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After Joan had left the hospital, she changed into a fresh set of clothes and headed towards the supermarket.

The supermarket was as bustling as always. Everyone was busy joking around as they chatted and mingled around. A bright atmosphere hung in the air.

"Look who's back!" a coworker of hers yelled all of a sudden.

"Yeah, I wonder who abandoned us by vanishing without a single trace. Yet, that person is now back here."

"Who are you? Are sure that you aren't lost?"

Her co-workers in the supermarket gossiped loudly as they glared at Joan with stares of displeasure. When Joan did not show up for work, they had turned red with anger. Their fury grew even further as she remained absent for a long period of time.

"Fine, I'll just leave. It seems like I'm unwelcomed here," Joan muttered and prepared to leave the supermarket.

"Joan, they are just joking. Don't leave. Pay them no mind! We all missed you dearly," a young woman ran forward and clung to Joan's arm.

"You are still my favorite," Joan replied softly and squeezed the woman's cheeks.

In the blink of an eye, lunchtime had arrived. Quickly, the women crowded around Joan as they gossiped amongst themselves.

"What happened to you? Did you know that Dustin worked himself to the bone in your absence? Out of pity, we all advised him to hire another worker. Yet, he stubbornly insisted that you would return."

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“Yeah! What on earth happened? You didn’t even tell us about it.”

Witnessing their familiar faces and speech sent a flutter of warmth in her heart. Their affectionate concern left her feeling grateful and touched.

It seems like the people from her village maintained their simple and friendly ways without any harmful intentions. They were all genuinely worried about her wellbeing.

“It’s nothing; I had a lot of things to deal with recently. It is all settled now. Relax, let’s eat! I’ll pay for all your meals! Just order them!” Joan raised her voice and announced.

“Ah, I want a serving of baked ribs!”

“One set of fish and chips for me!”

“I want baked chicken wings... and roasted duck! I want them both!”

The women’s loud and cheerful voices seemed to brighten the mood of the tiny restaurant.

Yet, Joan couldn’t help but feel a trace of disappointment that lurked in her heart.

She missed Larry dearly. It had been a long time since they last met each other. Additionally, they hadn’t called each other too. She wondered if he was doing well in his company.

“Ah, could you help me to apply for leave? I have matters to attend to later,” Joan blurted out all of a sudden.

Huh? Is she asking for leave when she just came to work? Is she alright? Everyone around Joan stared at her in confusion. Her bizarre behavior left them curious for an explanation.

“I want to visit Larry. He has been extremely busy lately. He hasn’t had the time to return home,” Joan explained with a bow of her head.

“Oh, you should have said that earlier! Leave it to us; you should enjoy your date!” one of the women exclaimed loudly as she patted Joan’s shoulder enthusiastically.

As always, her co-workers were reliable and helpful.

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“Gather around; Joan will be paying for our meals today! Don’t feel shy!”

“Mr. Norton, I think that our cooperation isn’t quite suitable. You should look for someone else.”

The words had been uttered to Larry by the owner of the manufacturing company. Larry had spent hours trying to gain the owner’s approval. Yet, the owner’s tone was firm and devoid of any hesitation.

“Why? Can you tell me the reason for your rejection?” Larry asked in desperation.

“It’s because of the distance. We are based in different countries. In the future, who will be held responsible if a problem arises? To prevent this issue from arising, you should find someone else.” With that, the owner of the manufacturing company prepared to leave.

Is this the only reason for his rejection? Larry stared at the man before him with a suspicious gaze. There was a hint of unease in his heart. Was there someone else involved behind the scenes?

Larry had heard rumors about the man. Apparently, he didn’t enjoy making promises to other people as he had a stubborn and headstrong will. Additionally, he was also determined. He wouldn’t be easily swayed if his sights were fixated on a certain issue or person.

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Yes, the man was right. Before Larry, there was a man who came looking for the boss. The man had even engaged in a long discussion with him. Luckily, however, the manufacturer decided to reject the man’s request.

The manufacturer had always thought fate was the most powerful driving force for him to determine if he should collaborate with any parties, just like how he would choose his friends. He had only collaborated with renowned corporations nearby his company. Hence, he had never once considered a joint venture with an overseas company.

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“Don’t you want to bring your business to greater strides? Your business reputation is over the top, and enjoys a great name, even on the international level. Why don’t you take this opportunity to expand your business?” Larry stopped the manufacturer in his tracks and tried to convince the man.

