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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2541 - 2550

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2541

"What did you say? You saw Joan having a meal with Dustin? In a private room?" Larry yelled from his seat in the office. He was currently facing Caspian, the bringer of the disturbing news.

"Yes, I saw them with my own eyes. Larry, do you want to check it out for yourself? I fear that Dustin would make a move on Joan," Caspian suggested out of concern.

"That's not necessary!" Larry stopped him.

Caspian could not help but wonder how his superior could remain so calm.

The last time Larry found out about Joan and Dustin, he practically lost his marbles. This time, he seemed indifferent about the whole ordeal!

"Larry, you really aren't going?" Caspian inquired again.

"No!" Larry bellowed.

There was no doubt that he was angry, but he managed to keep his emotions contained. Caspian paused for a moment. Then he excused himself and slowly backed out of the office.

Dustin, that scoundrel! What will it take for him to stop pursuing Joan? Larry stood in front of the window overlooking a lighthouse in the distance. A stern expression hung on his face.

But why would Joan want to stay in contact with him? Larry could not quite figure that out. She clearly knew that Dustin had tampered with Norton Corporation. She clearly knew what Larry thought about Dustin and his unusual hostility towards the man!

On the other side of town, Joan picked up her bag and got to her feet. "I'm leaving!" she announced.

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"Where are you going next? I can take you there," Dustin stood up and offered.

"That won't be necessary!" She exclaimed harshly and strode away.

The woman's cruel rejection sent a chill down Dustin's spine as he watched her go away while he stayed rooted to the spot. He could not explain why, but the more Joan played hard to get, the more Dustin yearned to conquer her.

Joan... One day, you'll choose to be with me! He swore he would make it happen.

Delilah was going about her business when Joan returned. "Oh, you're home!" she greeted her.

"Yes, I am," Joan answered feebly.

"What's wrong? Something got you in a bad mood?" Delilah asked kindly.

"No, I'm just a little tired." Joan forced a smile and retired to her room.

But Delilah begged to differ. She believed that the younger woman had something on her mind but was reluctant to share it with her.

"Joan, are you alright? You seem distracted for several days now, and jumpy too. Do you want to talk about it?" Delilah asked tentatively.

Instantly, Joan kept her guard up.

"Ms. Young, what do you mean by that? What else can I be doing? I've only been cooking and helping out in the garden," Joan defended herself.

"Oh, Dustin came by a while ago. He wants you back at the supermarket," Delilah informed her.

"Okay," Joan said. Then, she gently opened the door and flopped onto her large big bed. Using her arms as a pillow, she got to work sorting out her thoughts and emotions.

How am I going to tell Larry and Delilah about my affair with Dustin? Do I have to keep hiding it like this? If Dustin doesn't say anything, and I don't say anything, it can continue to

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stay a secret. Hmm, that doesn't sound so bad. Joan turned over to stare at the sky outside. Her mind was all over the place.

Why must there be so many obstacles in life? Fortune does not smile on me. Why am I so unlucky? Why have I gone on to commit the forbidden deed with a man I don't love? Right then, Joan found herself consumed by sorrow.

"Mom!" Outside her room, Lucius called out to her as he knocked on the door.

Startled, Joan sat up and composed herself as quickly as she could. Then, she slowly got out of the bed and went to open the door.

"What is it, Lucius?" Joan asked her son.

"Mom, you have to come to school tomorrow," Lucius blinked at her as he told her the news.

Is it a parent-teacher conference, or another family event? Joan observed her son quizzically as she waited for him to continue.

"We're having a parent-teacher conference at school tomorrow," the boy explained.

"I see. Thank you for telling me," Joan said, appreciating the update. Then, she squatted down and kissed Lucius on the forehead.

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The next day, Joan woke up rather early. She spent some time fixing the first meal of the day in the kitchen. After that, and with some time to spare, she stayed in the dining room as she waited for Lucius to rise.

"Good morning! Time for breakfast," Joan greeted Lucius who had just come out of his room, rubbing his eyes.

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"Mom, you're up early. The parent-teacher conference is in the afternoon," Lucius informed her, but not before letting out a yawn.

"Oh, it's not about that. Go get your breakfast," Joan urged the boy.

