embarrassed. Due to the alcohol, she had accidentally

fallen asleep in Dustin's arms.

"Dad, you're back," Lucius exclaimed in delight and threw himself into Larry's arms.

However, Larry avoided him and went straight back into his room.

"Lucius, I'm tired today.

I'll play with you another day instead."

Delilah was shocked to see what happened. After all, Larry had never treated Lucius so

coldly before. What's wrong with him today?

"I have tidied up your office," Joan remarked softly while standing by the door.

"Alright." Dustin looked awkward.

"Mmm, I want to thank you for today." Joan felt embarrassed.

He understood what she meant. But he couldn't stop his imagination from running wild

after thinking about what happened earlier and the teasing comments her colleagues made.

After saying goodbye to Dustin, Joan entered the house.

"Lucius, why haven't you slept yet?" Joan picked him up.

"Mom, where did you go? Why did you come back so late? Let me tell you a secret. Dad is in

a bad mood today," Lucius whispered into her ear.

Suddenly, Joan's gaze darkened.

"Lucius, go to bed now as you still have school tomorrow. Joan, there's some medication on

the table for Larry. Don't forget to give it to him." Just as she spoke,

Delilah led Larry back

into his room.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1990

Should I bring up the divorce with him? Joan was hesitant about it.

"Ms. Young told me that you are having a fever," Joan remarked when she entered the

room.

Larry didn't respond to her.

Is he asleep? She approached him slowly.

"Larry." Joan gently patted him on his arms.

However, he didn't move at all.

When she put her hand on his forehead, she was shocked.

"Larry, wake up. Quick, take your medication before you sleep." Joan panicked.

This fool of a man! Why isn't he taking his medicine despite having a fever?

"Joan," Larry mumbled as he pulled her into his embrace.

"I'm here. Take your medication." Joan gently stroke his hair.

"Don't leave me." Larry buried his head into her collar bone.

At that moment, Joan's heart wavered.

I don't want to leave him. But, I don't have a choice.

The next day, the morning sun shone through the windows. Larry was hugging Joan tightly

with a blissful expression on his face.

When he opened his eyes and saw Joan in front of him, he was shocked to realize it wasn't a dream at all.

He subsequently grinned in satisfaction.

"Urgh..." Turning around, he rubbed his eyes as it was already daylight.

"You're awake. Have some soup first, and here's your medication,"

Joan uttered softly as she

walked toward the bathroom.

Both of them were feeling awkward but pretended to be calm instead.

Breakfast was quiet as both of them hardly said a thing. Once they were done, Lucius went

to school while Delilah tended to her garden. As for Joan, she grabbed a piece of bread

before heading out. Finally, Larry felt lonely after he was the only one left in the small dining

room.

She hasn't forgiven me. His gaze darkened at that thought.

Wait, that's not right! Suddenly, his eyes flashed with anger when he remembered seeing

her hugging Dustin last night.

Suddenly, rage welled up within him when he realized everything was real and he wasn't

dreaming at all.

"Joan, what are you going to do about it?" Suddenly, a colleague approached and looked at

her noisily.

What is she talking about? Joan looked at the woman quizzically.

"Come on, what are you being shy about? We're all ladies here. We understand." The

woman patted her on her shoulder.

Joan was increasingly puzzled.

"What are you talking about? I really don't understand."

The woman was surprised but quickly recovered her composure.

"Last night, didn't Dustin send you home?" the woman asked curiously.

"That's right." Joan nodded.

"Did he just leave after that?"

How else did she expect it to be? I can't let him stay, can I? I am not that liberal. Besides, he is just a friend.

"Joan, is something wrong with your brain? Dustin is such a good man.

Why don't you

treasure..." Suddenly, the woman became furious.

"I've already told you not to concern yourself with this. We have told her the same but she just doesn't listen."

"That's right, let's get back to work," the other women urged.

"What are you ladies talking about?" Suddenly, a familiar voice rang out from behind.

"What else other than your marriage?" One of the ladies giggled.

Dustin blushed at once.

As there weren't many employees at the supermarket, Dustin treated them more like friends than subordinates.

"My goodness, it's still too early for that." Dustin laughed awkwardly.

"Hey, Mr. Silverman, what kind of girls do you like? Let me introduce one to you."

"That's right. It's best if we can keep the good stuff within our circle."

The group of ladies burst into laughter.

When Dustin looked at Joan, he saw her focused on reading the documents she had on

hand. She didn't take notice of the surrounding noise at all.

Bam! Suddenly, the doors to the supermarket were busted open.

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1991

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1991

Everyone's attention turned toward the entrance.

What is he doing here? Joan furrowed her eyebrows slightly.

"Joan." Larry gradually approached her.

"Oh, who is this? What is he doing here at our

supermarket?”

“That’s right. He is the ass*le that can’t keep it in his pants.”

The ladies began to make snide remarks. Obviously, Larry knew they were talking about him.

“What are you doing here?” Joan looked at him inquisitively.

“Something has happened to Lucius,” Larry whispered to her.

“What? How can that be?” Joan dashed out of the supermarket.

Behind her, her colleagues were all filled with concern.

“What happened?” Joan demanded to know.

Larry didn’t know either as he had just received a call from Lucius’ homeroom teacher.

Soon, their car arrived at the school gate.

“Hello, are you Lucius’ parents?” A young and beautiful teacher approached them and asked.

“That’s right. I’m his mom while he is Lucius’ dad.

What happened to my son?” Joan grabbed onto the teacher’s arms anxiously.

“Calm down. You will be able to see him soon. Your son is really extraordinary.” The teacher grinned before leaving.

What’s going on? Now that we’re here after hearing something happened to him, why doesn’t the teacher seem to be bothered?

“Dearest teachers and fellow students. How are you? My name is Lucius and the topic of my speech today is ‘My Mom and Dad’.”

That’s Lucius’ voice!

Joan quickly turned around and followed the sound.

“Mrs. Norton, your son is really awesome. He is the first one to go up on stage,” the teacher highlighted beside them.

Suddenly, Joan’s eyes were filled with tears.

Larry hugged Joan tightly as if to comfort her.

“Conflicts are inevitable once two people spend a long time with each other. My parents too are the

same. However, for some strange reason, they always make up a few minutes later. Not this time though. It has already been two days, and yet, they have not made peace.” Just as he spoke, Lucius’ eyes darkened.

Very quickly, his speech ended and he was greeted with a round of applause.

“Finally, I would like to thank my parents for giving me their unconditional love and patience. I strongly hope that they will reconcile as soon as possible.”

With that, Lucius bowed deeply in Joan and Larry’s direction.

Finally, Joan couldn’t contain her emotions. Tears flowed down her cheeks as she rushed to hug him.

“Alright, Joan, please maintain your composure. We are at the school after all,” Larry comforted her as he gently patted her on her shoulder.

“Mom, Dad,” Lucius ran toward them the moment he came down from the stage.

“Forgive me for using such an inappropriate method in trying to get both of you here.” Lucius lowered his head in guilt.

“Foolish child, it’s not your fault. You’re my son.” Joan’s voice was trembling when she hugged him tightly.

“Come, Mr. Norton. Let me take a family picture for the three of you,” the homeroom teacher suddenly suggested.

Joan quickly wiped her tears away and carried Lucius to face the camera.

“Mmm-hmm. Not bad. Here’s the picture, Lucius. If Mom and Dad quarrel again, you can show this photo to them,” the teacher suggested with a smile.

Suddenly, both Larry and Joan smiled in response.

Lucius’ actions had caused both of them to feel guilty as they didn’t expect their conflict to have affected their son.

Nevertheless, the matter between them was unresolved.

“Larry, I don’t want to drag on this any longer,”

Joan plainly remarked.

“As for Lucius, we will hide it from him for the time being. When he is older...” Joan’s eyes were heavy with sadness.

Is she that eager to divorce me? Just so that she can go and see Dustin? Larry clenched his fists as his eyes filled with rage.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1992

“Joan, tell me the truth. Why are you in such a hurry to divorce me?” Larry grabbed Joan’s hand tightly.

What a ridiculous question. Other than the child Gabriella is carrying, what other reason can there be? Giving him the side-eye, Joan responded with a snort.

“What is it? Cat got your tongue? Do you need me to say it?” Larry snapped.

Fine. Just spit it out. I want to hear what you actually have to say.

“It’s because of Dustin, isn’t it? After our divorce, you can return to his side!” Larry glared at her.

Suddenly, Joan’s eyes burned with rage.

What is he thinking? Am I really that disloyal in his eyes? Balling her fingers into a fist, Joan’s eyes were filled with contempt.

“Larry, you started this. Why don’t you reflect on your own mistakes instead of blaming them on others?” She stared coldly at Larry.

How dare he doubt my relationship with Dustin? From the beginning, I have made it clear that we’re only friends. Until now, he still uses this as an excuse to suspect me.

“You seemed to be enjoying yourself when Dustin was hugging you that day. Don’t think that I’m unaware that Dustin has always been waiting for you,” Larry bellowed.

So what? Did I do anything to betray you?

“I don’t want to talk to you anymore. Whenever you are free, let’s just sign the divorce papers. After that, you can move out,” Joan asserted coldly

before turning to leave.

Any broken-hearted lady would always seek a clean breakup. Ideally, they would go their respective ways and never see each other again.

She didn't deny that she really loved Larry. It was just that she couldn't control everything in life.

Being separated didn't mean she no longer loved him.

She just wanted him to be responsible for the child Gabriella was carrying. After all, the child was innocent.

"How did it go? Did you manage to resolve it?"

Dustin quickly asked.

Joan shook her head in silence.

It appeared that they had reached the end of their marriage. Sighing, Dustin felt that it was a waste.

Ring! Ring!

When Joan saw who it was, she quickly answered the call.

"Joan, are you free today? Let's go out for a meal," Nancy suggested softly.

"Sure."

After setting the time and venue, they ended the call.

"Sigh, I'll be heading out for a while." Joan patted Dustin on the shoulder.

He gestured an okay sign to her.

In the café, Nancy was sitting in a corner, sipping coffee. When she saw Joan's figure hurrying in, sadness filled her eyes.

"Nancy." Joan spotted Nancy the moment she entered the restaurant.

"Joan, you're here."

"How are you? Are you feeling any better?"

"Mmm-hmm, I'm fine. Joan, I heard about you and Larry. What happened? Do you need to go to such extremes as to file for a divorce?"

Joan sneered. Just as expected, I suppose Larry must have called you to talk to me about this?

"We have crossed the point of no return," Joan replied plainly.

What's that supposed to mean? All this while, their love had survived everything, no matter how difficult it was. Why is she giving up now? Curious, Nancy looked at Joan quizzically.

"Nancy, I have made my decision after giving it a lot of thought. I'm tired and no longer want to torment myself. To be honest with you, Gabriella is carrying Larry's child. On top of that, she has pestered me many times to divorce him."

"I'm sure you know by now how ruthless Gabriella is. She will never rest until she achieves her goal. Instead of letting her repeatedly hurt me and the one I love, I figured it's better that I let go. We won't be in each other's way anymore," Joan explained.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1993

Larry had an affair? Nancy couldn't believe it. In her mind, she was sure that Larry was not interested in anyone but Joan, let alone Gabriella. Is there a misunderstanding?

"Joan, don't be rash. We don't know for sure if the baby Gabriella is carrying belongs to Larry. So, let's not make any hasty decisions," Nancy quickly advised.

Ever since she had a child, Nancy had become a lot calmer and to a certain extent, gentler.

"If the child isn't his, why is Gabriella being so persistent? Furthermore, both of them were together that night."

What's wrong with Larry? Given what happened, how does he expect me to solve it for him? Nancy looked conflicted.

However, Gabriella has been known to be insidious. She must have set up an elaborate scheme.

"Joan, you should wait a little longer. I'm sure the truth will be revealed soon." Nancy held onto Joan's hands tightly.

What's the use? Am I to wait for Gabriella to come and hurt me? Or perhaps for her to hurt Lucius and Ms. Young?

I can't allow any other innocents to be hurt further.

Isn't Ms. Brooks the best example?

Joan's eyes flashed with an icy chill.

This marriage must end!

"I'm not waiting. I can't afford to do it." Just as she spoke, Joan stood up.

"Nancy, if talking about this is the reason you invited me out, then let me be frank with you. There is no room for negotiation. Anyway, I still have work to do and have to leave first." Joan turned and left.

Suddenly, her eyes were reddened.

Nancy took out her phone immediately and made a call.

"Hello, Jory? There's something I need your help with..."

On the journey back, tears welled up in Joan's eyes. Passersby who saw her looked at her as if she was crazy.

"Sigh, did that lady just break up with his boyfriend?"

"I don't know. She looks really sad."

"Sigh. What a pity..."

At that moment, she was oblivious to the comments being made around her. The only thing that filled her mind was Larry's image and the divorce.

Ring! Ring!

"Hello, Joan? Are you alright? Where are you now?"

Dustin sounded haggard.

"I'm fine. I'm on my way back now."

However, little did she know that he was somewhere behind, watching her quietly.

"What? You want me to investigate Gabriella?" Jory looked at Nancy in disbelief.

Since when did she take an interest in Gabriella? In his mind, Gabriella wasn't a person to be trifled with.

"Jory, Joan is going to divorce Larry and I heard Gabriella is carrying Larry's baby. But, I don't believe..." Nancy explained.

But what does this have anything to do with me? At that moment, Jory's gaze darkened. He had never wanted to interfere with the personal lives of others, especially that of Larry, who was Dustin's love rival.

"Nancy, let's just mind our own business. As for the problems of others, they will sort it out themselves." Jory hugged Nancy tightly.

However, Joan and Larry aren't just ordinary friends.

"If you won't investigate, I will." Just as she spoke, Nancy stood up and left.

"Fine, fine, I'll do it. Don't be angry. It's bad for the baby." Jory was left with no choice.

After being pregnant, her temper had toned down significantly compared to last time. Nevertheless, whenever it flared, no one was able to stop her still.

Ring! Ring!

While Gabriella was reading some magazines in the living room, the man beside her handed her phone to her.

Why is he calling? Gabriella furrowed her eyebrows in curiosity.