Why is this young man so annoying? I know how to run my business, and I’m not about to let this young man lecture me on how to do that!

“Young man, please leave before I get mad. I have said that I will not agree to work with you guys. I’m sorry but I have to leave right now,” the manufacturer said before he was about to turn around and leave.

It looks like I’ve really failed this time. Larry was disappointed.

He was not just any other manufacturer. Larry knew that it would take a while to convince the eccentric and stubborn boss.

“Ah!” Suddenly, Larry heard a shriek coming from behind him.

He turned around and noticed a boy had fallen into the swimming pool.

There were not many people around, and they were amateurs who were just learning how to swim. Without hesitation, Larry leaped into the pool to save the kid.

“Son, are you alright?” A woman crouched down beside the boy and wept.

The boy sat on the floor as he coughed non-stop to purge the water out of his lungs. His face contorted in agony.

“Are you feeling alright? Spit all the water out of your mouth, quick!” Larry said as he patted hard on the boy’s back.

In the end, the boy finally managed to purge himself of the water he swallowed.

“Mommy.” The little boy bawled as he lurched into the woman’s arms.

It was a very touching sight to behold.

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The manufacturer noticed the sight not far from himself. His lips curled into a contented smile as he nodded.

This young man is quite the Samaritan.

“Go find out what kind of company the Norton Corporation is, and investigate thoroughly on the reasons their former partners decided to terminate the collaboration with them,” the manufacturer ordered his subordinate.

The little boy who almost drowned was actually his grandson. He was merely suppressing his worries to find out who Larry really was. The young man did not disappoint him.

“Larry, what should we do? The boss doesn’t seem like he’s even willing to listen.” Caspian was worried sick.

But what can we do? We’ve already come this far, and it doesn’t seem right to just give up at this juncture.

“It’s alright. We will continue tomorrow. I believe that one day he will agree to collaborate with us,” Larry said with a determined look on his face.

Perseverance is the key to success. Larry had already gotten used to it, given his experience of being in the business for so many years. He had gone through a number of hurdles and challenges, and never once did he shy away from tackling it head-on. He knew that it was an inevitable process that he had to power through for him to grow.

“Mr. Norton, let’s go have lunch,” Jessica said aloud as she made her way over suddenly.

What an annoyingly tenacious woman. Doesn’t she have anything better to do?

“You’re really that free huh. We still have something on, and we’ve got no time to waste on you,” Caspian snapped.

Jessica was infuriated.

“Caspian, would you take a piss and look at yourself in the reflection? I’m asking Larry out, not you. You really have nothing to be smug about,” Jessica retorted in a low voice.

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She really thinks too much of herself. When has Larry ever gone out alone with her anyway? He always brings me along whenever she asks him out. Come to think of it, why is Larry getting involved with this kind of woman anyway? Hmm, I'm getting ahead of myself. This woman is the one who's clinging onto Larry.

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"Ms. Zimmer, are you really that lonely? Let me enlighten you then. There's a nightclub full of men just a hundred meters away from here. You may entertain yourself with them," Caspian mocked.

"Hey, how can you say such things? I'm really loyal okay?"

The two of them started to argue with each other. Larry did not want to be involved in the pointless argument and left.

Actually, Jessica might really be quite a good match for Caspian. Larry looked at the two from some distance away, and his lips curled into a smile.

He had never seen Caspian arguing with another woman with such gusto. Even with Nancy last time, Caspian had always been gentle and meek. However, Jessica somehow managed to bring out an entirely different side of Caspian.

"Hey, you'd better not step over the line!" Jessica yelled.

"What line? You're the one who's stepping on other people's tails! Always following us around like you've got nothing better to do!" Caspian rebutted.

They're adorable together.

"I'm gonna quit bickering with you. I'll go look for Larry," Jessica said and turned on her heels to find Larry.

"The way she's putting it, it's as if I'm really that keen to talk to her," Caspian retorted and walked over to Larry.

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"Larry, let's go eat," Caspian said.

"Larry, let's go eat," Jessica said the same thing.

Larry felt his head spinning.

Are these two going to torture me again?

"Um, I'm going to the restroom," Larry replied before turning around to leave.

Phew, that was close.

Larry could not help but heave a sigh of relief.

I'd better not get involved with those two so that I could enjoy a meal in peace all by myself.

However, Jessica and Caspian were still blissfully unaware as they waited for Larry to come back to treat them to a good meal.