"Are you going to the parent-teacher conference?" Delilah asked her from her spot on the sofa after the child left the room.

"Yes, of course," Joan answered.

Delilah looked like she wanted to tell Joan something, but she eventually resisted the idea.

Life was always full of surprises. No one would ever know what would happen in the next second. Joan, for example, had not expected that she would bump into a familiar figure at the parent-teacher conference later in the afternoon.

"Ms. Young, do you think I look nice in this?" Joan nervously asked for Delilah's opinion.

Before she left the house that day, she had received a call from Lucius' homeroom teacher informing her that, as a parent representative, she would be giving a speech at the event.

"It's fine. You better get going now. There's no time to fuss. You know you look good in anything," came Delilah's rather impatient response.

"No, you have to tell me, Delilah. Do I look nice in this or not? I don't want to embarrass Lucius in front of the class," Joan mumbled anxiously.

He's a child! Your appearance doesn't really matter to him! Delilah lifted her head to study the busy woman in front of her. Eventually, she let out a sigh.

"So, what do you think?" Joan spun around a few times in front of Delilah.

"Yes, yes, you look nice in that. Get going, alright? Quit dawdling or you'll be late!"

Without a minute to lose, Joan up and left the house with Lucius in tow, disappearing from Delilah's line of sight.

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The school was crowded. Everywhere, parents and students huddled in small groups, forming an overall peaceful and harmonious scene.

“Mom, I did really well in the test! Look, I’ve improved so much!”

“Mom, our homeroom teacher gave us this reward!”

“That’s wonderful, dear. You know you’ll always be the smartest kid to me.”

Several mothers and their children were busy chatting among themselves, seemingly having the time of their lives. It was rather enviable.

Where’s Lucius? Where did he go? Joan stood on tiptoes as she searched for her son.

“That’s strange. Where exactly has he run off to?” Joan muttered to herself as she searched high and low for the boy.

It was then that she heard a familiar man’s voice calling her. “Hey, Joan!”

Caiden? Joan turned around and came face to face with a familiar-looking man a few paces away. His appearance left her in a momentary daze.

“Mom!” Lucius was standing next to him and waving at her.

“Haven’t seen you in a while,” Joan went over to greet Caiden.

“Wow, you’re attending the parent-teacher conference with Lucius, right?” Caiden scratched his head and proceeded to strike up a conversation.

In front of Joan, he never had to play his role as a respectable leader nor maintain his image as a formidable president.

“Larry’s been busy lately, so here I am,” Joan replied.

Caiden forced a smile when Larry’s name was mentioned, but his eyes could not betray his resignation.

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"How are you lately?" he asked.

"So far so good. But, I'm curious, what brings you here today?" the woman asked back.

"Oh, I own the school now."

Joan was aware that this was a private school, so the fact that Caiden managed to acquire the property was not surprising to her.

"I heard that you'll be delivering a speech later, as the parent representative. Is that true?" Caiden asked further.

"Oh, yes," came the reply. The two went back and forth as awkwardness gradually stifled them.

"Caiden, I think Mom's getting nervous. I'm going to bring her in first. Let her get familiar with the place," Lucius cut in.

Who's nervous, you say? Joan's eyes widen as she stared at Lucius quizzically.

"N-No, I'm not..."

"Bye, Caiden!" Lucius bade farewell to Caiden, before dragging his mother away.

"Lucius, what's that about? Who says I'm nervous?" Joan tapped the boy lightly on the forehead, teasing him.

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"That's right. If you don't feel nervous, neither will Caiden. At most, it just feels a little awkward," Lucius answered at once.

Joan suddenly fell silent.

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She realized that Lucius could sense the tension between the two of them.

As his mom, Joan performed perfectly on and off the stage, to the extent that she won praise from both the parents and teachers.

“Who is the lady on the stage? She is so charismatic!”

“She’s the mother of the top boy in that class.”

“Look at them, how exceptional...”

As Joan continued with her speech on stage, Caiden looked on with a reluctant and helpless expression.

If I hadn’t given up, would she have chosen me? Lowering his head, sadness was written all over his face.

Perhaps, she still wouldn’t.