Ever since he returned the Norton Corporation subsidiary that she painstakingly acquired, she had never stayed in contact with the man. But right then, he was calling her on his own accord.

What does he want? Gabriella sneered.

"Hello, Mr. Synder, how are you?" Gabriella greeted him in a curious tone.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1994

She wouldn't mind if Jory ended the call the moment he heard her voice. In fact, that was what she desperately hoped for.

When Jory heard how strange she sounded, he tried his best to suppress his emotions.

"Ms. Ward, when are you free? Let's meet over a meal." Jory got straight to the point.

As to what it was about, Gabriella would only find

out once she met him.

“Wow, Mr. Synder, I’m surprised you are inviting me out for lunch. All this while, you never had time to do so given how busy you are. Unfortunately, I’m unable to make it as it’s inconvenient for me to move around now. I’m sorry,” Gabriella replied with a contemptuous tone.

She actually rejected me! Jory’s eyes darkened.

“Oh, is that so? And here I was thinking of working with you on a project I have. Since it’s not a good time, then let’s just forget about it.” With that, Jory ended the call.

Ever since Gabriella came back from overseas, she had become a lot more hardworking. Her decisive actions in the business world were no lesser than that of a man. Jory was puzzled as to what caused her to change so much in such a short time.

“Did you say project?” Gabriella’s eyes suddenly sparkled.

Since there’s a project involved, I’m definitely interested. As long as a profit can be made, I don’t care who my partner is. Gabriella’s lips widened into a smile.

“It’s too difficult to explain over the phone. Let meet someplace and have a meal together,” Gabriella suggested.

Since she had invited him, Jory would look petty if he held a grudge for how she treated him earlier.

“Sure.”

After exchanging pleasantries, both of them ended the call.

The stocks that Gabriella invested in had tanked while the projects she was working on hardly yielded any profit. Hence, she needed to solicit a few more projects to beef up her financial situation.

“Gabriella, who was that?” the man beside her asked.

“Oh, it’s just one of my business partners,” she plainly replied.

As she wasn’t feeling too good recently, the man

stayed over often to take care of her. In fact, she didn't resent his presence at all.

She didn't like employing maids as she wasn't one to place her trust on outsiders.

"Sigh, I need to go out for a while. When you leave, don't forget to lock the door," Gabriella instructed.

"How did it go?" Nancy looked at Jory in anticipation.

"Don't worry. Gabriella is no longer the hedonistic woman she used to be. The best way to tempt her now is by using projects." Jory pulled Nancy into his tight embrace.

"Do you feel better now?" He stroked her hair gently.

She did. Jory had never disappointed her before.

"It's been a while, Ms. Ward." Jory took a sip of his coffee inside the café.

"Yes indeed, Mr. Synder." Gabriella rubbed her stomach on purpose.

"I see that you're pregnant. Congratulations," Jory remarked deliberately.

Feigning bashfulness for a moment, she quickly regained her composure.

"It's just a pity it doesn't have a father," Gabriella commented on purpose.

I had better change the subject before she has any bright ideas.

"How can you say it doesn't have a father? Come, Ms. Ward. This is the contract for the project. Why don't you take a look?" Jory placed the document in front of her.

As they were discussing business, Jory knew he had to show his sincerity. Or else, she might see through his ruse.

"You are really bold, Mr. Synder," Gabriella remarked as she went through the document.

He is being overly generous for no reason. Since when did he think so highly of me—to hand me such a lucrative project?

“How about it? What do you think?” Jory asked. He was confident that she would sign the contract. After all, any self-respecting businessman would not let go of an opportunity like that.

“Mr. Synder, I have a question. Why did you choose me? You must know that there are many other domestic companies who are dying to partner with you.” Gabriella stared at him warily.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1995

Just as expected, she really is cautious. Jory sneered.

“I’m sure you know that we have partnered with many domestic companies before. However, this project’s focus is on expanding into the international market. I’m aware that you own an excellent company overseas. Although its scale isn’t big as of now, I believe it has the potential to be developed...” Jory tried to hide his agenda.

If not for Nancy’s request, who in the world would want to work with her? She is both cruel and ruthless. Sooner or later, she will break the rules of the business world. Hence, it is better not to even touch her with a ten-foot pole.

“I see. It seems you have come to the right person. I am connected to many famous companies overseas.”

Jory snorted in response.

She really thinks that I need her help.

“Alright, Ms. Ward. If you are agreeable, we can then discuss the details...”

What’s there to discuss? Isn’t this all there is to it? Gabriella gave him a puzzled look.

“This contract is just the first step. After that...”

Jory then held back his words.

His objective was to interact more with Gabriella via the different projects so that he could get closer to the truth.

However, he had significantly underestimated her intelligence.

“Larry, something strange has happened recently.

Jory and Gabriella are working on a project together,” Caspian reported warily.

Larry suddenly put his pen down and looked out the window.

I suppose it’s Nancy’s idea?

“Alright, you may go now.” Larry waved his hand.

He appreciated what Nancy had done for his and Joan’s sake.

Ring! Ring!

Is it him? How is it possible? Suddenly, Larry’s eyes darkened.

“Mr. Norton, I have something to tell you.”

“Alright, I’ll be right over. You don’t have to come.”

Larry ended the call and walked out of the office.

Soon, his car stopped at the entrance of the clinic.

“What happened?” Larry looked at the man anxiously.

Lonnie was hesitating and feeling helpless at the same time. He recognized that Larry was a good man—upright and loyal, while Joan was kind and generous. Both of them were a match made in heaven. He just didn’t understand how Larry could be involved with someone as cruel as Gabriella.

“Mr. Norton, I heard about what happened to you.

I just want to reveal some things to you.” Lonnie looked at him sternly.

Could it be that he is still hiding something from me? Larry looked at Lonnie inquisitively.

“Gabriella used to be the person Mr. Newman loved the most. She used him to hurt Joan but failed in the end. After that, she requested me to help her but I declined. Logically speaking, Mr. Newman should have recovered after receiving treatment in the hospital for such a long time. But until now, there’s still no news of him. Therefore, there can only be one explanation. Gabriella must be somehow controlling him and his subordinates,” Lonnie explained.

Larry had heard about something of this sort but never expected it to be as Lonnie had described.

Perhaps, he was simply too busy with work to have given it much thought.

“Therefore, I hope that you can reconsider before making a decision. Joan is a really good woman.”

Lonnie patted him on the shoulder.

Larry was his benefactor after all. Hence, he didn't want Larry to do anything the latter might regret. Although he had not been in a relationship before, he had seen the pain and helplessness Mr. Newman suffered. Hence, he understood the anguish of losing the woman one loved.

“I understand. Don't worry, I'll definitely find out the truth. As for Gabriella, I am honestly not sure if the child she is carrying is really mine. After all, I was really drunk that night.” Larry's gaze darkened.

What a fool! Since when does a drunk person still have the energy to make love? Lonnie walked up to Larry and gazed at him intently.

ever Late, Never Away Chapter 1996

“Mr. Norton, if you are not sure, you can run a test.”

What does he mean? What kind of test? Larry gave Lonnie a puzzled look.

“Based on my understanding, a drunken man won't have the ability to make love to a woman. Hence, you can try and get yourself drunk,” Lonnie explained in a serious tone.

Although it was a dumb idea, Larry found it to be extremely practical.

“Larry, what do you think?”

Larry's eyes lit up all of a sudden. I'm so stupid.

Why didn't I think of this in the first place?

“This is both the easiest and fastest way. Also, what about the security feeds in the nightclub? The ones which show you entering and leaving. You need to check them too.”

Suddenly, Larry realized he had missed a ton of details.

As expected of someone that roams the underworld.

After chatting a little while longer, Larry left the clinic.

Although Lonnie had fully recovered from his wounds, he continued to stay at the clinic because Gabriella was still searching for him. She had wanted to kill him to prevent him from talking. The doctor there understood his predicament and arranged for him to help out with simple errands.

"Hello, Caspian? Check the security feeds of the nightclub I went to," Larry explained as he walked.

Caspian was puzzled.

Haven't we gone through them? They clearly showed Gabriella helping Larry into the room.

"Alright, I understand." Caspian ended the call.

He believed in everything Larry was doing.

"Larry, this is the security footage from the other day. You can take a look at it."

Larry stared intently at the screen, worried that he would miss out on something important. He was sure that he would be able to find a clue from the video.

"Hey, Larry, something here feels strange," Caspian suddenly commented.

Larry too felt it.

"Rewind it to the beginning," Larry coldly instructed.

The last time they watched the footage, they only saw Larry entering the nightclub and Gabriella helping him into the room. However, he didn't finish watching the video then. After being reminded by Lonnie, Larry suddenly remembered that someone seemed to have entered the room after he left.

"What's wrong?" Larry demanded.

"Mr. Norton, someone seems to have edited out this portion of the video," the supervisor remarked softly.

Just as expected, we have found a flaw!

Bam! Larry slammed his fist onto the wall, causing blood to ooze out from his fingers.

Gabriella, I didn't expect you to be so careful. Larry let out a frosty glare.

However, as the nightclub was crowded then, it

would be impossible to check the patrons one by one.

“Larry, what do we do?” Caspian asked anxiously. “Let’s find the scene from where the security feed was restored.” Larry returned his focus to the screen and continued to stare at it.

When Gabriella walked out of the room, she even turned to the camera and smiled, flashing a victory sign.

Damn it!

Larry was infuriated.

“Mr. Norton, calm down. I will comb through all the security footage from that night. If we can narrow down the timing, it will be easier to look for it. I’m just worried that person was waiting in the nightclub the whole time until someone gave him a call. In that case, we will need to take a much longer time to search,” the supervisor explained.

That’s right. Given how sly Gabriella is, she will definitely use a crafty method to hide the person’s identity.

However, Larry was puzzled as to how Gabriella’s methods became so meticulous that every detail was taken care of.

Did she receive some form of intelligent guidance while she was overseas?

Ring! Ring!

“Hello, Lars, where are you now? Are you free tonight? Let’s have dinner together,” Gabriella suggested coquettishly.

Larry let out a mischievous grin. Sure, I’d be glad to have dinner with you...

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1997

“Sure.” Larry ended the call.

Meanwhile, Gabriella was jumping in joy.

Did I hear wrongly? Larry actually agreed to have dinner with me? Can it be that Joan has brought up the divorce with him? Gabriella sneered while her eyes let out an icy glare.

Joan oh Joan, it appears that you have lost your

charm. In the end, Larry has chosen me.

Looking out the window, Gabriella clenched her fists while emitting an intimidating vibe.

When the man beside her saw how happy she was, his heart sank. He knew that Larry must have agreed to her request. In this world, is Larry the only one that can make her happy? The man couldn't help but sigh.

In the end, I am nothing but a tool. But I really love her.

In the restaurant, the dim candlelight, soothing music, intoxicating red wine, and mesmerizing scent of flowers, simply made for a warm and romantic environment. Gabriella took a sip of red wine as she looked excitedly at Larry.

"Larry, have you been very busy lately? Look at you, you seemed to have lost a lot of weight."

Gabriella reached out her hand to touch his cheeks. When Larry avoided her hand, it suddenly caused her to feel awkward.

"It's alright. I'm just a little busy." Larry put a piece of steak in his mouth.

"Lars, you have to take better care of yourself."

Gabriella's heart pained to see him like that.

"Gabriella, do you remember how much I have drunk at the nightclub that night?" Larry carefully probed. Suddenly, Gabriella's gaze turned cold.

Why is he asking this all of a sudden? What a party pooper. And to think we finally got to share a meal.

"Erm... I forgot. Why do you ask?" She threw the question back at him.

"Oh, actually, I just went to the hospital for a checkup and the doctor commented that my stomach wasn't well. Hence, he advised me to cut down on my drinking. Therefore, I just want to know what my threshold for drinking is so that I can set my limits." Larry smiled on purpose.

So, that's why. Gabriella heaved a sigh of relief.

Is she feeling sensitive about it? Or else, why does she look so nervous? It seems that's the limit of

her emotional capabilities. Larry sneered.

"That day... I have really forgotten. I can only remember the table filled with bottles..." Gabriella commented half-heartedly.

It doesn't matter how many bottles there are. The more he drank the more drunk he became. Who knows how many bottles there really were? Gabriella continued to eat her steak.

Meanwhile...

"Joan, are you hungry? Do you want to have dinner?" Dustin patted her on the shoulder.

"How can we eat? Can't you see how much work there is? Besides, why did you give them the day off? Now, only both of us are left here doing the work. We still need to wait for the goods to arrive..." Joan complained.

Dustin laughed in response.

Given that she was in the mood to argue with him, it meant that she had forgotten about Larry, at least for now.

"If you really feel tired, you should take a break. After all, I didn't ask you to come," Dustin mumbled.

It was true that he didn't do so. However, she couldn't bear to see him do everything while she did nothing at all.

In the end, she was still a loyal friend.

"Stop talking to me. I have no time for jokes." Joan gently pounded her own shoulders.

Dustin smiled at her as this was his plan after all. He had wanted to exhaust her with work so that she wouldn't be able to think of that fool, Larry. However, both of them didn't expect to run into the very people they didn't want to meet, doing something they didn't want to see in such a large city.

"Joan, are you alright? Let's just go." Just as he spoke, Dustin pulled her away.

"I'm not leaving!" Joan shoved his hand away as her eyes glared at the restaurant nearby.

Both of them were smiling happily. Larry looked chivalrous while Gabriella was dressed to the nines. Furthermore, there was no one around, creating a quiet and romantic atmosphere for them.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1998

From the looks of it, they really looked compatible with each other.

Tears welled up in Joan's eyes.

Liar! You big fat liar! Despite saying till death do us part and declaring to love me forever, you have begun dating Gabriella before we have even completed our divorce. Are you that desperate?

Joan sniffled as she tried to calm herself down.

"Alright, stop watching. Let's go home." Dustin hugged her tightly.

He was aware of how sad she felt. Even though she had initiated the divorce, she was still devastated by what she saw.

"Dustin, I wasn't seeing things, was I?" Joan suddenly asked.

How am I to answer her? Dustin hesitated for a moment before choosing to remain silent.

"Come, let's go home." She dragged Dustin to leave.