In the end, the wait for Larry ended in vain after almost half a day.

Afterward, events took a surprising turn on the manufacturer's end. "Larry, what's the matter? Didn't the boss already decline to work with us?" Caspian asked, befuddled by the sudden turn.

Who knew what was going on in the manufacturer's mind. Since the boss asked Larry to meet him, Larry thought he might as well go. Maybe he's revoking his own decision; maybe we still stand the chance of working together with them.

The possibilities were endless. Sometimes things that did not look promising might take a very different turn with just a minor tweak.

"Please stay here, Caspian. There's no need to follow me there," Larry said in a decisive manner.

How can I let him go all alone? Caspian could not bear to let Larry meet the manufacturer alone, given how dangerous the situation was right then.

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“Larry, let me go with you. I’m afraid that something might happen to you,” Caspian said with a worried tone.

“Is there anything worse than Jessica clinging onto me?” Larry turned around to face Caspian suddenly.

He was right. The woman had been following Larry around all day. If it wasn’t for Caspian, the woman would have irritated the crap out of Larry by then.

“Your mission right now is to keep tabs on Jessica. Don’t let her stir anything up. I am serious about this,” Larry said as he adjusted his tie.

Jessica was actually not a bad person, and one might even say that she was quite innocent. Even though she always ended up arguing with Caspian all the time, it was undeniable that the chemistry between the two was endearing.

Larry left after saying a few more words.

Jessica was still deep in slumber right then and did not notice what was going on around there.

The crowd had dismissed while the sea breeze turned chilly. Jessica was laying on a beach chair while Caspian sat on the shore, setting his gaze out front on the sea before him in a relaxed manner.

Actually, she’s quite pretty. Caspian’s lips curled into a smile as he watched her.

She’s just a little fierce, especially when we argue. Does she have to be so damn loud every time? Does she know that she’s being unreasonable most of the time?

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In the private room of a hotel, Larry was sitting in a corner, engrossed in a discussion with the manufacturer.

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“Mr. Norton, I hope I didn’t catch you on a bad time today,” the manufacturer said.

Larry thought the man was being too humble. Moreover, Larry was the one seeking to work with the man.

“No, you’re too humble, Sir,” Larry hurriedly replied.

“Grandpa!” A boy’s voice suddenly rang in Larry’s ears.

He was dumbfounded the moment the door was pushed open.

Isn’t he the boy whom I saved that day? Larry widened his eyes in disbelief.

“I’ve seen what happened the other day, Mr. Norton. Thank you for saving my grandson. My daughter-in-law does not know how to swim,” the manufacturer smiled.

So, this little boy is his grandson. What a small world. Larry chuckled to himself.

Is he considering to work with us because I saved his grandson? Larry cast an inquisitive glance over at the manufacturer sitting next to him.

The man lifted his right hand, and snapped his fingers to summon his people.

His assistant brought over some documents in a jiffy.

“This is for you,” the manufacturer said as he handed over the document to Larry.

He took over the document and immediately flipped through them.

Shouldn’t I be the one to prepare this? He’s already done it all.

Larry was flabbergasted. What was more, the manufacturer had already signed the contract.

Am I dreaming?

Larry could not help but wonder, and he pinched on his hip to make sure he was not in a daze.

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The pain was reassuring. It meant that he was not in his own sweet dream.

"Mr. Norton, are you satisfied with the terms?" The manufacturer asked again.

Larry was beyond elated at the terms he offered. Thank goodness I'm not leaving empty-handed today. It was the outcome that he had anticipated the most.

"To success!" Larry extended his right hand.

The two men exchanged glances and smiled, knowing that their best days were ahead of them.

Larry revered the manufacturer. The man still commanded respect and moral authority even though he was already into his old age.

"Mr. Norton, how long do you plan to stay here? You could come to our place if you'd like to," the boss smiled and extended an invitation.

"I'm heading back the day after tomorrow. There is a lot of work pending back in the office. I will pay you a visit personally next time. Please do come to our country for a holiday sometime, and I'll make the necessary arrangements," Larry was excited to extend his invitation as well.

"I want to go too!" The little boy exclaimed.

The private room was filled with laughter right then.

The atmosphere was warm, and all of them treated Larry as one of their own. As a matter of fact, there were only the manufacturer's family members in the private room other than Larry.

"Ah!" Caspian cried out on the beach.

"What's the matter with you?" Caspian muttered as he turned to look at Jessica behind him.