By now, Caiden had seen the light. Love can never be forced, not to mention I still have to shoulder the responsibilities of my family. Furthermore, with my dad monitoring all my movements, not seeing Joan might be the best form of protection I can give her.

“Alright, we would like to thank Lucius’ mom for the inspiring speech. Next, it’s our pleasure to invite our special guest for today, Mr. Caiden Owens to say a few words,” the emcee announced excitedly.

The hall broke into a thunderous applause.

“Teachers, parents, and students, good afternoon. I am Caiden...”

Meanwhile, Joan, who was sitting beside Lucius, watched intently as Caiden gave his speech.

He has really changed. The stubborn, domineering, and self-centered man is no longer there. After not seeing each other in a long time, he has indeed matured a lot. Joan’s eyes were filled with relief.

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Perhaps, this is what Mr. Owens wanted to see.

“Mom, what’s wrong? Are you feeling under the weather?” Lucius asked, as he gently patted her back with concern.

“It’s nothing.” She quickly turned around and looked at him.

Finally, the parent-teacher conference ended.

This time, exceptional students such as Lucius were honored during the event.

“Lucius is a wonderful kid. He is so much better than my son.”

“That’s right. Despite his good grades, he is warm and humble. It’s obvious he has a lot of potential for the future.”

The other mothers praised Lucius repeatedly in front of Joan.

“Hey, here comes Mr. Owens,” one of the mothers suddenly remarked.

The crowd opened up a path for him.

“Thanks for doing that.” Walking up to Joan, Caiden uttered softly with a smile.

“Not at all,” Joan replied.

“Do both of you know each other?”

“What? Have you forgotten? Didn’t both of them come on the field trip together?”

“Indeed! I have forgotten about that. But what’s the relationship between both of them? I’m really puzzled by what I see.”

With that, the crowd began to gossip.

“Come, I’ll send both of you home,” Caiden suggested as he pointed to the car at the school entrance. At the same time, he gently pinched Lucius’ cheek.

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"Erm..." Joan hesitated.

"It's alright, don't worry." With that, Caiden pulled Joan along as they left.

At the Owens family villa, a few bodyguards were standing in front of Keith, looking resolute.

"What is it?" Keith asked as he took a sip of tea while being seated on the sofa.

"Joan was also at the parent-teacher conference," the bodyguard reported.

Crack! Keith smashed the teacup onto the floor.

"Did both of them speak to each other?" he continued to ask.

"They chatted briefly before Mr. Caiden sent her home," the bodyguard added.

It appears that he hasn't forgotten her. Gradually standing up, Keith raised his head and walked toward the balcony. Placing his hands on the parapet, he was consumed by both anger and loneliness.

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What is that foolish boy thinking?

"Keith, what's wrong? Why are you so angry?" Caiden's mom came downstairs and asked Keith with concern.

"It's nothing," he replied.

Did Caiden do something to get on his nerves again? She returned to her room and made a call at once.

"Hello, Caiden is driving so he can't speak at the moment."

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A child's voice was heard over the line.

Who is this? Mrs. Owens' suspicions were aroused. "Who are you?" she asked softly.

"I'm Lucius!"

"Lucius, don't touch Caiden's phone!" A female voice was heard in the background.

Mrs. Owens felt that the voice sounded familiar. After racking her brains, she finally recalled where she heard it before.

Its Joan! Why is Caiden involved with her again? Clenching her fists, she grew concerned.

No wonder Keith is furious, he must have known about this.

"Your mom called just now," Joan informed.

"I know," Caiden plainly replied.

He knew that he was going to face another barrage of questions later.

"Thank you, Caiden!" At the door, Lucius cried out as he bowed in Caiden's direction.

"Alright, go on in now. Call me if there's anything." Caiden waved at Lucius with a smile.

It's unlikely for a kid like him to get into much trouble. Even if he did, it would be unreasonable to call me for help.

"Lucius, you're home!" Delilah greeted him with a delightful grin.

"Grandma, Caiden gave Mom and I a ride home," Lucius exclaimed as he threw himself into Delilah's arms.

"Hello," Delilah greeted when she saw Caiden at the door.

She didn't invite him in as she was reluctant to have anything to do with him anymore.

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"Ms. Young," Caiden returned her greeting with a smile.