Back in the restaurant, Larry wasn't aware of what was going on outside. His focus was on trying to get more information from Gabriella.

The matter has to be resolved sooner or later.

"Lars, what's wrong with you today? Why do you keep asking me strange questions?" Gabriella probed.

Did he notice something? That shouldn't be the case. My plan was water-tight.

Larry stared at Gabriella inquisitively. His first few questions were elementary and didn't yield much information. But his final question was the key to revealing everything. Although he still needed to validate it.

"Gabriella, do you still remember the scar by my back? Recently, I cut myself with something sharp, causing the wound to split open. Therefore, I need to apply some medication on it. As Joan has been

ignoring me and pestering me for a divorce, I wonder if you could..."

"I can. Not a problem at all," Gabriella exclaimed quickly.

"Do you still remember the scar?" Larry let out a mischievous smile.

"I do. How can I forget? That night, I even stroked it for a long time as it pained my heart to see it," Gabriella murmured shyly.

At that moment, Larry knew the truth.

There is no scar on my back at all. So how can she even remember it so vividly?

I guess it must be another man that she remembers.

Larry snorted.

Ring! Ring!

When Larry saw who was calling, he quickly answered.

"Alright, I understand. Hmm..."

"Gabriella, there's something at work I need to deal with so I have to take my leave. Do you want me to send you or are you fine going home yourself?"

Larry asked softly.

After all, he had to make sure his act was perfect.

Or else, she would definitely suspect something given her intelligence.

"Lars, you should go on ahead. I'm fine by myself,"

Gabriella replied with a smile.

"Alright." Larry turned and left.

"Hey, Lars, come over to my place tonight after you finish your work. I'll help you apply your medication."

Larry left without a response.

Women really love to make assumptions.

"Hey, Larry, what's wrong with you today? Why are you drinking so much liquor?" Ms. Young looked at him with concern.

Should I call Joan? Delilah took out her phone and started making the call.

"No, Ms. Young, don't call her." Larry snatched her

phone away.

He really is a loyal man, but why is he doing this? Delilah shook her head and sighed.

Forget it, I'll just let him be.

For the whole night, Larry sat at the table drinking while Delilah watched him from the sofa, just in case anything happened. The situation continued until he fell asleep, sprawled on the table.

The next day, sunlight shone through the windows and brought with it a gentle warmth. Larry rubbed his eyes and stretched himself.

"Are you awake?" Delilah anxiously asked.

"Ms. Young, you're up early." Larry yawned.

"What do you mean up early? I stayed up the whole night," Delilah grumbled.

Initially, she assumed she could sleep once he had passed out from drinking too much. But he ended up shouting Joan's name the whole night instead.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1999

"By the way, Ms. Young. What did I do last night?"

Larry looked at her in anticipation.

What sort of question is that? Delilah looked at him quizzically. For a drunk man who could barely walk, what else can you do?

"You didn't do anything other than yelling Joan's name," Delilah plainly replied.

Suddenly, Larry's gaze darkened.

"What else? Didn't I do anything else? Such as standing up, returning to my room, or even going to the toilet?"

What a joke. You barely had any strength. How can you even go back to your own room?

"No, you didn't do anything at all. All you did was sprawl on the table, sleeping. You didn't even have any energy left."

So that's how it was! At that moment, Larry's eyes lit up.

In that case, nothing happened between Gabriella and me that night. However, I still need evidence to prove it. A cold glint flashed in Larry's eyes.

When he realized he could finally explain himself to Joan, a triumphant smile emerged on his face.

“Hey, Ms. Young, where’s Joan? Has she gone to work?”

“She didn’t come home last night. She said she was busy with something.”

Didn’t return for the night? Suddenly, sadness filled his eyes.

Is she together with Dustin? Has she really fallen for him? Larry clenched his fists as his eyes burned with rage.

“Alright, you should go home now and rest. After pulling an all-nighter, you deserve some good rest.”

Dustin gently patted Joan on the shoulder.

“Alright, you be careful too. Bye!” Joan waved.

Before she came in, Larry heard their conversation outside.

Just as expected, they were together last night.

“I’m back,” Joan exclaimed the moment she entered the house.

“Where did you go?” Larry asked coldly.

Looking at the face she hadn’t seen in a while, all Joan felt was sadness. Not wanting to engage him, she quickly entered her room.

“Work,” she declared loudly before slamming the door shut.

Do you take me for a fool? To believe that you’ve been working at the supermarket for the whole night together with him? Suddenly, Larry was filled with rage.

Bam! He forcefully kicked the door open causing Joan to open her eyes in fright.

“Joan, what did you do last night? Who were you with? Was it Dustin again?” Larry demanded angrily.

Is he mad? He doesn’t have the right to question me at all!

“Larry, I’m really tired now. Whatever it is, let’s talk later.” Joan covered herself with her blanket.

Suddenly, Larry jumped onto her.

“What are you trying to do?” She glared at him,

shocked by his reaction.

“Do you not love me anymore? Have you fallen in love with Dustin?” Larry grabbed her arms in rage. What a joke! If I were interested in Dustin, I would have fallen for him a long time ago. Isn’t it strange for him to feel jealous?

“I...”

Suddenly, Larry gave Joan’s sexy lips a kiss. He did it so forcefully and unforgivingly. Joan struggled to push him away but her efforts were futile.

How long has it been since I last kissed her?

Despite the familiar scent, he felt she was different this time.

Slap!

A slap landed on Larry’s face.

It was followed by Joan’s furious glare.

“Larry, scram!” With a forceful push, she shoved him aside.

What is he trying to do? How dare he kiss me after sleeping with Gabriella?

This is despicable and terribly unbecoming of him!

“Joan, I...” Suddenly, Larry was stumped.

Before he could finish, Joan had left for the garden.

“Mom, what’s wrong?” Lucius yelled aloud.

“Oh, isn’t it time for school?” Joan knelt and tousled his hair.

“It’s the weekend today. Have you forgotten?”

Lucius gave Joan a quizzical look as if he sensed something was wrong.

“Oh, I forgot as I’ve been very busy recently.

Come, let’s go to the garden to see Grandma.”

“What about Dad?”

Suddenly, Joan’s gaze darkened. Soon, he will no longer be your dad.

“He still has a lot of work in the office. Let’s go on without him.” Just as she spoke, Joan led Lucius away.

Left alone in the house, Larry began to regret his actions.

Was I being too impulsive just now?
He knew that Joan resented such advances.
However, he still committed the mistake
nonetheless.

“Grandma!” Lucius yelled loudly in the garden.
“Hey, why are you here?” Delilah sounded delighted.
“Oh, has Larry drank the soup to cure his
hangover?” Delilah asked Joan.
He was drinking? Joan furrowed her eyebrows
slightly.

“Last night, he downed a lot of liquor. I wanted to
call you but he stopped me. In the end, he fell
asleep at the table.”

At that moment, Joan’s felt a wrenching pain in his
heart.

Foolish man. Does he think he can drink his
problems away and not let me know? Joan’s eyes
were suddenly filled with sadness.

“Mom, look, the flower is withering...”
“Larry, are you alright?” Caspian asked in concern.
The only thing that filled his mind right then was
Joan’s face.

“Go on out first. I need to be alone for a while.”
Larry felt a throbbing pain in his head as he
massaged his temple.

The scar and his state of drunkenness were enough
to prove that nothing happened between Gabriella
and him. However, the security footage is
lost. Larry’s gaze darkened.

“Joan, if you feel troubled, why don’t you go travel
to ease your mind.” Delilah gave Joan a concerned
look.

“Really? Grandma, can we go overseas?” Lucius
blinked as he looked at both women curiously.
Ever since he was born, he had never left the
village, let alone the country. When she saw how
enthusiastic and anxious Lucius looked, Joan smiled
faintly.

“Tell me, do you want to travel overseas?” She
knelt down and looked at him intently.

“Mmm-hmm.” Lucius nodded with conviction.

“Alright, once I have settled my work at the supermarket, I’ll take you overseas, alright?” Joan tousled his hair.

“Hurray! I’m going to travel!” At that moment, Lucius jumped in joy.

Actually, there was no need for her to deal with work as Dustin was around. All she needed to do was to take leave from him before she left.

“Oh? You’re going overseas?” Dustin leaned by her ear and asked softly.

Does this mean she wants to forget everything?

“That’s right. I want to take Lucius to travel,” Joan replied with an awkward expression.

She didn’t want to see Larry for the time being as she wanted to avoid being dragged into his problem with Gabriella. All she wanted right then was for him to sign the divorce agreement.

“I want to go too,” Dustin suddenly suggested.

Joan was stunned.

What are you going for? It’s not like you have any emotional problems to run away from. Furthermore, the supermarket is very busy recently. How can it function without you? Joan gave him an inquisitive look.

“What is it? Do you not want me there? Fine, forget it. I was even thinking of helping you guys carry your luggage.” Dustin made a pitiful and helpless face.

“Mr. Dustin, are you really coming together with us?” Suddenly, Lucius ran out and asked loudly.

It’s not a bad idea for him to help carry our luggage, although he isn’t as handsome as Dad. Thereafter, a mischievous smile emerged on Lucius’ face.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2001

“What’s the matter? Do you want me to go together with you?” Dustin asked as he stroked Lucius’s head.

“Of course. I haven’t seen you for a long time now.”

The man glanced at Joan as he grinned with delight.

Dustin never thought that the little boy would speak favorably of him.

“Come on, Lucius. He’s busy.” Joan tugged the child over to her side.

“Huh? Are you really busy?” The child turned around and looked at Dustin, who stood not far away.

“I’m not busy at all,” the man responded immediately.

Suddenly, Joan blushed in embarrassment.

What’s wrong with this boy? He used to dislike Dustin, so why the sudden change now?

Dustin was curious about that too.

Only Lucius knew the real reason for that. He wanted nothing more than a favor from Dustin.

“Alright. I’ll go and book a plane ticket then.”

Having said that, the man turned and left.

Joan watched helplessly at the retreating figure.

Meanwhile, Gabriella, who was in the living room, exclaimed with a displeased look on her face.

“What? She’s going abroad? With that child?”

What is that b*tch up to again?

“Ms. Ward...” the man hesitated and stopped himself.

“Follow her at all times and be on standby,” the woman snarled.

Now that she’s abroad, it’s a good chance for me. The woman clenched her fists tightly, and pure hatred flashed across her face.

Not long after, the trio landed safely abroad.

Delilah did not join them as she was preoccupied with something. Lucius, on the other hand, was boisterous throughout the journey.

At that time, Larry was standing by the window and waited for Joan’s return.

Two hours went by, but there was still no sign of her. He kept glancing at his watch anxiously until the moon and stars shone brightly in the sky.

Not being able to hold back anymore, he took out his phone and called her, but he could not get through because she had switched off her phone.

“Ms. Young, why isn’t Joan home yet? Is she working overtime again?” the man asked with a tone of worry.

“She left the country, and she took Lucius with her,” Delilah answered.

When did this happen? Why did no one tell me this?

“Why did she leave?”

“Oh, that. Lucius has never been abroad before, so Joan brought him along for the trip,” Delilah replied nonchalantly.

Why didn’t she tell me? And why didn’t she invite me along? In that instant, his eyes dimmed. Is there no way to go back to the way we were before? Can’t she wait a little longer? Just a little longer for me to find out the truth.

“I don’t want to be involved in the private matter between you and Joan. But I treat Joan as my own daughter, and I hope that you can make her happy in any possible way,” Delilah said. Sometimes letting go is better than holding on. Delilah carefully examined Larry who was standing in front of her. Larry knew what she meant, but he just couldn’t let go. He and Joan had gone through thick and thin together, so why should they give up now? Just because Gabriella is pregnant? But that’s not my baby!

“There’s something I want to explain, Ms. Young. I do admit that I was at the bar that day...” Larry said in a low voice.

He believed that Delilah would choose to stand by his side if he explained himself.

True enough, she did.

“Why didn’t you say so earlier? Joan thought that the woman is carrying your child,” Delilah chided as she patted him on his shoulder.

Am I really that old now? I can never understand how young people think nowadays.

“What I’m trying to say is that Joan has been ignoring me lately. Besides, I can’t prove myself now...” Larry said with a wince.

What a silly man.

What is love? Love is trusting one another unconditionally. Isn't Joan that kind of person? Delilah shook her head and sighed.

But this ain't too bad, either. Let it be a lesson for him. Nothing good ever comes from going to a bar.

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2002

Ring! Ring!

Delilah quickly picked up her phone after looking at the caller ID.

"We're here, Grandma. It's beautiful here. You have to come here when you have the time..." Lucius shouted excitedly into the phone.

Larry, who was next to Delilah, could hear the phone conversation clearly.

"Alright. Be careful, you hear?" Delilah replied.

"Don't worry, Ms. Young. I'll look after them."

Suddenly, Larry heard a familiar male voice through the phone before the call ended.

The fact that Dustin was there infuriated Larry.

Why must she be together with Dustin? Why is that scumbag there? Larry clenched his fists as his scowl deepened.

"Don't think too much of it. Lucius wanted Dustin to be there to help with the bags," Delilah gently patted his shoulder.

But that's not what Dustin had in mind. Joan is mad at me right now, and if that man takes this as an opportunity to get close to her... Larry's expression grew grim.

Delilah read his thoughts and stifled a laugh before she left quietly.

Let the couple sort out the problem themselves. When there's a will, there's a way.

Meanwhile, at the beach. Joan hollered, "Slow down, Lucius!"

"Come on, Mr. Dustin! Catch up!" the child shouted.

Affected by the young child's infectious excitement,

Dustin played along with him.

Birds of a feather flock together. Dustin continued to stick around even though Joan had turned him down.

“Stop running!” Dustin shouted while he chased after Lucius.

“Come on, Mr. Dustin. Come and catch me!”

Both man and child were having fun running and chasing each other upon the shore.

Joan, who was sitting not far away, watched them and a smile tugged on her lips. She’s happy as long as the child was happy.

In fact, as she pondered, she realized that Dustin was marriage material. If she had not set foot back in the country in the beginning, and if she had not turned down Dustin when he professed his love for her, then things wouldn’t turn out to be this bad.