"You're too damn far away from me, and I can't reach you. That's why I'm throwing the bag of sand at you," Jessica snapped.

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What kind of logic is that? Couldn't she just call out my name? Her intelligence is really questionable.

"You could use your mouth, woman," Caspian snarled at her.

Why is this man so petty? I did just throw some sand at him but does he have to freak out like that?

She actually packed a punch while throwing the sandbag, and it hit right at the lower back of Caspian's head. He really couldn't be blamed for complaining about the pain.

"Hey, where's Larry? Why don't I see him all morning?" Jessica asked as she glanced at the surroundings.

It was a funny question.

"Weren't you sleeping all morning? It's a wonder if you could see him. You sleep like your friends who wallow in the mud! I guess even an earthquake wouldn't be able to wake you."

Jessica was seething with fury at his remark.

Is he implying that I'm a pig? Is he tired of staying alive?

"Caspian, what did you say?" Jessica pointed at his nose and berated the man.

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Is she seriously asking me to call her a pig again? My goodness, she's asking for it. Caspian turned around and refused to look at the woman.

She's only quiet when she's sleeping.

"Are you ignoring me? Come over here! What did you say? Did you just call me a pig?" Jessica clutched tightly at Caspian's arms and yelled at the man.

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"I did not say that. You're the only one saying that. Keep away from me, let me go!" Caspian pointed at her arms and said.

I will not let you go. How dare you imply that I'm a pig!

"You b*st*rd! How dare you say that I'm a pig?" Jessica took another sandbag aside and hurled it at the man's head.

Larry suddenly appeared when the two were fighting.

"Could the two of you be more aware of your images in the public?" Larry spoke in hushed tones.

The two of them went quiet.

"It's your fault. You said that I'm a pig," Jessica grumbled in a low voice.

"I..."

Caspian wanted to refute but thought better of it.

"Mr. Norton. Your best friend here bullied me by hitting me and scolding me." Jessica stood up and swayed Larry's arms from side to side to protest to him.

The two of them are a good match for one another. It's really good if they end up together.

"When did I scold you? I never hit women, okay? Don't slander me," Caspian rushed to explain himself.

However, Jessica was not listening to a word he said, and insisted that Larry did her justice.

"Okay, so what do you want me to do?" Larry was getting irritated by her tenacity and asked aloud.

"I want him to be my servant for three days!" Jessica pointed at Caspian as the woman yelled.

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What? Has she gone mental? Why would I agree to be her servant?

“Jessica, is there something wrong with your head? How can you say something like that?” Caspian spared her no niceties and snapped.

“See, Larry. He’s scolding me.” Jessica clutched tightly at Larry’s arms and said in a small voice.

Yeah, thank the heavens that I’m only scolding you. If you weren’t a woman, I’m going to hit you right in the face!

What is in her head, exactly? How does she keep coming up with these weird notions? And there are endless streams of them!

“I think you two should work this out yourselves. I’m just an outsider, and I sure as hell do not have the right to butt into what is clearly a matter between the two of you. So, please decide on your own. I’ll get going then.” Larry turned around to leave.

I’d better not get involved in this mess. Larry has achieved his target for his overseas trip this time. His next step would be to consider the direction that his company would undertake in the future.

“Hey, Larry!” Jessica called out behind him.

Caspian peered at the woman and said nothing.

“Caspian, you have to make it up to me!” She yelled again.

How is this woman so childish? One moment she’s angry, and the next she’s all smiles again? He had never noticed this side of Jessica. Now that he was aware of it, he was starting to regret that he even cared about it in the first place.

“I don’t want to talk to you. Quit following me around!” Caspian got up to leave right after.

“No, you can’t leave me here all alone. I’m scared!” Jessica yelled.

Caspian broke into a chuckle at her remark.

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What is she even afraid of? It's not like the beach is deserted or anything. She's an easy-going kind of girl too, what is there to be afraid of? She's got it the other way round. It's good enough that people are not intimidated by her.

"Larry, what did the boss say?" Caspian asked the man who was standing before him with a serious look.

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"Well, I'd say it was a success. We'll be able to go back soon," said Larry slowly.

This is great! I can finally go back and Jessica will no longer pester me. Larry felt elated at the prospect.

"Where is Ms. Zimmer? Did you lose her or something?" queried Larry again.

"I doubt anyone will disturb that tiger-lady. She's spending some time alone at the beach, worry not," replied Caspian, his voice low.