"Anyway, I'll take my leave now." With that, he turned and walked to his car.

"Who is that man?" A male voice rang out from behind Joan as he watched the car drive away.

"Caiden," Joan replied.

"Dustin, don't you have anything better to do?" Dustin asked.

Only then did Joan realize that Dustin was behind her.

"Erm, I am quite free and even bored actually," he replied mischievously.

"Isn't there a lot to do at the supermarket?" Joan asked.

"I've finished all my work," Dustin replied with a shrug.

That annoying fool. When will he ever leave me in peace? Joan gave him a cruel stare.

However, Dustin no longer cared for how she treated him.

"I'm warning you not to come by my place so often. Or else, people will start talking." Just as she spoke, Delilah went back into her house.

"Ms. Young, why are you chasing me away? You know how much I love you..." Dustin tried to flatter her as he followed her in.

"Joan, go and get some groceries as we're out," Delilah remarked suddenly in the living room.

Joan went into the kitchen and checked the fridge. Just as Delilah had said, it was empty.

"In that case, I'll head out now." She left right after she spoke.

"Dustin, come here!" Delilah yelled at him.

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When he saw her fearsome expression, Dustin knew that something was amiss.

“Ms. Young, what is it?” he quickly caught up with her and asked.

“What happened between you and Joan? Don’t you dare tell me nothing!” Delilah demanded.

At that moment, Dustin felt awkward.

Joan was supposed to tell Delilah what happened between both of them. But after dragging her feet, it only served to arouse Delilah’s suspicions.

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“Nothing happened,” Dustin quickly replied after a slight hesitation.

B*llshit! Delilah had noticed the minute gestures and the look they gave each other. Hence, only a fool would believe nothing was going on.

“If you’re not going to tell me the truth, you can forget about coming here ever again,” Delilah threatened.

“Please don’t be like that, Ms. Young. There really is nothing going on between us,” Dustin answered.

No, he must be lying!

Although Dustin had loved Joan all this while, he had never come by as frequently as he did now.

“Since you have chosen not to tell me, then out you go! Shoo! And don’t ever come back!” With that, Delilah chased him out.

“Ms. Young, fine! I’ll talk, I’ll talk.”

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Finally, Dustin compromised. He couldn't accept the fact that he couldn't see Joan.

"Erm, actually, it was an accident..." Dustin recounted what had happened and spiced up some parts while he was doing so.

In a short while, Delilah's mind was blown.

It was beyond her wildest imagination that Joan would do something like that. Delilah's impression of her was that she was someone emotionally loyal. But now, after her brazen actions, Delilah no longer held her in such high regard.

"Dustin, are you lying to me?" Delilah questioned in an agitated tone.

"Ms. Young, there's no way I would lie to you. Besides, given how experienced you are, can't you easily tell if I'm lying?" Dustin suggested on purpose.

"I'm back, Ms. Young. What would you like to eat? I'll cook." Just as she spoke, Joan entered with her hands full of bags.

In the living room, both Delilah and Dustin watched warily as Joan sauntered in. Dustin was worried that Joan would be furious at him for telling Delilah the truth. Now, Delilah had become more vigilant toward Joan after learning about her preposterous actions.

"What are both of you doing?" Joan walked up to them with an awkward smile.

It took both of them a while to regain their senses.

"Nothing, let's start cooking." With that, Delilah got up and headed into the kitchen.

The atmosphere was filled with awkward tension as the three of them keep their own secrets while having very different expressions.

"What's wrong with Ms. Young?" Joan asked as she pushed Dustin's arm gently.

"Joan, there's something I need to do. So, I'll take my leave first." Just as he spoke, Dustin got up and left.

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What's wrong with them? Glancing at the busy figure in the kitchen and then at the silhouette of the one who just left, a sense of unease crept upon Joan. She could feel that there was something wrong with both of them, but neither would tell her what it was.

"Joan, give Larry a call and ask him to come home for dinner," Delilah shouted loudly from the kitchen on purpose.

"Alright," she answered at once.

During dinner, all of them ate their food quietly.

"Lucius, how was school recently?" Larry suddenly asked.

"It's pretty good," Lucius replied with his mouth full.