Joan lowered her head and looked glum.

“Come and join us, Mom!” Not far away, Lucius shouted excitedly.

“Alright. Coming!” Joan quickly got up and hurried over.

Once Joan had joined them, they had fun chasing each other along the shoreline.

“You’re quite nice actually, Mr. Dustin,” Lucius suddenly said.

As though he had just received great news, a gleeful smile appeared on Dustin’s face. The child used to think that Larry was the best man in the whole world. But now, it seemed that he and the man in front of him were getting along better than before.

“Hello, I’m sorry to interrupt. But can you do me a favor?” All of a sudden, a woman appeared in front of them.

“How can we help you?” Lucius leaned forward and asked her.

Since when did he become this nice? He must be smitten by this pretty woman. Dustin grinned amusingly at Lucius’ friendliness.

“So, we’re actually in the middle of a poster campaign to promote family vacation at the beach...”

It turned out that the woman wanted to work together with them to shoot a poster campaign.

Joan hesitated. After all, Dustin was not the child’s father. Furthermore, Larry would be upset if he were to know about this.

“Are you okay with that, madam?” the woman asked politely.

“Yes, of course!” Lucius answered loudly.

Oh, this child just agrees without even thinking about it! At that moment, Joan was put on the spot and blushed in embarrassment. Of course, Dustin knew what she was thinking, but he kept quiet. He respected Joan’s choice, regardless of the outcome.

“Let’s go, Mom. Look at how beautiful it is.” Lucius said as he pointed to the sea.

It’s beautiful, indeed. It’s just that we’re here at the wrong time and with the wrong person.

“We’re finally here at the beach. Come on, Mom.”

The child persuaded as he shook Joan’s arm to catch her attention.

“Alright. Let’s go.” After a long while, she finally agreed.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2003

The three of them arrived at the studio together.

“Come with me, let’s get you all ready. You’ll have to change into a bikini...” the staff guided Joan to the changing room.

All of a sudden, Joan blushed at the sight of the bikini laid out for her.

“There’s no need to be shy. Relax, it’ll be over soon. Besides, nowadays people are more open to this kind of swimwear,” the staff prompted.

Soon, the three of them changed into their respective swimwear and began shooting.

“That’s it. Mr., please place your arm around your wife’s shoulder. Stand closer to each other. A little closer.”

“Good. Turn a little to your left. Mr., look at your

wife lovingly. Yes, that's good..."

At that time, Lucius was so engrossed as he posed happily in front of the camera. He was totally unaware of how uncomfortable Joan was.

"Okay. This is the last shot. Mister, please place both of your hands on your wife's cheeks. Now, press your foreheads together..."

Both Joan and Dustin grew even more uncomfortable and embarrassed. After all, Joan was a married woman.

"Come on, don't be shy. We are all open now in this day and age. Even married female celebrities are fine with kissing scenes."

"Come, I'll help you." As he said that, one of the staff in front of him walked over to them.

With the staff's guidance, both of them stood so close until they were nearly pressed together. Just then, not only Joan was embarrassed, but Dustin's face was flushed as well.

"Okay. Let's begin..."

Finally, after what seems like forever, they completed the shooting for the poster campaign. At that time, there was a trace of sadness in Joan's eyes.

What will Larry think of this when he comes to know about it? Will he be jealous? Forget it. Why am I still thinking about him? We're about to be divorced soon anyway. Joan shook her head and sighed.

"Oh, look! Your shots came out really well! You guys look like a happy family." A woman came over and sang praises.

A family? We're definitely not a family!

"We're not a family," Joan said politely.

In an instant, the eyes of the woman dimmed, and she quietly backed off.

It was better to stay quiet than to continue on the embarrassing topic.

"It turns out that they are not a family. Are you guys sure it's okay to shoot like this? Will it..." the woman muttered.

“Take a look at this photo. His eyes are full of adoration for the woman. I’m pretty sure they’ll become a family soon. Don’t worry about it. They’re probably in the middle of a lovers’ spat.”

But Dustin had overheard the exchange between the woman and Joan.

She wasn’t going to have a second husband in her life. A cold glint flashed across Dustin’s eyes.

“Mr. Dustin, do you like my Mom?” Suddenly, Lucius came running to him and blurted out that question.

Why is he being so direct? Dustin tapped lightly on the child’s forehead and smiled at him.

“Do you even know what it means by liking somebody?”

The child pouted, showing his displeasure.

“I know. Dad says that when you like someone, you’ll think about her every day. You will miss her, and you will want to protect her and take care of her.”

Dustin was astonished by Lucius’s remark.

“I’ll like whoever who treats my Mom well,” the child uttered sensibly.

Dustin studied the child in front of him and thought to himself. He’s really matured for someone his age.

Meanwhile, back in the office. “What’s happening?”

“I don’t know. Is Mr. Norton fighting with Mrs. Norton? Will they be getting a divorce?”

“Nonsense. They have a great relationship.”

A few colleagues were chattering away, and they were completely unaware that there was a silent figure behind them.

“Do you think Larry is being cheated on?”

In an instant, the air in the room stilled.

The figure behind them gradually moved to the front. It was none other than Larry, and his face was grim.

“Give it to me,” the man commanded.

The female colleague handed him the phone.

All of a sudden, a cold light flashed across Larry’s eyes.

On the screen of the phone, it was a poster of

Joan, Dustin, and Lucius. They looked like a family in the poster photo. Joan was smiling shyly at the camera, and Dustin had a big grin on his face.

Lucius looked the happiest among them.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2004

Bang! Larry slammed the phone down on the table and left.

All the staff looked at each other and fell silent.

Larry stood by the window and balled his fists so tightly that his nails were digging into the skin of his palms.

“Larry!” Caspian panted as he came rushing in without even knocking on the door.

“Joan...” Caspian hesitated as he didn’t quite know what to say.

What’s wrong with her? She’s happy! She looks happy when she’s with that man. Misery flitted across Larry’s eyes.

There was nothing between himself and Gabriella, so why won’t she believe him? In that instant, he felt so hurt that it felt like a stabbing pain in his heart.

There was only one woman he loved, and that was Joan. He had never touched another woman other than her, but she wouldn’t believe him. How could she get herself involved in a family poster shot with Dustin and Lucius?

What a joke! That’s the love of his life, the woman he loved for many years.

“She must have her reasons for doing that, Larry.

Let’s wait for her to return, and we’ll...”

“No,” Larry interrupted Caspian.

There’s no need for that.

Anyway, she went ahead with the family poster shot without having any consideration for his feelings.

There was nothing for her to explain. Besides, she looked happy on the family poster.

In that instant, deep sadness pasted on Caspian’s face.

Is their relationship coming to an end? Just like Nancy and myself.

He had been a witness since the start of Larry and Joan's romantic relationship. Like any other couple, they had gone through highs and lows, from quarreling to making up. But now, they were like strangers to each other.

Caspian let out a long sigh and left the office.

After pondering for a long time, he decided to give Joan a call.

Ring! Ring! Ring!

Joan glanced at her phone and saw that it was Caspian.

"When are you coming back, Joan?" Caspian asked anxiously.

"In a few days. I'm having a getaway trip with Lucius..." Joan explained.

But she had no idea that the poster had already been circulating in her homeland.

"I suggest you come home soon, Joan. About Larry and Gabriella, it's not what you think. But it's not that simple, either. I promise you, there's nothing between him and Gabriella," Caspian vowed confidently.

Joan hesitated for a while. Why is Caspian calling me? Shouldn't it be Larry calling me instead? Why Caspian? Is he avoiding me? Or is it because he has nothing to say to me?

Joan clenched her fists and snorted inwardly.

"Caspian, this is between Larry and me. You don't have to worry about it. Also, Larry is not feeling too well lately. So, please take care of him." After saying that, Joan hung up the phone.

She knows that Larry is not feeling too well, and she knows that Larry needs someone to care for him. So why isn't she here to take care of him herself? Why is she away and did the poster shoot with Dustin? How is Larry going to deal with these so-called rumors?

Caspian's brow knitted.

Ring! Ring! Ring!

Larry looked at his phone and ignored the incoming

call.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the phone, Gabriella's eyes narrowed into a steely glare. Why isn't he answering my call? Joan is no longer around, so what is he still busy with? It's obviously after work hours. Gabriella made another call to him.

Larry, who was annoyed by the constant ringing of his phone, turned off the phone and threw it on the sofa. Then, he rested his head on his arms at the table.

I'm sick and tired of all these.

He was not only physically tired, but he was also mentally drained to the brink of exhaustion.

Larry had never been so heartbroken until now. It only made matters worse when he saw the poster of Joan, Dustin, and Lucius together.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2005

Knock... Knock... Knock...

For a long time, the assistant knocked on Larry's door but didn't get any response.

"There's a meeting shortly, Mr. Norton. Do you want to reschedule?" the assistant asked carefully. She had seen his reaction when he overheard the chatterings of his employees earlier on. She knew that Larry would be feeling dejected, so she came into his office to check on him.

"Reschedule it. Cancel all of today's meetings," Larry said in a low voice as he rested his head on the table.

At that moment, his eyes were bloodshot and he looked haggard. The assistant started to worry.

"Larry, are you alright?" the assistant asked tentatively.

She had never seen him so disheartened before. Even when Norton Corporation was being acquired some time ago, he was never this despondent. But now...

He must really love Joan, too bad... The assistant's expression turned grim.

“Get me some flu medication.” Larry lifted his head up and said.

“Right away.” The assistant ran out of the office immediately.

“Lars!”

As soon as the assistant went out, the despicable woman came rushing in. Larry felt his head throbbing.

“Why are you here?” Larry asked coldly in a weak voice.

Why am I here? We’ll be getting married soon anyway, so we might as well lay some groundwork now. A scheming smile crept onto Gabriella’s lips.

“I’m here to check on you. You didn’t answer your phone when I called you, so I thought something must have happened to you,” Gabriella said as she slowly walked up to him and gave him her most charming smile.

But Larry was dreadfully turned off.

“I’m fine. You can leave now,” Larry replied straightforwardly.

Her absence was better than anything else.

“Lars, are you chasing me away? We’ll be living together soon anyway,” Gabriella snickered.

Who wants to live with a malicious woman like her?

“What’s wrong with you? Are you not feeling well? Come on, let’s go to the hospital.” Gabriella clung onto Larry and tugged him.

There was utter silence outside of his office.

“Don’t touch me. Get your filthy hands off me!” Larry roared.

Just then, Gabriella stared at the man before her in disbelief.

Damn him! Why is he still thinking about Joan?

How ridiculous of him to be this lovesick! That woman has eloped with another man.

I should be grateful to you, Joan. Gabriella stared at him with fierce eyes.

“Lars, have you seen the news today?” Gabriella deliberately asked in a low voice.

Larry glared at the woman before him, and he knew what she wanted to say.

“Get lost. You’ll be sorry if you show up in front of me again.” His outburst caused Gabriella to tremble, and she stumbled a few steps back.

“I’ll leave now, Lars. Call me if you need anything.”

With that, Gabriella rushed out of the office.

When she came out of his office, the employees quickly dispersed and went back to their seats. She could tell that they were discussing among themselves about Larry and herself again.

Nevertheless, Gabriella walked past them proudly with a haughty look on her face.

“What’s going on? Why is Gabriella getting so close to Mr. Norton recently?”

“I don’t know. But something doesn’t seem right. And Mrs. Norton hasn’t come to the office recently.”

“Gosh, it can’t be! Gabriella is the homewrecker?”

Just then, everyone was shocked to the core. The women went back to their seats with inconceivable expressions on their faces.

To them, this was a terrible conjuncture. From their point of view, Larry was a man with a successful career and a perfect gentleman. How could he possibly be involved with another woman, let alone someone like Gabriella?

“Mr. Norton!” The assistant rushed into his office with the medicine in hand.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2006

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2006

At that moment, Larry broke out in cold sweat. His worried assistant quickly retrieved a piece of tissue and wiped his forehead with it.

“Are you alright, Larry? Do you want to go to the hospital?” the assistant asked with genuine concern.

Larry had always been a strong person in her eyes, so she was clearly distressed when she saw that he had fallen seriously ill.

After all, Larry was an ordinary man too. His

assistant sighed while she poured him a glass of water. She had been working with him for so many years, so she naturally knew his temperament well. For Larry to become so weak, it had definitely got to do with Joan.

“From now on, don’t let Gabriella into my office. Send her away if she ever comes here again,” Larry snarled.

“Understood,” his assistant replied.

Meanwhile, Gabriella’s phone rang. Ring, ring, ring...

“How is it?” Gabriella squinted and looked out of the window.

“They’ll be back soon,” the man on the phone replied.

I’m not going to let her return so easily. Gabriella sneered.

“Fine. Make a move and show no mercy. I’ll transfer the money to you once it’s done,” With that, the vicious-looking Gabriella hung up.

Her last statement couldn’t be more obvious. The man watched as Joan and Lucius played not far away from him. A cold glint flashed across his eyes. What a woman! The man let out a sigh. Too bad she’s a victim to a cruel tyrant.

“Mom, I’m going to the washroom for a while. Wait here for me,” Lucius said loudly to Joan.

“Alright, be careful,” Joan replied.

At that time, Dustin was lying on a recliner as he watched both mother and son playing in front of him. He knew that Joan didn’t like it when others mistook them as a family. Therefore, he tried to keep his distance. He respected all of her decisions. Suddenly, his phone rang. Ring! Ring! Ring!

“Mr. Silverman, when are you coming back? Mr. Norton is not feeling well, and there are a few things that require your attention.” Larry’s assistant said softly into the phone, and there was a hint of anxiety in her tone.

He’s sick? Dustin suddenly frowned.

What does that have to do with me? Dustin quickly

resumed a composed expression.

Ever since he joined Norton Corporation, he was inspired to take over the entire Norton Corporation. He wanted to defeat Larry and to make him disappear once and for all.

Damn it! Dustin clenched his fists as he got up and walked to the side.

“I won’t have the time to deal with the things in office...”

Suddenly, he heard a woman’s piercing loud shriek. Dustin quickly turned around, but Joan was nowhere to be seen.

“Joan?” he called out tentatively.

However, there was no sign of her anywhere.