That being said, it is getting dark outside. Why isn't she back yet? A faint hint of worry flashed in Caspian's eyes.

"Surely you're not worried about her being abducted or something?" mused Larry aloud.

But why hasn't she shown up yet? She's in her twenties, for Christ's sake. Surely she'd be able to find her way back on her own? Caspian snorted coldly.

"Please. Who'd want to kidnap someone who looks like that? If there's a kidnapping, she's likely the culprit."

The pair sat at the table in silence, occasionally broken by the sounds of Larry's keyboard. Caspian flipped through a magazine, visibly bored. He suddenly missed Jessica. When they were together, there was never quite a moment of peace. Jessica was quite the chatterbox, after all. Now that she was not there, he could not help but feel worried.

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Was she going to find her way back at some point? It has been a while. Did something happen to her?

Caspian clenched his fist, feeling very uneasy.

Suddenly, the shrill sound of the phone rang, breaking his train of thought. Larry reached over to pick it up.

"Hello."

"Hello, am I speaking to Mr. Larry?"

The voice did not belong to someone he knew, but how did the person know who he was? He looked at the phone suspiciously.

"Yes, this is Larry. To whom am I speaking to?"

"It's like this. We have a lady who introduced herself as Jessica, an acquaintance of yours. She asked that we call you to come and get her because she lost her way."

What kind of nonsense is this? Jessica got lost? In spite of the other party's patience in explaining the situation to him, Larry was still confounded by the whole situation.

She is a grown-ass woman, how is her sense of direction still so bad?

Caspian sounded anxious. "What is it, Larry?"

"Let's go. We need to pick up Jessica. Look at what you did! You forgot about her, and now she's lost. How is she going to find her way home?" Larry's tone was mild as he looked at Caspian's worry-etched face.

Caspian could only nod and ran outside immediately.

At the time, Jessica was huddled in a corner, visibly afraid. Several people had tried to talk to her to alleviate her fears but to no avail.

"Jessica?" Caspian shouted her name as soon as he showed up.

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However, Jessica barely gave him a reaction from the corner she was in.

"I'd really like to apologize for the trouble. She is a friend of mine, so you can just leave her to me."

Suddenly, Jessica stood up hurled herself into Larry's arms, sobbing.

"Hush now, it's alright." Larry tried to soothe her and gently patted her back.

Caspian watched the whole scene unfurl and felt his heart clench.

What did she go through? How could she suddenly get lost? The beach was not even that far away from the hotel, for starters. It was only a few minutes away! How did she end up at the police station, of all places?

"Let's go." Larry then proceeded to help her up and they all prepared to leave.

"Excuse me, policeman? How did she end up here?" enquired Caspian.

The policeman explained, "Oh, she was really out of it when we found her. I think she was swindled, but fortunately, her sense of self-preservation prevailed."

Caspian had not realized exactly how seedy this place was. His gaze darkened as he pondered over what the policeman said.

However, he could not deny that he had a hand in this. If he hadn't just left her so impulsively then, this would never have happened.

Caspian could still hear the sounds of Larry comforting Jessica.

Jessica's face remained impassive. Her gaze seemed hazy and lost. Caspian sat next to them, just as speechless.

"Well, Ms. Zimmer, I'm sorry. It was all my fault." Caspian could not control the outpouring of guilt in his voice. "If I hadn't left you alone, none of this would've happened."

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“Larry?” Jessica’s hoarse voice broke the silence.

“I don’t want to see him. Send him away.”

Larry looked uncomfortably at Jessica before turning his gaze towards Caspian.

It would appear that she was truly hurt by Caspian’s actions. Larry could only shake his head and sigh. Caspian then promptly left the scene without a word.

He had no desire to make things any harder for Larry, nor did he want to make Jessica feel any sadder.

“May I rest my head on your shoulder?” Her request sounded formal, but Larry could sense a hint of a plea in her tone.

He hesitated, but finally obliged.

“Caspian did not mean anything by it. We all thought you were capable of finding your way back. It’s not that far away, is it?”

“My sense of direction is absolutely terrible. I’m serious,” came Jessica’s mild response.

“When I was very young, my mother once brought me shopping. I then got lost. It happened so abruptly that I didn’t even know what to do. If my father hadn’t alerted the police, I could’ve been kidnapped.”

My biggest problem is that I do not have a sense of direction at all. I’ve tried to hide it, but I have a crippling fear of being abandoned.” As she said this, Jessica snaked her arm around Larry’s, akin to a wounded animal seeking comfort.

