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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2211

"Hey, what's wrong? Why are you scowling? Did you hear what I say?" Jessica tugged on Larry's sleeve and pouted.

Is she dumb? Can't she see that I'm upset right now? I can't believe she's trying to act cute. Larry loathed those who tried to fawn when he was upset. Joan knew that well.

"Take a look for yourself." Larry pointed at Caspian's ward that was not far ahead of them.

What the hell? Did I seriously beat someone up? Isn't it quite unlikely? I'm a girl, for goodness' sake. I can't be that strong.

Jessica trudged along the hallway nervously until she reached the ward.

When she saw Caspian on the bed, she finally relaxed.

"What happened to you? Why are you here?" Jessica gave Caspian's shoulder a light tap and demanded in a loud voice.

It's true that alcohol is the crux of all things bad! I can't believe she forgot everything. Forget it, then. Caspian sighed and flashed a grin.

Just then, Larry sauntered in and remarked, "He wouldn't be in this state if it wasn't for you."

Huh? What has this got to do with me? Caspian obviously got into a fight with others. Not only was I drunk, but there's no way I would be strong enough to beat him to a pulp. The most I could do was probably curse at him.

"What happened to you? Tell me who beat you up and I'll avenge you. Since you've always been nice to me, I shall help you," Jessica patted her chest and declared.

Caspian stared at her dubiously. Is she really sober?

"Just stay here and take care of Caspian," Larry interjected in a mocking tone. "Don't go anywhere else and create trouble. After all, your dad isn't here to clean up the mess after you."

Create trouble? When did I do that? Jessica wondered why Larry was being this sarcastic early in the morning.

She leaned nearer to Caspian and whispered in his ear, "What's wrong with Larry? Did he have a fight with his wife? Why is he so rude today?"

At once, the doctor and Caspian burst out in laughter.

"I heard that. Regarding last night's situation, I hope there won't be a repeat of it," Larry commanded and spun on his heels to leave.

Has he lost his mind? Why is he suddenly so indifferent? Jessica stared at his retreating figure as sorrow flitted across her face.

She couldn't remember doing anything wrong last night and was caught surprise by Larry's sudden fury.

"It's fine. Larry's just worried about me. Don't worry," Caspian consoled her.

Jessica knew Larry was upset because of Caspian's situation, but she had no idea why he was mad at her. In fact, she should be the one mad at him, for he kept refusing to eat with her.

"Please don't drink in the nightclub alone in the future. It's too dangerous," Caspian uttered suddenly.

"What happened last night?" Jessica demanded. "Tell me, or I will continue doing that."

After a moment of hesitation, Caspian poured out the whole story to prevent her from going to the nightclub alone again.

Instantly, Jessica felt rather embarrassed.

She finally understood why Larry was being so stiff earlier. It turned out that Caspian got hurt protecting her from the thugs. Remorse and guilt filled her heart instantly.

"Uh, Caspian. I'm sorry. You wouldn't be lying here if it wasn't for me," she mumbled softly.

"I'm fine. It's nothing serious. I'll recover in a few days, so there's no need to worry," Caspian answered promptly.

Jessica knew he was trying to console her. Looking at his wounds, he must be doubling over from the agony, but...

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Am I that unreasonable? Jessica's nails had dug into her flesh, her emotions a complicated mess.

She knew Caspian liked her, and she had rejected his confession. Still, she allowed him to follow her to the nightclub. He even ended up getting hurt. Suddenly, she felt disdain toward herself.

"Don't think too much about it. It's normal to get hurt. Besides, isn't it normal for men to protect women?" Caspian returned nonchalantly.

Jessica's face went pink under his gaze.

He's right, but this is different.

"What would you like to eat? I'll go get it for you," she hurriedly changed the subject.

"I'd like some dumplings. Can you make them yourself?" Huh? Make dumplings myself? Seriously?

"Uh, I'll buy some for you. I'm not good at cooking." With that, she exited the ward in a hurry.

Caspian was left alone in the ward, chuckling to himself.

Meanwhile, Larry was still busy at work in his office.

His assistant came in and greeted him. "Mr. Norton."

"Did you find something?" Larry didn't beat around the bush.

"Yes, but..." the assistant trailed off hesitantly.

Sensing something was amiss, Larry looked up at his assistant solemnly.

"An accident killed them both," she added softly.

Back at the hospital, Jessica returned with the dumplings. "Here you go." She handed them to Caspian.

"Mm, not bad," praised Caspian.

Jessica shook her head at how easily Caspian was pleased.

"Hey, are you hungry? Do you want some?" Caspian offered, feeling a tad shy.

"No, I'm not hungry. You should finish them yourself. And I'm going to leave soon," she responded.

"Where are you going?"

"None of your business." With that, she stalked to the sofa and sat down before flipping through a magazine.

Since she refused to divulge further, Caspian didn't press on.

Shortly after, Jessica left. Caspian lay in bed and spaced out.

What's wrong with me? I could've defeated those thugs. So why did I end up at the hospital instead? There was a glint of despondence in his eyes.

"Have you eaten?" Larry showed up and asked.

"Mm, I've just eaten. What about you?"

"I'm fine. I have something important to tell you," said Larry in all seriousness.

Caspian instantly put on a serious look. Larry didn't like to joke. Seeing how grave he was, Caspian knew something huge must've happened.