Oh crap!

Dustin ran around in circles, trying to search for her, but there was no trace of her at all.

“Where’s my Mom, Mr. Dustin?” Lucius, who just got back from the washroom, asked in confusion.

“She...” Dustin hesitated and stopped himself.

How am I going to tell him about Joan’s disappearance? He’s just a child. I can’t tell him that!

“Why don’t you go to the security room and wait, Lucius? Your mother and I need to deal with something, so it’s better for you to wait in the security room. Don’t talk to strangers and don’t follow them. Do you hear me?” Dustin said sternly to the child.

“What’s wrong, Mr. Dustin? Why do you look so worried? Why do I have to go to the security room? Where’s my mom?” the child asked.

“Come on, be a good boy. I’ll take you there. Just wait for us in the security room.”

After that, Dustin had a quick walk along the beach to look around, but he still couldn’t find Joan.

Damn it! Who’s behind this? A cold glint flashed across Dustin’s eyes.

“Excuse me, did you see a Chanaea woman with long hair around here?”

“Nope.”

“I haven’t seen her.”

“I don’t know.”

He was given disappointing answers whenever he questioned passersby. None of them had seen Joan. At that moment, Dustin was about to lose his mind.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2008

The assistant who had been standing aside quickly placed the documents back on the table, a cautious expression on his face. Larry glanced disdainfully at the woman before him and continued to work.

“Lars!” a woman outside the office screamed hysterically.

Larry had informed the receptionist that Gabriella was persona non grata. She was now blocking Gabriella from entering the office.

“Get out of my way! Don’t you know who I am? I’m Gabriella Ward!”

Gabriella landed a hard slap on the receptionist’s cheek.

The receptionist glared at her with rage burning in her eyes.

“Ms. Ward, Mr. Norton gave specific orders that you were not to enter his office. I didn’t tell you this so you could leave with your dignity intact, but you’ve left me with no choice. You should leave,” the receptionist stated coldly.

While she had but a handful of interactions with Gabriella, she could tell that Gabriella was an incredibly difficult person. She could also tell that Larry despised her very existence.

“Nonsense! That’s a load of crap! Lars wouldn’t stop me from entering his office. I’m going to be his wife, and I’m pregnant with his child!” Gabriella shouted.

All eyes turned to her at that moment.

“Is she crazy? Mr. Norton’s been married for ages.”

“Yea, how could she claim to be his fiancée? She’s delusional!”

“She’s definitely trying to sink her claws into Mr. Norton.”

A few women began gossiping about the commotion.

“I’m telling the truth! You’d do well to respect me, or I’ll screw all of you once I’m married to Larry!”

Gabriella pointed menacingly at the gossips.

“That’s creepy as hell. Let’s go!”

“If she really becomes Mrs. Norton, I’m going to quit!”

The gossips commented snidely.

Gabriella had always been a temperamental woman. Her emotions had become even more unstable since her pregnancy. She lost her temper easily and frequently.

Sometimes, Larry wondered if she might be mentally ill.

“I’m really Larry’s fiancée. The baby in my belly is-”

“Shut up!” A frosty bark reached Gabriella’s ears.

“Lars, you’re finally here! This lady wouldn’t let me in to see you.” Gabriella rushed towards Larry and clung to his elbow.

“Gabriella, what are you doing? I told them myself not to let you in. Do you have a problem with that?”

Larry glared at her., clenching his fists in annoyance.

Stupid man, why would he stop me from seeing him? Gabriella tried to rein in her emotions before she explained herself.

“Lars, I just wanted to see you. Are you still sick, or are you all better already?” She made a move to touch his forehead.

Larry ducked to avoid her hand.

“Why are you here to see me?” he asked indifferently.

What other reason could she have other than to latch on to me and torment me?

“We need to pick out a name for our baby.”

Gabriella rubbed her stomach slyly.

What a joke! Larry felt this patience running

thin. When is she going to stop her delusional act?

That kid's not even mine!

"I'm busy. You can pick a name yourself," he replied coldly and turned to leave.

"But Lars, it's always better if both parents come up with the name together." Gabriella pouted coyly.

"Then I advise you to find the baby's real father!"

He shrugged off her hand.

Gabriella froze in shock.

Does he know? A chilling gaze appeared in her eyes.

I've kept it under wraps for so long. How could he

find out? She clenched her fists while her eyes

burned with rage.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2009

I guess his suspicions aren't confirmed, or he

wouldn't allow me to stay here for this long!

"How's it going?" The fury in her eyes was palpable.

"I found her," the man on the other end of the

phone answered.

"I asked how things were going!" Gabriella shouted into the phone.

This b*tch! Yelling at me even though I'm the one

doing her dirty work. F*cking cold-blooded b*tch.

No wonder she can order someone to be killed so

frankly. He rubbed his jaw thoughtfully.

"We're on it. I just found the woman today, so I

should be able to get it done soon." He made up an

excuse to placate Gabriella.

I need to get the ransom before I get rid of Joan!

"Fine, get it done ASAP. I'll pay you double once

she's dead." Gabriella hung up without waiting for

his reply.

His gaze seemed to brighten as he became excited

at her promise.

So this woman's worth a pretty penny, eh? What a

rarity. He laughed coldly.

Search and rescue efforts for Joan were still

ongoing. Lucius was pacing in the security room.

"Mr. Dustin, where's Mom? Why isn't she here

yet?" Lucius looked at Dustin curiously.

Dustin was a bundle of nerves.

“Lucius, don’t worry. Everything’s fine. I’ll find your Mom. Don’t run around, ok?” Dustin addressed the boy before him earnestly.

He didn’t want anything to happen to either Lucius or Joan. If he lost the boy before Joan was found, there would be hell to pay.

“I want to find Mom too! She must have missed me,” Lucius walked out of the security room as he spoke.

“Wait, Lucius!” Dustin ran forward to block his path. How is he going to find his Mom when he’s just a kid?

“Lucius, I need you to stay here and behave, or your Mom will really be worried. Come here. Just wait in this room. I’ll look for your Mom with the cops.” Dustin carried him back into the security room.

They’d scoured almost every possible location they could think of: the beach, convenience stores, toilets, and hotels. There was still no trace of Joan. Dustin clenched his fists in anxiety.

The entry to the nearby lighthouse is also blocked, so she can’t be there either.

Should I tell Larry? Dustin hesitated.

No way, why should I tell him now, he’s going to divorce Joan! Dustin shook his head in an attempt to clear his mind.

Just then, Joan finally came to. She was sprawled on the floor.

She was surrounded by darkness. She couldn’t make out anything beyond the light streaming in from a window on the far wall.

That’s my only hope!

Joan got up slowly and fumbled her way to the window. The window was far too high, and she couldn’t reach it. She turned and moved along the wall.

“Ouch!” She almost tripped over something in the dark.

It was a metal rod with a hook on one end. Suddenly, Joan's lips curved up in a satisfied smile. This is my way out! She moved toward the window again.

"Stupid b*tch! I can't believe she took out her temper on me! F*ck, who does she think she is-"

The voice of an unfamiliar man drifted into the room. Without a hint of hesitation, Joan placed the rod on the floor and assumed her original position on the floor. She shut her eyes.

Bang! The door was kicked open forcefully.

"Hey, get up!" He slapped her.

She lay as still as she could and pretended to be unconscious.

"Damn it, get up!" This time, he kicked her.

Joan could only resist the pain so she wouldn't give away her act.

"F*ck, why is she unconscious? Useless woman. I haven't gotten my money yet!"

He left the room and slammed the door behind him.

Joan immediately opened her eyes and listened carefully for his movements.

Thankfully, he seemed to have left.

She waited for ten minutes to make sure that her kidnapper was truly gone. Steeling herself, she picked up the rod and hooked it on one of the thin slants on the window. This window only had two thin slants, with a narrow gap in between. Joan would never have thought of escaping through the windows if not for her slender frame.

"Ah!" She fell off the rod on her first attempt.

She fell off the rod countless times. Each failed attempt chipped at her already limited stamina.

She didn't know how many times she'd failed before she finally managed to get up to the window.

The window was really high. If she jumped from this height, she could fracture a good number of bones or even die. Yet lady luck seemed to be smiling upon her today. Instead of solid ground, there was a calm river before her.

Not too far from the river was her kidnapper. He appeared to be gloating while he was picking berries. Splash!

Joan jumped into the river before she could change her mind.

Her kidnapper turned around at the sound.

Perplexed, he surveyed his surroundings.

I swore I heard something just now. But why isn't there anyone here? He started swearing as he ate the berries he had picked.

"F*ck! Dumb jerks and their stupid pranks!"

Joan was swimming frantically toward the other side of the river at that very moment. She wanted to find Dustin and Lucius as soon as possible. She fainted from exhaustion just as she pulled herself onto the riverbank.

"Miss, wake up!" A man was shaking her by her elbows.

I'm really tired.

In the hospital, Joan lay on the bed with her eyes shut. She had been hooked up to an IV drip, and she looked utterly exhausted. It was raining cats and dogs outside the hospital, with frequent flashes of lightning and thunder.

"What a poor woman. She's covered in injuries," the nurse sighed, shaking her head at Joan's state.

"Maybe she was abused."

A few curious onlookers had gathered in front of her bed to speculate on her condition, though they didn't linger for long.

"I need a family member to sign off on this!" the doctor shouted.

No one came forward. The people crowding Joan's bed were all strangers.

"Or whoever brought her to the hospital?" The doctor sounded somewhat displeased.

Joan opened her eyes at the loud and unfamiliar sounds. In her hazy state, she tried to figure out if she had escaped successfully.

"Where am I?" she croaked weakly.

“Don’t worry. You’re at the hospital,” a woman comforted her while she stroked Joan’s hair.

What a poor woman!

Meanwhile, Gabriella was enjoying her coffee on the sofa in her living room. She flipped through a magazine with her right hand.

Suddenly, the cup slipped from her grasp.

Damn it! What’s wrong with me today? I almost fell down when I got off the bed, and then I choked at lunch. I can’t even enjoy a cup of coffee in peace.

Ring! Ring!

She immediately answered her phone when she saw the caller ID.

“What did you say? She ran away? What did I hire you for, then? Go find her! You better find that damn woman even if you need to dig her out from her grave!”

It was the fourteenth of September. Dustin was waiting patiently at Joan’s bedside. “Joan, wake up.”

“Larry,” she mumbled in her sleep.

Dustin’s gaze dimmed at her words.

“Mom, why won’t you wake up?” Lucius shook Joan’s elbows gently.

Still, there was no reaction from her.

“Dr. Silverman, that was so careless of you. How could you let her jump from such a height? Do you know how dangerous that is?” one of the nurses chided.

Luckily some of the staff in this hospital knew Dustin or he would still be looking in circles for Joan.

“How is she? Anything serious?” he asked urgently.

“She suffered a lot of injuries. It’ll take time to heal,” the nurse answered.

Dustin tightened his grip on Joan’s hands. His heart ached at her condition.

Suddenly, Lucius left the ward and headed for the reception. Dustin didn’t realize that Lucius had left the room. All his attention was on Joan.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2011

"Dad, Mom's injured. Come quickly!" Lucius shouted anxiously.

"What? Where is she? How is she?" Larry hurriedly asked.

He thought with Dustin by her side, he would not need to worry about her. However, he had been proven wrong; she was in the hospital.

"Don't worry, Lucius. I'll be right there." With that said, the man rushed out of the office.

Unbeknownst to him, Gabriella was waiting for him right outside his office.

"Lars!" shouted Gabriella the moment she saw him.

"Stop following me," the man snapped.

She knew where the man was going and what he was going to do. Nevertheless, that did not mean that she was going to admit defeat.

Why does Joan get to have his love? Why can that b*tch get his attention?

"Ouch! Lars!" The woman abruptly clutched her stomach as she sprawled on the ground, seemingly in immense pain.

When Larry turned to look at her, he realized there was a puddle of blood under her. Several coworkers who saw the scene were startled.

"Lars, send me to the hospital quickly!" Gabriella reached out toward the man.

Damn it.

Larry could not pretend not to have seen it, so he ran over to lift her into his arms before heading toward his car.

"Lars," Gabriella mumbled with closed eyes.

All of a sudden, the colors on her face drained, and she looked exhausted. When the man saw the state she was in, he was dumbfounded.

Why is she suddenly in this way? Wasn't she fine a moment ago? A grim look crept upon Larry's face.

"Doctor, please take a look at her." Larry carried her into the hospital.

"My God, what kind of husband are you? The

pregnant lady's already in this state. I can't believe a man like you exists in this world."

"She's right. Look at her. She's in agony!"

"Hear, hear. If the man was more attentive, there's no way she'll be in this state. What a douchebag."

The few patients aside were chattering away. However, they were all actors that Gabriella had hired for the day. She had guessed that Larry would leave the country to look for Joan, so she had been waiting for him outside his office, aiming to stop him.

Joan, Joan. Let's see if Larry's more concerned about you or me. With that thought in mind, Gabriella narrowed her eyes as she clenched her fists.

"Ms. Ward, are you okay?" the doctor asked with a smile.

"I'm fine. Doctor, thanks for your help. The baby in me should be fine, right?" the woman worriedly asked as she rubbed her belly.

Everything was just a show that Gabriella had orchestrated. The poor Larry was still fooled; he was still pacing outside the ward nervously.

No matter how capable a man was, it was impossible for him to master everything. In that case, Larry did not know much about pregnancies.

"Ms. Ward, you can't do this anymore. It's very dangerous. I can lend you a helping hand this time, but next time..." the doctor trailed off.

Gabriella knew that the doctor was already going against medical ethics just by helping her. However, she had no choice. For Larry, she would do everything.

"Also, I have to remind you to take care of your emotions. You can't agitate yourself too often and don't ever do this again. Otherwise, you might really lose the baby in your stomach," the doctor said solemnly to her.

If you're pregnant, you should take care of yourself

and rest more while waiting for the baby to be born. I really don't know why she's tormenting herself and her baby. The doctor sighed.

It's fine. My dear baby, I'm sorry to make life difficult for you. Gabriella gently caressed her stomach as an apologetic look flashed past her face. The baby was nothing but a rope to bind her with Larry. If the man still left her, there was no point to keep the rope around.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2012

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2012

After a long while, the doctor finally came back out.