“You should’ve said something. I’d been wondering why you were so intent on following us around everywhere,” replied Larry.

He could understand someone not having a sense of direction, but he never imagined Jessica to be thus afflicted. Apparently, she had gone through a lot as well.

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“Well, I was too embarrassed to admit. How could I just mention something like this casually? But Larry, I have a request. In the future, don’t leave me behind like this please? I was terrified!” Jessica’s lower lip trembled briefly before she burst into tears again.

Why was she crying again? Larry hurriedly picked up the box of tissues nearby and gave it to her.

“You have no idea how terrified I was, out there all alone. I was worried that I would be kidnapped or murdered! When I was abroad, I’d constantly hear about lone women getting murdered. All of it was true!”

How the heck did she stay abroad for so long? Larry looked suspiciously at the woman in front of him, somewhat curiously.

“Why don’t you return home?”

“Because Dad refused to let me go back, claiming that things were too complicated. He didn’t want to put me in danger. You know how businessmen have to exercise caution.”

This was the first time that Larry and Jessica have managed a quiet conversation in each other’s presence. This was also the first time that Jessica had been so open and honest with Larry.

Larry suddenly felt a little relieved. At the very least, he now understood that Jessica was not entirely fearless after all.

She was but a woman. A cold light flashed in Larry’s eyes.

“Hey, look, that man is so handsome.”

“Yes, his girlfriend is also very beautiful.”

“Wait, why is that woman crying?”

“I don’t know, but look at how warm their eyes are! I think they’re both very much in love!”

Not too far away, two girls were observing the pair and secretively took photos from time to time even though their backs were turned to them.

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Even if they had their backs turned, Joan could tell who they were at a glance.

“And then what? Your dad has not shown up since?” asked Larry coldly.

Yes, that’s exactly what happened. When she first went home, her father warned her against staying too long. He even suggested that she did not return at all. Jessica, however, did not heed her father’s advice and remained there until her trip with Larry and Caspian. However, she had also since been unable to reach her father.

Jessica noticed that her father’s phone had been disconnected, somehow.

Maybe he is angry? Sometimes, men can really behave like whiny, pouty, children.

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Jessica noticed that her father did not treat her as a daughter. Instead, she was regarded as a friend or even a peer. It may have been strange, but Jessica admitted that the dynamic did lead to them both having a good relationship.

“Do you think something has happened to your father?” Larry had blurted the question out of nowhere.

In an instant, Jessica raised her head and looked at him angrily.

“Excuse me? More like something has happened to your dad instead. Mine has only gone abroad for a while, so how could something have happened? What are you implying?” She glared fiercely at him, clearly angered at the insinuation that some misfortune had befallen her father.

Larry was a little startled by her outburst. After all, he had merely been reminding her. Besides, she had been unable to reach him for some time now, even though she made two calls. It was not too far-fetched to assume that something had happened. This is your father, Jessica. Not some friend.

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"Alright, I'll drop it. You seem to be alright now, I think? Why don't we call Caspian and grab a bite together?" suggested Larry in a low voice.

"I don't want to!" shouted Jessica abruptly.

What the hell is wrong with her now? Why does her temper flare like that without warning? Is she seriously expecting me to abandon my brother in arms just because she threw a little tantrum?

'Alright, alright. Stop fussing. Hurry up, pull yourself together, and we'll go and eat.' Larry pursed his lip, his expression a little unhappy.

He had never been the type to fuss over or wheedle about with women. To him, things were black and white. There was no need to fuss over something so minor. Larry was already exhausted enough dealing with situations at work and could not be bothered to entertain such trivial notions.

"I just don't want to see Caspian! When he left, I told him how scared I was, but he never listened! He left me there all alone!"

But had Caspian not clarified that it was an accident? Accidents happen all the time! I really don't know what is wrong with this woman.

"Caspian has already apologized! I think you should just let things slide. Besides, he also mentioned being in a foul mood at the time," said Larry assuringly.

If a man is in a bad mood, he can just abandon a defenseless woman? Where's the logic in that? And if he gets married and things go sour, is he going to abandon his wife too? Wow, this guy is straight-up trash.

"Furthermore, you are not his girlfriend or his wife. What obligation does he have to care for you anyway?"

Jessica trembled at the notion.

Deep down, she knew that he was right.

Caspian was observing the situation anxiously from a distance.