"I heard there was a parent-teacher conference at school," Larry continued.

"That's right. Mom attended and we even met Caiden there. Dad, you should attend next time, alright? My classmates in school all want to see you," Lucius continued.

The moment Lucius mentioned Caiden, Larry's hand visibly froze as he was serving himself seconds.

"That's good." He then stuffed the food into his mouth as he replied.

"Larry, if you're not busy next time, you should try coming home earlier," Delilah suddenly remarked.

Larry raised his gaze and gave Delilah a puzzled look.

Why is she bringing this up all of a sudden. Don't they understand the demands of my work? The company was in an expansion phase which required a lot of his attention.

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Joan then gave Delilah a puzzled look.

“When are the both of you going to remarry?” Delilah suddenly added.

“Pfft!” Joan spewed her food out immediately.

“Erm, I’m sorry.” She quickly wiped her mouth with her napkin.

“Are you alright?” Larry asked at once.

“I’m fine,” Joan replied.

“Joan, what are you so nervous about?” Without even turning her head, Delilah asked as she ate.

“Huh? Erm, I’m not. I just happened to choke,” Joan replied awkwardly.

She being self-conscious. Delilah sneered.

She had once thought that Joan was a lady with principles, a good wife, and a wonderful mother. But reality had shown her otherwise.

“Next time, you had better be more careful. It would be a disgrace if you were found out,” Delilah commented with a strange tone.

In response, Joan felt a sense of dread.

Can it be that she has found out about me and Dustin? She gave Delilah a wary look.

Throughout the dinner, Joan felt on edge as she considered whether to tell Larry and Delilah the truth. However, she still didn’t have the courage to do so.

Back in her room, she lay on her bed, tossing and turning around while feeling troubled.

Crack. The door to her room gently opened.

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After glancing at Joan, Larry crept up to the bed. Looking at her face with a smile, he crawled into bed and hugged her to sleep.

Despite the familiar scent and touch, why do I feel such confusion? Joan closed her eyes while trying hard to relax.

Finally, after a long time, both of them fell asleep. Meanwhile, the moon outside the window slowly crept across the sky.

"Ms. Young, what's wrong?" Joan carefully probed as unease filled her eyes.

"Nothing," Delilah replied on purpose.

She wanted to see how long Joan could refrain from telling her the truth. After giving Joan the side-eye, she continued with her work.

"Let me help you." Just as she spoke, Joan took over Delilah's scissors.

"You don't have to. Just clean up your own mess," Delilah declined. Given how obvious I'm making it, hasn't she gotten it already?

Joan stood still and gave Delilah a heartbroken look.

"Did you tell Ms. Young about what happened between us?" Walking to the balcony, Joan spoke into the phone with her hand covering her mouth.

On the other end of the line, Dustin fell silent.

His response was telling. No wonder Delilah's attitude toward me changed so drastically yesterday.

"Why did you tell her? Didn't I tell you that I'll explain it to her?" Joan bellowed softly, with her voice filled with rage.

"No, Joan. Let me explain. Actually, Ms. Young has already suspected something. She just felt that you weren't going to tell her, so that's why she forced me to," Dustin explained.

The next thing he heard was the disconnect tone. Obviously, Joan had hung up.

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Is she angry? Dustin looked out the window with concern.

“Why are you questioning him? You should be questioning me instead as I forced him to tell me,” Delilah snapped as she approached Joan from behind.

Joan turned around with a guilty expression.

“Ms. Young, I’m sorry,” she apologized softly, hanging her head.

“Why are you apologizing to me? You didn’t do anything to betray me. The one whom you betrayed was yourself,” Delilah asserted.

Despite Delilah not showing any anger, Joan somehow felt a terrifying aura from her.

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There were some people who were just born with gravitas and Delilah was one of them.

“Ms. Young, I really didn’t do it on purpose,” Joan sobbed.

Regardless of whether it was deliberate, the matter did happen. Delilah patted her on the shoulder, feeling sympathetic.

“Tell me, what are you going to do?”

Raising her gaze at Delilah, Joan shook her head to indicate how lost she was and how much she was struggling.

She didn’t dare tell Larry for fear that he would be angry and even seek to hold Dustin accountable.