"What's wrong? Doctor, is she fine?" Larry murmured.

The doctor heaved a long sigh before shaking her head.

"It's best that you take good care of her. She's having severe mood fluctuations, and that affects the baby in her. You should spend more time consoling her. After all, that's a human in her." As the doctor spoke, she somberly stared at the man in front of her.

The doctor knew everything was just an act from Gabriella, but what she said was true as well. Gabriella had been having mood fluctuations the past few days, and she was easily agitated. It was impossible that the baby was not affected by Gabriella's mental state.

"All right, she'll be staying in the hospital for the next few days. You should take care of her. It's not easy for a woman to give birth to a child, so I hope you'll be able to protect her well." With that said, the doctor gently patted his shoulders.

But what about Joan? Misery flitted across Larry's eyes.

After a while, the man opened the door and walked toward her bedside.

By then, Gabriella was already asleep. Perhaps the words from the doctors upset her, so she had

chosen sleep to forget about those words.

Ding, ding, ding.

After a brief glance at the phone, Larry picked the phone up. Caspian's voice traveled out of the speakers. "Larry, I've booked the ticket for the flight."

"Caspian..." Larry mumbled.

A second later, he continued, "Find a good helper to take care of Gabriella in the hospital."

He did not know it, but Gabriella heard his words.

That wench Joan is still in his heart! Gabriella could not help but gripped the bedsheets as she ground her teeth.

"Lars, don't go. Don't leave me," came Gabriella's fake mumbles as she tossed and turned in her supposed sleep.

A nurse, who knew nothing about the situation, questioned, "Hey, what are you doing? Can't you hear that the patient's calling for you? Why are you still on the phone instead of consoling her?"

"Lars, don't go. Please. I'm so scared. I'm so scared if anything happens to the baby. What if I die?"

Gabriella continued mumbling with tears streaming down her face.

Larry only quietly stared at her, slightly suspicious.

Generally, he would not believe in any of her words.

However, the sight of her bleeding in front of the office had shocked him to his core earlier.

"I've found a helper. She'll be here soon," the man replied.

"I don't want a helper. Lars, I just want you. Don't go. Stay with me, please." The woman had a tight grip on his arm, and in her eyes was a pleading look.

"What kind of man is he? I can't believe he's trying to leave even when his wife is in this state. How irresponsible."

That's right. He's clearly a scumbag. What kind of husband would leave his wife in the hospital alone?"

"I'd say she must have been blind to find a man like him as her husband."

The surrounding patient returned to their loud gossips. Meanwhile, when Gabriella heard them, glee surged in her chest.

It seems like the money I've used to hire these actors hasn't gone to waste. At the same time, a smug smile grew on the woman's lips.

She wanted to find out what the man would choose. Is he going to look for Joan overseas and have his reputation ruined, or will he stay here and take care of me until I'm discharged?

"Gabriella, don't be unreasonable. I have matters to settle. Since I've already found a helper to take care of you, I'll be leaving now." With that said, Larry stood up, about to leave.

He was sick of hearing those things. Ever since he stepped into the hospital, he had been hearing the surrounding people gossip about him. In fact, he was starting to wonder if those people were doing it on purpose.

"Lars, you can't leave. What should I do if you're gone?" Gabriella gazed at him, misery written all over her face.

However, all Larry could think at that moment was Joan. He had yet to find out what happened to her. Whether she was hurt, or if she had woken up.

Larry frowned, his hands clenching into fists.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2013

"I'll come back in a few days." Then, the man pried her off.

Damn you, Larry. How can you be so concerned for that witch? You don't even care about me!

"Ah!"

All of a sudden, Gabriella fell off the bed.

Everyone in the room froze.

Then, the woman moaned in agony as she held her stomach.

"What's wrong with you? Your wife is already in pain. Where are you trying to go?"

"She's right. That baby in her is yours. How can you abandon her so ruthlessly?"

“Is that man having an affair?”

That question causes an uproar in the room, and everyone started whispering to each other about the possibility of his affair.

Ignoring then, Larry hurriedly walked over to carry Gabriella back up on the bed before tucking her in.

“What are you trying to do?” He glared at her.

It had been a long while, and he finally knew what kind of woman she was. Everything was just part of her act.

Damn it. I never thought you’d be as vicious as this, Gabriella. I can’t believe you’d risk the life of that baby in you. Larry’s scowl deepened.

“What are you talking about, Lars? I only want you to accompany me for a little longer. I was trying to send you off earlier, but I didn’t think that... Ugh.”

Gabriella suddenly grabbed her stomach and scrunched up her face.

Once again, the nurse walked over and commented, “You’re her husband; you shouldn’t do this. This is a crucial time of her pregnancy, so you should just heed her words.”

Who’s her husband? Larry shot a glare at the nurse.

“I’m not her husband,” he gritted out.

However, the surrounding people were not surprised at his reply.

Before coming to the hospital, Gabriella had already told them about the situation—if she managed to get Larry to become her husband, she would give them even more money. That was why those people were so dedicated to the act.

“If you’re not her husband, then why did you impregnate her? Now that she has a baby, you should bear the responsibility,” the nurse hissed.

At that moment, a sinister glint flashed in the eyes of the woman on the bed.

Larry, you’d never guess that these are all my people, would you? The smugness in Gabriella’s eyes grew.

Delilah was busying herself by tending to the garden. It seemed like she was in a good mood, but there was a hint of sadness in her eyes. It's been some time since I've seen Joan and Lucius.

Ding, ding, ding.

Delilah hurriedly picked up her phone after briefly looking at it.

"What? Your mother's hurt? When did that happen?" the woman questioned.

Lucius called her because he wanted to find out why Larry had yet to visit Joan.

It had been two days since he called Larry. As a child, he was naturally anxious about how his father had yet to visit his mother.

"You mean, you called your father, but he hasn't come to visit yet?" Delilah suspiciously asked.

"Grandma, can you please find out what happened to Dad? Mom even calls for him in her sleep," Lucius muttered, feeling distressed.

A few minutes of chatting later, Delilah ended the call and left the garden.

"I'm sorry, Mrs. Young. Mr. Norton is currently not in his office," the receptionist politely answered.

Where would he be? She frowned. Why is Larry dilly-dallying all of sudden? He used to prioritize Joan's matters in the past. Why is he...

"When will he be back, then?" Delilah asked.

"Mrs. Young, is there something urgent? Is that why you're looking for Mr. Norton? If my guess isn't wrong, he should still be in the hospital," the receptionist offered with a small smile.

Delilah was not a stranger, and that was why the receptionist was willing to tell her about Larry's whereabouts.

Hearing the reply, the older woman instantly hailed a cab to head to the hospital.

Why is he in the hospital? Is he sick?

In the meantime, Larry was standing by the windowsill, staring out of the window with dull eyes.

Behind him, Gabriella seemed carefree. That's

right. I'm stopping you from going overseas. I'm going to keep you here! The grin on her face grew wider.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2014

"Hello, is there a patient named Larry Norton here?" Delilah asked.

"No, but we do have a man named Larry Norton who's a family member of a patient here," the nurse answered.

A sense of dread came upon Delilah when she heard the nurse's words.

Ding, ding, ding.

Larry picked up the call.

"Ms. Young."

The two words caught Gabriella's attention.

"Where are you now?" came Delilah's question.

"I..." Larry hesitated.

"Come outside. I have something to talk to you about." With that said, she ended the call.

At the start, she thought the receptionist's words had been untrue. However, the moment she entered the hospital and asked the nurse about his whereabouts, she realized the receptionist had been speaking the truth.

"Larry, do you know where Joan is at and what's she doing right now?" Delilah fixed her cold gaze at him.

Of course, Larry knew, but there was nothing he could do about it. What if something actually happens to Gabriella when I leave? She's already in such a terrible state.

"Ms. Young, don't be anxious. After these two days, I'll definitely go overseas and visit Joan," Larry explained.

However, Delilah only walked closer to the man, her eyes filled with disdain for him. That was the first time she was disgusted with a man, and that was the first time she felt as apathetic toward Larry.

"What are you doing here? Keeping Gabriella company?" Delilah gritted out.

She could not figure out what this man was thinking about. Joan was his wife, yet the one he was concerned about was another woman.

After a long silence, Delilah sighed and walked away.

Staring at her retreating figure, Larry's eyes dulled.

"Lars!" Gabriella suddenly shouted.

She knew who had come to look for him, and she was not surprised about that woman's arrival.

Dear Joan, you'll never win, Gabriella thought as a cruel look entered her eyes.

"Doctor, how is she? When will she be able to leave the hospital?" Larry asked.

"Ms. Ward still needs some time to recuperate, so she might need to stay in the hospital for a while longer," the doctor said. Then, she added, "She's pregnant, so she should stay happy. Otherwise, it might affect the baby in her."

Ugh! Why does she have so many problems? The man gritted his teeth.

"Gabriella, I still have some matters to attend to, so I'm going to leave now. Take care of yourself."

At that, Larry turned to leave.

"What are you going to do, Lars?" She looked at him with woeful eyes.

What else am I going to do? I haven't visited Joan even though something major happened to her.

Instead, I'm here, accompanying you.

"There are some things I have to attend to in the company," the man responded.

Just work? Gabriella was suspicious of his answer. However, it was true that he had not gone to the office for days.

"Larry, then when are you going to come back?"

Gabriella queried as she fluttered her lashes.

Why should I come back? Should I come back to look at your ugly face? If not for you threatening me with death, why would I even be here? I must have committed some heinous act in my previous life

to have met someone like her in this.

“It depends. There are quite a lot of things I have to deal with in the office,” Larry drawled.

What project can be so important to him? Gabriella blinked, and a thought entered her mind.

Taking out her phone, she then sent out a text. The reply she had gotten affirmed Larry’s words—the Norton Corporation had been busy lately, and there was no one around to manage the company.

“All right, then. Lars, after you’re done with your work, you have to come back here, okay?” Gabriella crooned.

However, that only served to disgust Larry even more.

I have to find out who’s the father of that child. I can’t possibly be the scapegoat of this incident. The only one I’ll ever love is Joan.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2015

Taking out his phone, the man then made a call.

Ding, ding, ding.

The phone on the table continued to ring. Joan was lying on the bed as she watched the scenery outside. She had not heard her phone at all.

“Mom, your phone is ringing!” Lucius informed her loudly.

“Oh. Turn it off. I’m tired, and I don’t feel like picking up the phone,” Joan murmured.

When Lucius glanced at the screen, he hesitated. In the end, he took the phone and went out of the room. Joan’s face was still turned toward the window, so she did not notice Lucius’ action.

“Hello? Dad, when are you going to come? Even Grandma came,” the boy hastily asked.

“Listen to me, Lucius. Dad has a lot of things to do recently, but I’ll be able to come to you by today. Is your mother fine? How is she now? Did she eat regularly?” Larry worriedly inquired.

“Don’t worry, Dad. Mom’s awake and fine. She’s just a little tired,” Lucius explained.

Meanwhile, Joan, who was still in the ward, was

tearing up.

Even Delilah's here, but Larry isn't. It looks like he really doesn't want me anymore. She balled her hands into fists as she hung her head.

We used to be so close and sweet with each other. Why did things turn out this way? Melancholy flickered across her eyes.

"Dad, I think you've crossed the line. Mom's already in the hospital for days, but there aren't any signs of you. When she sleeps, she calls for you. Mom really misses you," Lucius quietly said.

Instantly, upset swarmed into Larry's heart.

I miss her too. From the moment she left the country until now. I dream of her every night I sleep. But whenever I think of how she's with Dustin, and whenever I think of the poster they took together, I feel miserable.

"I understand. I have a morning flight, so I'll be able to reach your place in the afternoon. Don't worry, Lucius. Do take care of Mom, okay?"

After a brief while of chatting, they then hung up the call.

Meanwhile, Delilah had been standing in the corner, listening to the boy's call. She could only sigh.

After collecting herself, she then stepped into the ward.

It had been days, but not once did Joan mention Larry's name. Similarly, Delilah herself dared not mention him.

I'll leave the matter of the marriage to them. After all, I should let the young couple solve the problem themselves.

"Grandma, what's the matter? Are you tired? I keep hearing you sigh recently," Lucius wondered.

I am tired. Joan's hospitalized, but Larry is nowhere to be found. How can I not feel worried? In fact, Delilah was sorrowful.

"Mom, Dad will be here soon," the boy abruptly voiced.

At that very moment, Joan's eyes lit up.

“Lucius, when did you call him? Dad’s busy, so you shouldn’t be calling him,” Joan gravely uttered.

“Mom, what’s the matter? You used to hope that Dad would be by your side when you were sick,” the boy muttered curiously.

That was back then. It’s different now.

It’s nearly the end of our marriage, but what can I do about it? At the end of the day, the baby in Gabriella’s stomach is his. That’s a fact. If we can continue to live as we used to, why would I ever choose to divorce him?

In the afternoon on the fifteenth of September, Larry arrived.

“Joan, how are you? Are you okay? Are you hurt?”

Larry anxiously touched her head.

Joan only sneered in response. Why is he here? Is he here to watch me make a fool of myself?

“Why are you here? Don’t you have someone who needs you more back in the country?” Joan hissed.

He’s only here after days. That means Gabriella must have been in the way. Gabriella was a woman who was vicious and cruel. As long as she wanted to get something, she would do anything to get it.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2017

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2017

The boy knew the changes in Joan and Larry’s relationship. Lucius was a brilliant boy; there was no way he could not guess that they were fighting.

In fact, he knew that there was a chance they might be separated in the near future.

Nevertheless, Dustin was still by her side. At least he takes care of Mom, Lucius thought with a smile.

“What are you talking about? He must be sleep talking,” Joan quickly clarified.

Right then, Larry appeared by the doorway with breakfast in his hands.

“Joan.”

When he took in the scene, he stiffened, feeling awkward. “You’re already eating.”

“Lucius, you haven’t had your food, right? Here. Dad bought you

breakfast,” he said instead.

Slowly turning around to walk to Larry, the boy cast Larry a look of disdain.