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"Alright, enough of this. Let's go eat," said Larry hurriedly. He seemed to be agitated as well. They had since been seated at a restaurant. The food had arrived, but it remained on the table, untouched.

Well, fine. He can have it his way then, sheesh. Jessica tried to focus on her food instead. She started to eat, shoving large bites of meat and vegetables into her mouth. She had not noticed what she had eaten until she sat upright, feeling a little ill.

A thin sheen of sweat covered her forehead as she swallowed audibly.

Wait, this does not feel right. What is this odd feeling? Caspian noticed the change in her pallor and stared at Jessica, a little worried.

"What's wrong?" It took a while before Caspian decided to ask her.

"I'm not feeling well," replied Jessica in a low voice as she clutched her stomach.

Both men were stunned by Jessica's pained expression. Very quickly, they came to their senses and made the necessary arrangements.

"Hospital, now." Caspian picked Jessica up and ran outside towards the car.

In the ward, Jessica lay restlessly on the bed. Her eyes were closed, but she looked frightfully pale. It was as if all color had drained from her face.

"Doctor, what's wrong with her?"

"I think she had something she was allergic to."

What kind of food is she allergic to? Didn't she pay attention to her food at all? Was she distracted by something else?

"Caspian, don't worry. We're already at the hospital." The sound of Larry's voice snapped Caspian out of his reverie. Larry then patted Caspian on the back gently to allay his fears.

"I'm going to get some fruit. Be back soon." With that, Caspian stood up and left.

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Larry's gaze wandered around the room for a bit before it landed on the frail-looking woman on the hospital bed. There was no mistaking the worry in his eyes.

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For someone who seemed to be so put-together all the time, she looked remarkably vulnerable in this state. With a poor sense of direction, food allergies, there seemed to be no end to the suffering she had to endure. Larry sighed inaudibly and sat down on the sofa next to her bed.

Suddenly, Jessica began to mumble something in her sleep. Larry was just barely able to make out what she was saying.

Is that what I think it is? She's calling for her father? With slow, measured steps, Larry walked towards her.

Jessica's face was flushed, with beads of sweat all over her face. The doctor had taken a look at her and mentioned that it was a normal reaction. She would be alright after a while.

"Dad, don't go! Don't leave me," murmured Jessica.

Without warning, she stretched out her right hand and firmly held onto Larry's, refusing to let go.

Larry tried to tug his hand away but he could not escape her vise-like grip. Does she think I'm her father?

Also, it has been so long. Her father had yet to reach out to her. Under normal circumstances, any parent would have called to enquire about their daughter, who happened to be with their competitor. Larry's gaze darkened as he thought about the kind of mess she was in.

He gently patted the sleeping woman's arm, trying to wake her from her apparent nightmare. "Jessica? Hey. Wake up. It's Larry."

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Jessica awoke with a shrill scream and opened her eyes, feeling a little dazed.

What happened? Why does it feel so warm? Larry eyed Jessica curiously.

"Don't worry, it's normal. Her body temperature has risen a little, but it should pass in a while." The doctor checked her BP and checked on her one more time before he opened the door and left.

"Jessica, do you feel better?" enquired Larry gently.

Jessica turned to look at the man in front of her in earnest. Tears began to form in her eyes.

Larry was at a loss. He could not understand what elicited that response.

"Why are you crying? Are you feeling unwell? Are you in pain? Shall I fetch the doctor again?" He got up urgently and prepared to leave the room.

"No! That won't be necessary." Jessica tightened her grip around Larry's waist to prevent him from leaving.

A hysterical cry soon filled the air shortly after. Larry did not know why she was crying, but he couldn't bear to leave her alone in this state.

"I-it's nothing. I just dreamt that my Dad died. What was I to do?" Jessica's voice shook before she broke into tears again. "He was going to leave me behind. He... didn't want me anymore."

What is with this woman? She usually seems so fearless, but now she's here whining like a child when something bad happens.

"It was just a nightmare. Besides, aren't dreams usually the opposite of the reality? Don't dwell on it. Just take care of yourself and recover," said Larry gently. "Do you know what you're allergic to, at least?"

"Well, I am severely allergic to zucchini."

What? Larry frowned. She seemed to have eaten half the serving of zucchini. Does this idiot not look before she puts stuff into her mouth?

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'Well, why did you eat that dish?'

"You mean the vegetable stew? I wasn't paying attention, I think. I was distracted," said Jessica petulantly.