“Do you plan to hide it from him forever? Joan, you of all people should know how Larry’s temperament is. He doesn’t like to be lied to and hates betrayal even more,” Delilah added.

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And then? Am I to confess everything to the man I love? Joan looked hesitantly at the woman in front of her.

“What did Dustin say? Will he take responsibility?”

Ms. Young is really sharp to have seen through us easily.

She nodded in agreement.

“What about you? Do you not plan to remarry Larry?”

No! Of course, I still want to be with him. It’s just that I need time to sort out what happened between me and Dustin. However, it seems that he is not giving me any space. Hence, I will have to take this a step at a time.

“Do you plan to marry Dustin then?” Delilah continued to ask.

“No!” Joan snapped instantly.

Very good. That’s the Joan I know. Loyal to the one she loves. A satisfied smile emerged on Delilah’s face.

After chatting a while longer, both of them went their separate ways.

To Delilah, the solution was simple. The earlier Joan told Larry, the faster they can solve the problem together and get their lives back on track. However, if Larry was to find out before that, the matter would become infinitely more complicated to resolve.

“What’s wrong?” Jessica asked aloud as she leaned into Joan’s ear.

“It’s nothing,” Joan replied as she stirred her coffee.

What does she mean by nothing? Her troubles are written all over her face. Jessica let out a nosy laugh as she took a sip of coffee.

“Joan, are you arguing with Larry again?” she asked directly.

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“No, what is there to argue between Larry and me?” Joan quickly replied.

“Joan, don’t worry. If Larry bullies you, just tell me and I will teach him a lesson,” Jessica added.

“Oh please, why would he bully me?”

However, it was obvious to Jessica that Joan was feeling upset.

“Joan, why don’t we go shopping?”

“Shopping? I’m too tired for that. I just feel like going home and rest.” With that, Joan got up and prepared to leave.

“Don’t be a spoiled sport. The mall is just next door. Since you’re already here, you might as well not waste the trip,” Jessica pleaded aloud as she shook Joan’s arm.

Unable to refuse her, Joan had no choice but to follow her into the mall.

“What about this? Or this? This looks good. Quick, give it a try!” Just as she spoke, Jessica stuffed a bunch of clothes into Joan’s arms.

“I not buying any clothes!” Joan yelled as Jessica pushed her into the changing room.

Despite obviously being in a bad mood, it’s a pity to see her being so harsh on herself. Looking at the changing room, Jessica shook her head.

She really liked Joan. But due to her boisterous personality, there was still a gap between them given how quiet Joan was.

“How is it? Does it fit? Come out quickly, and let me see!” Jessica yelled from outside.

Finally, Joan stepped out of the changing room.

“Wow, Joan, you look stunning. It fits you perfectly! You should get it,” Jessica exclaimed as she ran over excitedly.

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"I feel that this dress doesn't really suit my style," Joan replied awkwardly.

"Why not? You look great in it. Right? Miss?" Jessica pulled the sales attendant over and asked.

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"Yes, yes, you look great in the outfit," the sales attendant affirmed immediately.

"Forget it, Jessica. I want to go home," Joan remarked when she saw herself in the mirror.

Given the circumstances, she had no mood to shop at all.

"Alright, we'll take this, this, and this." Right after that, Jessica dragged Joan out of the clothing store and entered a footwear store instead.

"Joan, let me give you one piece of advice. As an ordinary woman, you have to learn how to spend your husband's money. Or else, what's the point of him earning so much?" Jessica remarked as she winked mischievously.

But I betrayed Larry! Joan looked around and saw that everything inside costs a bomb... On her way home, Joan ran into Dustin.

"What do you want from me? Haven't I made my stand clear enough? Why are you still clinging on to me?" Joan scowled by the roadside.

She couldn't accept how clingy Dustin was, let alone marrying him.

"Joan, give me a reason for me to stop loving you. I really can't let you go," Dustin answered bluntly.

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Prior to this, he chose to stay silently by her side for the sake of her happiness. But now, he wanted to be more selfish. He no longer could tolerate Joan being together with Larry while he licked his wounds in a dark corner. He was sick of playing that role.

“The reason is that I don’t love you!” Joan replied resolutely.