“Why is Mr. Dustin doing the things Dad should be doing?” the boy intentionally asked loudly.

Larry froze, but he soon recollected himself.

“Lucius, maybe I’ve been too busy lately, and that’s why I’ve been neglecting you and your mother’s feelings. However, I’m free now,”

Larry

explained as he gently patted the boy’s head.

But it’s too late now! Lucius thought furiously, unhappy with Larry’s slow actions.

“What’s wrong?” Delilah softly asked Lucius.

“Grandma, Dad isn’t doing his job well. Can we get rid of him?” Lucius blurted out.

Oh no. How can the boy say such senseless words? Joan flew into a panic.

Like her, Delilah was equally dumbfounded. In the beginning, the boy kept

calling Joan Mom. Later, when Larry found Joan, and she returned to his side, the boy began calling him Dad. But now...

What do I do?

At that moment, delight emerged in Joan’s eyes.

Lucius mentioned it himself. If we really divorce, he won’t feel as hurt then.

For Lucius, all he wanted to do was make sure that Joan was happy. I’ll respect whatever decision Mom makes, as long as it makes her happy.

“Time for breakfast. I’ve bought a lot, so let’s share,” Delilah quickly voiced.

“Time for breakfast!” Lucius cheered.

After all, he was just a child.

As days went by, Joan slowly recovered. Her returning health also lifted the spirits of the others.

“Let’s go back, Mom,” Lucius suddenly said.

Almost immediately, gloom veiled Joan’s face. If she could, she would stay

here forever, never to return.

“Joan, how do you feel now? Do you feel better?” Delilah inquired.

Instead of answering her verbally, Joan nodded.

Other than Larry, everybody was in the ward. Larry knew Joan did not

want to see him. In fact, he knew she hated him.
After a brief discussion, the few decided to return immediately.
When they had come down from the plane, Joan swayed, still feeling weak. Dustin, who was by her side, was unsure if he should help her, and it was a sentiment Larry shared with him. Fortunately, Delilah was right beside them, and she swiftly stepped forward toward the younger woman.

“Sorry to trouble you, Ms. Young,” Joan whispered.

“Hush now, silly girl. Why are you still saying such things at a time like this?” Delilah replied.

“Lars!” A familiar voice came from a distance away.

Crap. Why is she here? Larry scowled. How did she know I’m at the airport?

Joan slowly turned around to see a pregnant woman running toward Larry.

“Lars, why are so slow in coming back? I missed you so much!” Gabriella threw herself right into his arms.

At that moment, Larry was staring at Joan. He opened his mouth, about to

say something, but ended up closing it again.

What a joke. He said he has nothing to do with her. He’s nothing but a liar.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2018

Men are all good-for-nothings. Joan gritted her teeth as she narrowed her eyes at them.

She hated liars the most, and that included Larry, who had kept his relationship with Gabriella a secret from her.

“Stop messing around. Why are you here?” Larry growled.

“My, Lars. Of course I’m here to pick you up,” Gabriella beamed.

At that very moment, there was only one thought in Larry’s mind. Who the

f*ck told this b*tch I’m at the airport?

“Lars, you left in such a rush back then. I couldn’t even come with you. If I

knew you left for a vacation, I’d have come with you. It’s only a great trip when both of us are together.” At that, Gabriella then hooked her arm around his.

“Absence really makes the heart grow fonder, huh?” Dustin commented.

Hearing him, Larry rolled his eyes at the other man. What is he trying to say? Please. I don't have anything to do with her.

"Lars, quick, tell me where you've been and what you've done? Was it fun?"

What a clingy rat. Larry looked at the woman in front of him in disgust. Meanwhile, Joan was eavesdropping on their conversation, hoping to glean some information. However, their conversation seemed like a normal conversation between a couple.

How can Larry say he doesn't love her? But why is he still continuing the talk with her? He knows she has set me up multiple times in the past. Are they really in love? Is Larry only denying it? Joan averted her eyes away from them.

"All right, don't dwell on it. We'll think of what to do when the time comes, okay?" Delilah gently patted her shoulders in consolation.

She's right, Joan thought. I should be happier.

The group of people then went to Delilah's place.

"Thank you very much for your concern for Joan, but I'd have to apologize;

our place is a tad bit small, so all of us won't be able to have dinner here together. So, please take your leave." Delilah uttered.

It was simple to understand what she was trying to say. Out of everyone who was there, Gabriella was the only one who was unwelcomed in that house. Joan sneered.

Although Delilah did not quite like Dustin in the past, she slowly warmed up to him after finding out that Dustin had genuine feelings for Joan, and he was not inferior to Larry.

What a pity. Delilah shook her head and sighed.

Reality had defeated a perfect pair.

Meanwhile, it was as if Gabriella had heard nothing. Her arms remained firmly hooked around Larry's arm as she glanced around. It was as though

Delilah was not talking about her.

"Miss, we don't have that much food at home, and I'm sure you've realized it by now. We're from the village, so we don't earn that much.

We

can't afford lavish food, so it's best that you head to a high-end restaurant

for your dinner," Lucius said after darting toward Gabriella.

What? Is a kid trying to chase me away? Gabriella raised a suspicious brow at the boy.

Where did this stupid kid come from? How dare he speak to me with that tone? Gabriella scowled.

“Miss, you have a baby in you, so you should be taking good care of your emotions and what you eat,” Lucius continued. Then, he flashed her a sweet smile.

Right then, Dustin gave the boy a thumbs-up. Smart boy.

“Dustin, let’s leave. Look, the place is too small for the two of us. Let’s take our leave,” Gabriella voiced.

“Mr. Dustin, it’s fine. You don’t need to leave. If you don’t mind, we can squeeze a little around the dining table. But that’s all we can fit,” Lucius added.

When did this boy become as witty as this? Satisfied, Delilah patted his head.

“My, Joan. Is this your son? So he’s the kid you’ve raised. No wonder he has no manners,” Gabriella berated as she pointed at Lucius.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2019

So what? He’s still my son. Who should he be biased toward if not me? You? The outsider? Joan nearly rolled her eyes at Gabriella.

“Let’s go, Lucius. It’s time for us to change.” With that said, Joan grabbed the boy’s hand and headed toward the bedroom.

“Ms. Ward, if you think that our child is rude, then feel free to go to another place with a more polite child. You shouldn’t waste your time here,” Delilah frigidly said.

She would not let anyone insult her family, not even when the boy was not biologically related to her.

“I...” Gabriella fell silent.

Fine! I’ll leave. A cold look flickered past her face.

“Lars, let’s go. They don’t welcome us here,” Gabriella said as she shook his arm.

“Larry, didn’t you say you want to visit the garden? The flowers are blooming now, so you should take a look at them,” Delilah interrupted.

Gabriella was the only one she wanted to get rid of; she still wanted Larry to stick around.

“Okay, Ms. Young. I’m going to take a look now.” Larry swung off Gabriella’s arm and walked out of the house.

Damn it. These pieces of trash must have a death wish to do this to

me. Who do you think you are? As Gabriella glared at Delilah's house, a thought popped into her mind.

"Hey, there's something you're going to do. Remember, you have to be in

disguise when you're doing this," Gabriella coldly instructed.

Huh? What is she up to this time? On the other end of the line, the man listened to the woman's instruction despite feeling perplexed.

Whatever. I'll do anything for money.

"How would you like me to do it?" the man queried.

"I want you to give your all," Gabriella replied.

What? I'm not hearing things, am I? That'll be murder! Maybe I should reconsider this.

"Miss, I can't do that. You should know that although I'd do most things, there's a line I won't cross. Moreover, the prices vary."

Damn man. Just cut the crap and tell me if what you want is money.

Neither of us is an idiot, so who are you trying to fool? Fury was burning bright in Gabriella's chest.

"Three times the original amount. Don't worry. I'll make sure your money

won't go to waste."

"Deal," came the swift response.

Gabriella then ended the call. A malicious grin grew on her lips as she wondered, How will Joan deal with this?

If a love-struck man would love the others around the one he loved, then a

woman in anger would not let the ones around her enemy off. Gabriella, the ruthless woman she was, was one of them.

"Grandma, where are you going? It's raining outside. Don't go out."

Lucius

tugged Delilah's arm.

The elderly woman crouched down to pat his head and smile at him.

"I want to go to the garden to take a look at the flowers," she explained.

She adored those flowers, and she had poured much effort into growing them. Naturally, she would want to take care of them.

"Ms. Young, it's raining really heavily outside. Why don't you stay in today

and go out to see them tomorrow instead?" Joan suggested anxiously.

"Don't worry. It's really close. You should rest up at home and spend more

time with the boy. I'll be right back. It's fine." Delilah gently patted her

shoulders.

Yet, for reasons unbeknownst to her, there was a foreboding sense in Joan's heart as she stared at Delilah's departing figure.

"Mom, why am I suddenly feeling worried about Grandma? I've never felt

this way before now," Lucius suddenly said.

He's feeling the same too?

No. I must be overthinking things. How can anything happen to Ms.

Young? She's only taking a look at the flowers in the garden.

"Come on, Lucius. Mom's going to play some games with you, okay?"

Joan

flashed the boy a reassuring smile.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2020

"Mom, can you really play games with me? Have you recovered? I'm scared that you'll be tired," Lucius quietly muttered.

His words moved her. He's such a sensible boy. It doesn't matter if I get tired. For him, I'm willing to.

"Oh my dear flowers, this must be a tough day for you," Delilah muttered

under her breath when she reached the garden.

She had forgotten to move some of her plants into the room, so those were all soaked by now. Thus, Delilah quickly got to work. As she was

too

busy, she did not remember that her door was still unlocked.

Bang!

What's that noise? Delilah wondered. However, she saw no one around when she raised her head.

That's strange. I clearly heard something earlier. Could it be Joan?

"Joan?" Delilah called out.

Silence.

Forget it. I must have been hallucinating just now. Delilah returned to her

work.

"Ah!" All of a sudden, a figure darted past her and punched the back of her head. Delilah passed out.

"Mom, why isn't Grandma back yet? She's usually back by now," Lucius mumbled.

He's right. She only went to the garden to move some pots. She wouldn't

need such a long time. Joan furrowed her brows. Could something have

happened to her when she was on the way there? Worry overtaking her mind, she quickly took out her phone and called Delilah.

“Sorry, the number you have dialed is unavailable.”

What’s going on? Why can’t I get through to her? Where did she go? Joan’s frown deepened.

Ding, ding, ding.

When Dustin saw the name on the screen, he was excited.

“Hello, Joan. What’s up?” he eagerly asked.

“Ms. Young went out earlier to the garden, but she hasn’t come back yet,”

Joan nervously said to him.

“What? It’s almost a day since she went out? I got it. Stay calm. I’ll be right over. Also, stay at home and don’t come out. You haven’t fully recovered yet.” With that said, Dustin ended the call and rushed to the garden with an umbrella in his hands.

Indeed, the door to the garden was wide open.

“Ms. Young, are you in there?” Dustin shouted, but no one replied to him.

Boom! came the deafening sound of thunder, and the man by the doorway shuddered.

“Ms. Young, it’s time for dinner,” Dustin continued shouting.

Yet, there were still no responses. At that moment, he panicked and ran into the greenhouse.

No one was around, but the pots by the corner were wet. That should be Ms. Young’s doing, but where is she? She’s gone.

Dustin spent a long while shouting in the garden, but still, he could not find Delilah.

“Hello? Joan, are you sure Ms. Young went to the garden? I don’t see anyone here.”

“I’m very sure. She even told us before she left that she’d be back soon, but she’s still not home,” Joan quickly said.

At that moment, a grim look crept upon Dustin’s face.

That means something happened to her. That must be it.

“All right, don’t worry. I’ll look for her right away. Stay at home and don’t

come out, okay? Take care of the boy.” Dustin ended the call.

Joan was hurt, and now, Ms. Young is missing. I refuse to believe that there isn’t any connection between these two events. Who is behind this? Why are they so persistent in this? Dustin clenched his fists as his eyes burned with rage.

Could it be Gabriella? But why would she do this to an elderly woman?

“Larry, Ms. Young’s missing,” Dustin snarled.

This must have something to do with him.

“What? Where did she go missing?” Shocked, Larry jumped to his feet.

Meanwhile, in the living room, Gabriella was rubbing her stomach, carefree as she watched the television.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2021

“What happened?” Larry hissed.

What else happened? If not for you having an affair, why would all these things happen? You betrayed Joan, but you won’t even divorce her.

“Joan told me Ms. Young was in the garden earlier, but it’s been almost a

day since then. She hasn’t come back. When I went to the garden, Ms. Young is nowhere to be found,” Dustin explained.

What? Ms. Young keeps a low profile, and she’s nice. If it’s nothing major,

she wouldn’t bother herself with it. Why is she missing?

“Have you call the cops?”

“I did, but they can’t find her either,” Dustin responded. Then, Dustin watched the other man’s reaction carefully.

With the way he’s panicking, it seems like he hasn’t come to the conclusion that Gabriella is the one behind this. But I’m not sure if my guess is right.

“Larry,” Dustin said after a moment of silence.

Larry slowly turned around to look at the other man gravely.

“Say, do you think it’s possible that Gabriella did this?” Dustin carefully suggested.

He wanted to see what reaction this man would have upon hearing those

words. Is he really biased toward her after she became pregnant? At that

thought, Dustin sneered.

“Why would she kidnap Ms. Young?” Larry threw a perplexed look at the man.

Is he kidding me? Has he not realize what kind of person Gabriella is after

so long? She’s a woman who’ll take revenge on whoever wrongs her. Ms.

Young chased her out of the house yesterday, so how can she not be angry

about that? What a joke!

"To her, everyone around Joan, excluding you, are her enemies. Isn't that

right?" Dustin voiced as he strode toward Larry.

He's right. Gabriella's not someone who's easy to deal with.

In the room, Delilah was yelling, "What are you trying to do? Who are you?"

The man sneered as a dark look crawled onto his face.

"The one who's going to kill you."

Hearing that, a cold glint flashed past Delilah's eyes.

I don't know who he is, so why is he trying to kill me? The elderly woman's

curiosity was piqued as she gave the man a once-over.