Larry took a deep breath and tried to calm himself down.

She was truly an odd woman. Someone this odd was definitely a match for Caspian. Larry had never encountered someone like her before.

"Larry, do you hate me?" asked Jessica in a low voice. She paused to wipe the tears from her eyes before looking at him again.

What is there to hate? If anything, isn't that a problem for her boyfriend? However, he merely felt irritated. Larry had made plans for the next few days. With Jessica in the hospital, he could only postpone them until she recovered.

"Caspian went to get you some fruits. He said you like to eat grapes." Larry enunciated each word as he carefully observed her expression.

"Hmph! I'm not eating anything he bought me."

Larry sighed again. I guess she's a tad cute, sometimes. She grows on you. However, such petulance seemed to be common among women. Even for someone like Joan, who had yet to contact him after all this time.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2180

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"Here comes the grapes! Took me a while to find them, but I did. Have a taste?" Having said that, Caspian gave her some of the grapes he had just rinsed clean.

The grapes looked so tantalizing, she was unable to resist.

Jessica popped one into her mouth and chewed thoughtfully before swallowing. "It's big and sweet. A fine product." She smiled contentedly at the taste.

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“Fresh, right? Have some more!” said Caspian sweetly.

Ah, why is this a**hole being so nice to me all of a sudden? Does he have some kind of agenda? Jessica suddenly gave Caspian the once-over as if she was trying to discern something important.

“Say, what are you trying to pull here?” asked Jessica suspiciously.

Is she actually asking me this? Caspian was a little confused when he heard the question.

He just wanted to be nice to her, was that so wrong?

“Don’t overthink this, Jessica. He rarely does something like this. He spent the whole afternoon looking for grapes, which is quite out of character,” said Larry cautiously.

Caspian fidgeted with his collar, seemingly bashful.

Was it truly that simple? Jessica pouted.

Ever since that incident with Jessica, Caspian seemed to be more concerned about her. Larry was truly happy for Caspian upon seeing the interaction between them.

“Ms. Zimmer, have you ever considered Caspian?” asked Larry suddenly.

What the hell is this? What was there to consider? What can someone as uncouth as Caspian do for me, exactly?

“No,” replied Jessica curtly.

She was not sure what Larry even meant by “consideration,” nor had she the desire to find out.

“Are you feeling better?” queried Larry, mildly. “We can go back soon.”

And why would I want to do that? Since it was so difficult for her to leave in the first place, she was hell-bent on having a good time.

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“Say, Larry. Let’s stay for two more days, and then we can go.” Jessica gently nudged Larry’s arm.

However, Larry had no real reason to stay. After all, he had quite a bit of work to do for the company.

Although Dustin was the Norton Corporation’s second-largest shareholder, that man spent almost every day dallying and barely spared a second thought towards company affairs. Even if he did take an interest in the Norton Corporation, Larry would still fret over it.

“How about this? I’ll leave Caspian here with you. Some urgent matters require my attention, unfortunately. How does that sound?” Larry noticed that Jessica’s expression suddenly became tense.

“But I don’t want to be with Caspian. I’d rather hang out with you.” As she said this, Jessica tightened her grip on Larry’s arm.

“Hey, watch it.” Larry huffed angrily and then pushed her arm off.

No need to get so iffy! I was just kidding. Sheesh. Jessica was definitely not pleased.

“Two days is all you have. Otherwise, you’re staying here on your own,” said Larry nonchalantly as he walked out of the ward.

He needed to stay the hell away from this woman. Larry would rather have gone back alone, leaving Caspian and Jessica here. However, he was worried that Jessica would cause a scene.

After all, she was still the daughter of a manufacturing company magnate. If anything happened to her, there would be hell to pay. Even though they no longer had a standing agreement, he did not want the Norton Corporation’s reputation to be sullied.

“What is it, Larry?” Out in the corridor, Caspian had been waiting for him. He seemed nervous, however.

“What do you think of Jessica?” Larry thought that there was no reason to sugarcoat the topic.

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Caspian flushed and shuffled his feet shyly.

How was he going to explain this?

Caspian was quite reserved. If he really liked someone, he tended to keep things to himself and cared for the person silently. Caspian was definitely not the type to shower compliments and sweet nothings on his lover either. However, it was through his actions that his simple, down-to-earth character was exhibited.

"I think she's alright," murmured Caspian. He lowered his head and seemed even more embarrassed than before.

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