Again and again, she hurt him with her heartless rejection. Dustin had lost count of the number of times she had rejected him. Despite always being emotionally prepared for the expected outcome, he still felt devastated by it.

Dustin gradually turned around, hiding his emotions. After that, he left without saying another word.

At that moment, he had truly given up on her as he no longer knew how else to win her back. He wondered if he was just a supporting actor in Joan’s life all this while.

Looking at the lonesome figure walking away, Joan couldn’t help but feel her heart burn.

No, I cannot waver. I must stand firm. With that, she turned to leave.

Thump!

Unknown to her, the moment she turned around, Dustin was lying in a pool of blood on the ground.

Looking at her silhouette, he opened his mouth to say something but no longer had any strength to do so.

Finally, his eyes closed against his wishes.

“Hey! Wake up!

“There seems to have been an accident over there.”

“The victim is a man. He seems to be grievously hurt.”

As the passersby began to crowd around, they were shocked at what they saw.

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However, Joan was oblivious to what was going on.

“Jory, isn’t that Dustin?” Nancy exclaimed anxiously when she saw the news report on TV.

Ever since both of them bared their hearts to each other, their relationship took a positive turn. As for Nancy’s psychological problems, they gradually disappeared day by day.

“What are you talking about? Dustin is busy now. Where would he find time to be an actor?” Jory replied softly.

“It’s true! Come quickly. He was involved in an accident,” Nancy repeated as her eyes were glued to the screen.

The moment he heard the word accident, Jory dropped his work and rushed over.

“What happened?” he asked anxiously.

Just as expected, both of them were ready to go in less than ten minutes.

“Are you ready?” Jory asked with impatience.

“Yes, let’s go now.” Just as she spoke, Nancy grabbed her bag and left the living room.

In the hospital, it was extremely crowded. As the weather had turned cold recently, the corridor was filled with sick people.

“Doctor, there’s a patient here named Dustin Silverman. May we know where is he?” Jory asked loudly as he grabbed the doctor by his shoulders.

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“Do you see the ward by the corner?” After giving them directions, the doctor walked away.

Without further hesitation, Jory ran toward the corner.

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Inside, Dustin was laying there quietly with his eyes closed. His face was pale while his body was covered in blood.

“Doctor, what is his condition? When will he be awake?” Jory anxiously asked the man beside him.

“Are you the patient’s family?” the doctor asked.

“I am, I am. How is he now?”

“Here, I need your signature on this. I’m sorry, we have done everything we could,” the doctor gradually explained while his eyes were filled with pity.

What does that mean? Jory gave the doctor a confused look.

This was the first time he was stumped when trying to say something.

“Mister, don’t panic yet. We will continuously treat him with new technologies, so don’t worry. As of now, our hospital’s ability to treat a paralyzed person is still limited. I hope you understand. If you don’t have faith in us, you are welcome to transfer him to another hospital...”

Despite the doctor explaining a whole lot in great detail, Jory didn’t register any of it. He was simply at a loss as to what to do.

“Jory, get a hold of yourself!” Nancy reminded him as she quickly approached.

How am I able to stay calm? My best friend has become a vegetable all of a sudden!

Who did this to him? As he tried his best to get a grip of himself, Jory whipped out his phone and made a call.

“Hello, find out everything that happened to Dustin before his accident. Who he called, who he met, what he did, where he went...”

When she saw Jory’s vicious gaze, Nancy was inexplicably terrified.

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She hoped that what happened to Dustin was really an accident. Lowering her head, she prayed for his recovery.

“Why are you back so late?” Delilah asked softly when she saw Joan enter the living room.

“Oh, I was meeting a friend for dinner,” Joan simply found an excuse and replied.

Is that so? Is that so-called friend named Dustin? Suddenly, Delilah grew wary.

“Joan, did you know that Dustin met with an accident?” Delilah added.

At that moment, Joan was so exhausted that she had fallen asleep on the sofa. With her eyes closed, she no longer heard what Delilah said.

“Joan?”

What did she do to tire herself out like that? Delilah shook her head before leaving.

However, she was now very concerned about what was going on between Joan and Dustin.

Bam! The door was suddenly kicked open.