Since neither of us has crossed paths with each other, why are you trying to kill me?

"I'm not the one who bears a grudge against you. Don't you know who you've crossed?" The man was chewing on a piece of gum as he shot her a

glare.

In response, Delilah lowered her head and tried her best to figure out what

happened.

She had been living in the village for many years, and she had always been

nothing but helpful. The villagers all liked and respected her, so she could

not think of someone who would wish to kill her. Although the villagers rarely strayed far from their homes, they knew about the dangers of the world outside the village. Therefore, they cherished their

friendships. There's no way they would do something as horrible and shameless as this.

No. It can't be them.

"Who told you to come after me? Even if I die, I want to die knowing who

did this to me," Delilah gritted out.

What use is it for you to know that? The man slapped her hard.

"Keep dreaming. If you can't figure it out yourself, you can keep up with the guessing in hell," the man rejected immediately.

How cruel. Delilah tensed as she kept her gaze on the man.

I've been hiding this for years. Am I going to reveal it today? She tensed

her jaw.

When she was younger, to protect herself, she had practiced all forms of martial arts. As she hailed from a wealthy family, she had been in various types of training classes and competitions. It was only fate that had brought her to the village.

Delilah tried to conceal every part of her past life, hoping that she could start anew. Thus, it had been a long while since she had combated someone else. So what if I'm old now? Am I an easy target just because I'm old? Delilah scoffed as she rolled her shoulders.

Then, she yelled, "Hey, I want to go back!"

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2022

Hearing her shout, the man spun around to glance at her suspiciously.

Has

this old wench lost her mind?

"What? Do you want to go home? Which home? The home in hell?"

Right

then, the man burst out laughing.

He's too much! Delilah ambled toward the man, her eyes fixed on him the

entire time.

"I've given you a chance. Let me out. This will be the last time I'll say this.

Otherwise, don't blame me for showing you no mercy," Delilah whispered.

What can she do? She's got one foot in the grave. I can't believe she's threatening me now. She's better off reminiscing about her sweet past with the time she has left. The man shook his head and sighed.

"Ten minutes. That's all the time I'm giving you. You can tell me whatever

last words you have, especially about your assets. That's really important,"

the man muttered, smirking.

What an animal. I can't believe he's planning to get my assets too. He's really lost his marbles for money.

"So you're not going to let me go?" Delilah questioned.

For a moment, the man was taken aback by the vicious look in her eyes. However, he managed to recompose himself quickly.

"What are you trying to do? What can an old woman like you do? What will you do if I don't let you go? Are you going to hit me? You? What a joke. I'd say you—"

Smack! A punch rammed toward the man, so quick that the man did not even have the time to react.

Instantly, he collapsed on the ground, in immense agony.

“Y-You f*cking wench! How dare you hit me!” the man screeched,

jabbing

his finger at her.

So what if I did? Goodness me. That feels great. It’s been so long since I’ve

hit someone. I really am getting rusty at this. After the punch, Delilah dusted her hands.

“What’s wrong? Did you think I’m the kind to take things lying down?

Yes,

while it’s true that I keep a low profile at most times, it doesn’t mean I’ll relent at all times.” With that said, Delilah kicked him and turned to leave.

“Stop! You’ve got to pay for my medical fees!” the man on the ground screamed.

Is he trying to be funny? He should be glad I’m not suing him for giving me

psychological trauma. How can he be that shameless to ask me to pay for

his medical fees?

“How is it? Have you found her? Where did Ms. Young go?” Joan asked in

a shaky voice.

Dustin, who was beside her, gently patted her shoulders. “Don’t worry. We’re doing our best to look for her. She’ll be fine. It’s okay.”

When Larry saw the two interacting, the light in his eyes dimmed.

Lucius ran toward Dustin and hugged his leg, asking, “Mr. Dustin, did something happen to Grandma? I’m so worried about her.”

Larry averted his eyes.

Have they already chosen Dustin instead?

“No. I can’t just sit here. I have to look for her,” Joan blurted out as she moved, about to leave the house.

“Who are you going to look for? Aren’t I right here?” came Delilah’s loud voice.

Joan’s eyes lit up as her heart finally lowered from her throat to her chest.

“Ms. Young, where did you go? You scared me!” Joan gripped the elderly woman’s hands with her own shaking ones.

"I'm fine. You can rest assured now." Delilah smiled then patted Joan's shoulder.

None of them knew that the elderly woman was well-versed in martial arts; there was no one in the world who could lay a finger on her. The man

from earlier, by then, had fled the scene on all fours.

"Ms. Young, we tried looking for you in the garden earlier, but we couldn't

see any signs of you. Moreover, you didn't pick up Joan's call. You've frightened her," Dustin quietly stated.

"I... I went out for a moment, and I lost my phone. I think I dropped it on my way there. I'm fine now," Delilah lied.

She did not want the few people in front of her to worry, especially Joan and Lucius. Moreover, she had come out of the incident completely unscathed. The one who wanted to harm her had to try harder than that.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2023

"Ms. Ward, the mission failed," the man mumbled dejectedly on the phone.

"What? How can you possibly fail? Could you not even deal with an old woman?" Gabriella roared.

Damn b*tch. I haven't even begun to list all your faults but you're already

shouting at me? The man coiled his fists and clenched his jaw.

"Ha! Why don't we talk about why you didn't tell me about how that woman knew martial arts?" the man fumed.

Gabriella promptly fell silent. She's that powerful? Fury flashed across her eyes.

Damn it. It's getting harder and harder to deal with everything. What the hell? The man then informed her about the incident before the call ended.

As he had not completed the assigned task, Gabriella only paid for his medical fees.

Bang!

The door flew open.

The woman on the couch jumped in fright and whipped her head toward the doorway.

"Lars." Gabriella sprinted toward him, arms spread out for a hug.

It had been a long time since he visited her. He's here to see the baby and me! Gabriella was understandably excited. However, Larry shouted, "Gabriella Ward!" His tone was not a friendly one. She frowned. He's not here just to visit me. Nevertheless, Gabriella was quick to plaster on a smile.

"Sit, Lars. Have some tea. Are you here to visit our baby? Our baby's fine. Don't worry." At that, Gabriella carefully rubbed her stomach. When Larry saw her intentional act, he sneered. Still lying about how the baby is ours, I see. Let's see how long she can keep this up. Once the baby is born, we'll do a paternity test. Everything will be revealed by then. However, what he could not stand anymore were the things that the cruel woman was doing to Joan. He could not bear to see Joan hurt nor upset.

"Tell me. Was it you?" Larry questioned. This jerk. How can he ask me this without any hint of hesitation? Yes, that's right. It's me. So what? What can you do if I refuse to admit it? Gabriella sneered back.

"Lars, what are you talking about? What do you mean by was it me? Of course I was the one to make this tea," she said, changing the subject. He only has that she-devil in his mind! When has he ever think about me? Never. He has never thought about me! Even a tiny bit of concern from him would make her day, but he was a miser; he only gave his love to Joan. Gabriella scowled.

This is such a joke. She's not as pretty as me, and neither is she as rich as me. She's nothing but an ordinary woman, but she's the only one in Larry's heart!

"Drop the act, Gabriella. Everyone knows what kind of woman you are. Even if you refuse to admit it, I'll find evidence for what you've done. Also, you should tell your baby's father to start owning up. Otherwise, once the baby is born, you'll be a single mother," Larry uttered in a glacial tone.

“Karma is waiting for you around the corner, so you should know when to stop. I’ve been gathering evidence, so don’t assume you’ll get to escape the law. I’m sure you know who you’ve hurt and what you’ve done.” With that said, Larry left.

The moment he did, the woman collapsed onto the couch. Her eyes blankly stared at the ceiling, lost in her thoughts.

How did he find out about this? I’ve destroyed all the evidence. I’ve stopped contacting those assassins. How did he figure this out? Fear danced across her eyes.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2024

No. That’s not it. Maybe he’s just trying to test me. Maybe he knows nothing. After collecting herself, she made a call.

“Hey, come over. I need you,” Gabriella anxiously demanded.

However, the individual on the other end of the line fell silent.

“Who are you? Why are you calling him?” A high-pitched female voice traveled into her ears.

At that moment, Gabriella’s mind went blank.

What? Why is a woman picking up the call?

Gabriella swiftly hung up before making the call again, thinking that she had gotten the wrong number.

“Hey, spit it out. I’m starting to get annoyed from your continuous calls,” the other woman hissed impatiently.

He’s forgotten about me; he’s found a new woman!

Thud! Gabriella threw her phone on the ground.

She then slumped on the couch as tears began to brim in her eyes.

Men are useless, Gabriella thought as a brutal look crawled into her tearful eyes.

“Hey, bro, there’s some weird girl who was calling you earlier. I asked her

what’s the matter, but she refused to say anything. Call her back later, okay?”

“Who was it?” the man shouted from inside the bathroom.

“I don’t recognize her voice, but her name in your contacts is...”

Oh no. It’s Gabriella! Oh no, oh no. She’s going to misunderstand. The man

hurriedly washed off the suds and wrapped himself in his towel before walking out.

“Wow, your body still looks as amazing as ever!”

“Shoo! Hurry up and go to work. Stop messing around all day.”

When the man checked his phone, he realized his sister was speaking the truth—there were two calls from Gabriella. A delighted smile grew on his lips.

“Gabriella, did you call me?” the man whispered into his phone.

“Yes, but forget it,” Gabriella snarled.

When I needed you, you’re with some other women. Why are you calling

me when I don’t need you anymore?

“I was showering earlier. That’s why I didn’t hear my phone ring,” the man

hastily explained.

Gabriella narrowed her eyes.

What the man had not explained to her was that his sister had been the one to pick up the phone earlier.

Hence, Gabriella ended the call after saying, “It’s fine. Bye.”

The man panicked.

Despite that, he thought, She must be jealous, but that’s good. She should

feel a little stressed about our relationship. At that thought, the man smiled. Unbeknownst to him, Gabriella had decided to cut off her ties with him.

Stupid man. It’s all lies when he says he only loves me and me only.

What

a load of rubbish when he said he’ll protect and take care of me for the rest of my life. Now? Now he’s with some other woman. He ditched me! Gabriella balled up her fists, infuriated and upset.

All men are the same. They’ll leave after sleeping with the woman. With a

sneer, the woman then shut her eyes.

Knock, knock.

The knockings outside the house were rapid and urgent, but Gabriella was

already asleep in the living room.

“Open up, Gabriella! I’m here. Weren’t you looking for me earlier?” the man shouted from outside.

Not known to the two, Caspian was watching them from afar.

“Larry, that man’s here again, but Gabriella isn’t opening the door this

time.”

He finally appeared again. Larry’s lips curled.

With this man around, everything will be sorted out.

“Keep a close eye on him and find out who this man is,” Larry commanded.

Only after a long while of knocking, then did Gabriella groggily went to open the door.

“Why did you keep knocking on the door? Didn’t you realize that I’m sleeping? You’re annoying,” Gabriella complained.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2025

The man awkwardly scratched the back of his head and mumbled, “Gabriella, you were asleep? I’m sorry. Did I disturb your rest?”

Right then, Gabriella sobered up.

Wait. Why is he here? Didn’t he use to call me before he comes?

“Wait. How long have you been standing here?” Gabriella hastily surveyed

her surroundings with anxious eyes.

“Quick! Come in.” She dragged him in.

Darn it. No one’s following him, right? Gabriella had found out that Caspian was following and investigating her for some time. It’ll be over for

me if Caspian finds out about this man. Thus, Gabriella scurried to the balcony and looked downwards.

Good. There aren’t any cars that I don’t recognize downstairs. She heaved

a sigh of relief at that revelation.

“Didn’t we agree that you won’t come over unless you call? What if something happens because you break that rule? What’s wrong with your

brain?” Gabriella punched the man’s chest.

Hold on. I should be angry at him. Almost immediately, Gabriella strode toward the couch and lay down.

How shameless is he to come to me? She scoffed.

All men are playboys and dishonest people, including this one.

However, Larry was the only exception. He had loved Joan for so many years, and not once had he ever thought of giving up on her. In fact, she was the only person he would ever think of.

At that moment, Gabriella found herself feeling envious of Joan. Even

though the latter had no money, talents, nor intellect, she had a man who

loved and took care of her without ever thinking of giving up.

“Gabriella, I missed you,” the man whined as he wrapped his arms around

her waist.

Ever since Gabriella was pregnant, the two only met in secret. They could

not hold hands in public nor go on dates. It was fine in the beginning, but as time passed, the man grew agitated.

“Don’t touch me!” Gabriella flung his arm off her.

What’s the matter with her? Why is she angry? The man studied her carefully, confounded by her strange behavior.

“What’s wrong? Are you in a foul mood today? Come, let’s have a walk.”

With those words out of his mouth, the man moved to pull her to a standing position.

“I’ve told you not to make me mad! You disgust me,” Gabriella shouted.

Her words made the man freeze.

What? It’s true that I look like some playboy, but I’ve never laid a finger on

another woman other than her. To take care of Gabriella, the man did not

even visit bars and other entertainment venues that he usually went to. But now she’s saying I disgust her?

“Gabriella, what are you trying to say? I called you earlier, but you seemed

to be in a bad mood. I thought you were feeling unwell, and that’s why I rushed to your place, hoping to be able to do something for you. How can

you treat me in this way? That’s right. I love you; I really do. But I’m a man, and I have my dignity too. I’m nice to you, but that doesn’t mean you

can treat me horribly for that,” he bellowed.

How can he sound so righteous after messing with another woman?

Who

gave him the right to?

Gabriella turned grim when she heard his loud volume.

“Don’t you already have someone else? What a joke. Why are you here when you can’t even resolve your own problems?”

What the hell? What does she means by someone else? Why don't I know about it?

"Gabriella, did you make a mistake? I don't have anyone else. Ever since you were pregnant, I haven't been in touch with any other women," the man explained as he tapped her shoulders.

Liar. Why can't he just admit it? Maybe I'd have forgiven you if you were honest. But even now, you're still lying to me.

He's the same as all other men!

"Gabriella, I think I need to explain something to you. When I was showering, my sister was the one to pick up the call, so don't dwell on that," the man voiced as he scratched his head.