Joan was awakened by the noise while Delilah rushed out to see what was going on.

“What are you trying to do?” Delilah asked in horror when she saw the man in front of her.

“Where’s Joan?” Jory demanded.

“Who’s looking for me?” Rubbing her eyes, Joan walked out to the living room.

“What? How can you still be sleeping? Joan, how heartless can you be?”

Given Jory’s sudden arrival and shocking accusation, Joan was puzzled as to what was going on.

What did I do? Why is he calling me heartless? I didn’t kill anyone or commit arson...

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“What’s wrong?” Joan asked.

How dare she feign ignorance after what happened to Dustin. How vicious can this woman be?

“Joan, tell me. What does it take for you to let Dustin go?” Jory asked bluntly with a cold glint in his eye.

What kind of question is that? Isn’t it obvious that Dustin is the one that’s clinging on to me? Why is Jory twisting the facts and interrogating me? Joan looked at him with both disappointment and anger.

“Jory, I’m sure you’re aware that all this while, it was Dustin that pursued me,” Joan replied with conviction.

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She told him the truth as she had nothing to hide. Furthermore, Jory was Nancy’s husband and she had faith in his character. She was sure that he was able to see things clearly in the end. However, she didn’t expect that she was nothing to him when compared to Dustin.

“Jory, don’t be rash. The matter has yet to be investigated...” Nancy interjected as she caught up from behind, panting.

“Nancy? Why are you here?” Joan asked curiously.

What’s going on? When she saw what was unfolding before her, she began to feel nervous.

Although she wasn’t close to Jory, she had heard Nancy mention that Jory would only personally deal with a problem if it was serious. However, she couldn’t think of any reason for him to come looking for her.

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"It's as clear as day! Nancy, you don't have to protect her anymore. I know she is your best friend, but Dustin is my best friend too!" Jory reminded.

With a helpless expression, Nancy looked at Jory and then at Joan.

"Nancy, what's going on?" Joan walked up to her and asked.

Her question caused Nancy to be dumbfounded. Does she not know what happened to Dustin?

"Joan, don't you know? Something happened to Dustin," Nancy replied while looking at her warily.

How can that be? When I saw him just now, he was just doing fine. What can happen to him in such a short time?

"Are you kidding me?" Joan laughed.

"Joan, it's not a joke. Dustin is lying in the hospital as we speak," Nancy asserted.

Joan turned around and looked at Delilah, who nodded her head in silence.

At that moment, Joan hurried to the hospital hysterically.

Dustin, how can this be? It's a lie. All of them must be lying. Joan sobbed as she ran.

To her, it was simple. If something had really happened to Dustin, she was definitely responsible for it.

The moment she dashed into the hospital, she grabbed onto a nurse and asked, "Dustin? Where is he?"

Given a fright, the nurse pointed in the direction of his ward without saying a word.

When she saw him lying on the bed, Joan was devastated.

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“Dustin, wake up! It’s me, Joan. Wake up!” Joan screamed as she desperately tried to shake him awake.

Unfortunately, he lay there without any response.

It’s all my fault! If I hadn’t said something that cruel, he wouldn’t have met with the car accident. And more importantly, he wouldn’t have ended up in a coma. Joan sprawled by the bed as she wiped her tears in remorse.

“Are you finally regretting it now? What happened to you earlier?” Jory snapped from behind.

All this while, he never liked Joan. But he turned a blind eye to her on Nancy’s account. Just as expected, she did turn out to be a troublemaker.

“Jory, stop with the snide remarks,” Nancy chided him softly as she pushed his arm.

“Am I wrong?” he roared.

Jory was feeling emotionally charged given Dustin’s situation. Hence, he vented his frustration on Nancy despite knowing she had nothing to do with it at all.

“Jory, what are you yelling at me for? What’s the use of doing that? If your screams can wake Dustin up, then please be my guest,” Nancy snapped.

The thing she hated most in her life was someone flaring their temper at her for no reason.

“Get out!” Jory bellowed, pointing at the door.

“Fine, Jory, remember this is how you treated me!” With that, Nancy stormed out of the ward.

Meanwhile, at the Norton Corporation office, Larry was busy as usual and was oblivious to what Joan was going through.

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