"Jessica isn't here, right? It's about her parents. They were involved in an accident abroad and passed away," revealed Larry.

Caspian was thunderstruck.

He knew that there was no way Jessica could handle the truth. After all, she was her parents' only daughter. Her parents adored her a lot, so the news of their death would be a fatal blow to her.

He immediately asked, "Larry, is there a possibility of you receiving the wrong information?"

"No. I've investigated for a long time, so it's true. Jessica is clueless, so don't inform her for now. We need to break the news to her slowly so she can accept it readily," Larry answered slowly.

There was simply no way she would accept her parents' death easily. Caspian couldn't help but worry about how she would take it.

"Are you serious, Larry?" he blurted anxiously.

"Caspian, calm down," said Larry as he patted Caspian's shoulder. "It's definitely true. It seems like you will need to treat her well from now on. After all, you are all she has left."

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Naturally, Caspian could take care of her, but he could never replace her parents, ever. It's no wonder that she didn't really talk about her parents recently. Wait, doesn't that mean she has found out about it? But that doesn't seem right. She wouldn't be so calm if she knew about it.

"Alright, stay here and rest. You don't have to worry about work for now. I need to go now." Before Larry left, he reminded Caspian, "Remember to be nice to Jessica."

Caspian shook his head despondently. Seems like Jessica's got a hard time ahead of her... He suddenly felt sorry for her.

"Hey, what's up?" Jessica inquired as she ambled over.

"H-Huh? O-Oh, it's nothing. I-I was just spacing out," Caspian stammered.

Does she know her parents are dead? Caspian scanned the woman before him curiously, his heart engulfed with sadness.

Hmm, I don't think she knows. I guess I have to take things slow.

"Miss, can you help your boyfriend to apply the ointment?" Suddenly, a nurse scurried over and asked for Jessica's help. "I'm too busy to do it now."

Is this a joke? Do we look like a couple? Displeasure flitted across Jessica's gaze.

"She's not my girlfriend," Caspian hurriedly explained.

"Ah, I see," came the nurse's reply. "But I'm really busy and can't help you apply the ointment right now. Why don't you apply it yourself?"

Caspian nodded without a word.

All the while, Jessica was still brooding about the nurse misunderstanding their relationship. Sensing her foul mood, Caspian took the ointment and applied it to his wounds slowly.

"Ngh..." he groaned as a wave of pain rolled through him.

He gritted his teeth against the agony. Jessica, who was seated on the couch, frowned at the sight of him wincing in pain. She stood up and went to him at once.

After all, he got hurt because of her.

"Let me help you. It's not like you can reach it yourself, anyway," Jessica offered.

Oh? Is she offering help? This is a rare moment.

"Thank you, then." As Caspian spoke, he handed the ointment to her.

Jessica was actually a lovely woman. She might seem unreasonable at times, but she was kind-hearted. It was precisely because of the different sides to her character that Caspian fell in love with her.

"Slow down. It hurts," he hissed.

Why is a man like him squealing from the pain? Jessica shook her head.

"Jessica, aren't you a lady? Can't you be gentler?" he continued grumbling.

Ha! Is he implying that I'm not a lady? He'll pay for that.

"Ah!" Suddenly, Caspian's scream pierced the air.

"I'm sorry! You're the most beautiful woman on earth!"

Meanwhile, back at home, Delilah was talking to Joan. "I heard Caspian got hurt, Joan. You should go visit him in the hospital."

Caspian got hurt? But he's Larry's bodyguard! Is Larry alright, then?

"Ms. Young, how did you know Caspian got hurt?" Joan inquired uneasily.

"Oh, you weren't home yesterday afternoon. Larry came home to take his briefcase. He was talking on his phone, and I overheard his conversation," Delilah explained.

Joan breathed a sigh of relief. So he's alright... That's good to hear.

"Okay, I'll head to the hospital now." Joan whipped her phone out and made a call.

Jessica was busy helping Caspian to apply the ointment, so none of them heard the phone vibrating beside.

What is Caspian doing? This is frustrating. Joan grumbled inwardly.

Suddenly, she thought of someone. I should ask Nancy to come along.

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"Hello? Nancy, where are you? I heard that Caspian has been hospitalized. Shall we drop by and pay him a visit?"

"Are you serious? What happened to him? Is everything fine? I'm on my way there, Joan!" Immediately after she finished her sentence, Nancy hung up the call.

I guess she still holds him dear, huh? Joan smiled when she thought about it.

"Caspian, what the heck is going on? Why have you ended up in such a miserable state?" Nancy raised her volume, looking irked.

He answered with a question of his, "What is a heavily pregnant woman doing here in the hospital? Get going and return home immediately!"

What's gotten into him? He is actually trying to pull my leg? Is he dating someone?

Nancy stared at the man on the bed with a confused look as she had a hard time comprehending his odd behavior.

The man then asked with his brows arched in confusion, "Why are you looking at me like I have done something wrong?"

All of a sudden, laughter echoed across the room.

He must have done something behind my back. Otherwise, it would be impossible for him to go through such drastic changes within such a short period.

"Why don't you be frank with me? Have you fallen for someone? As long as you share everything with me, I'll definitely try my best to matchmake you and her! What do you think?" Nancy tapped on his shoulder and offered.

If he didn't know her well, he would have taken up her offer. Unfortunately, he knew it was merely an attempt to get to the bottom of the things going on behind the scenes.

Hence, Caspian brought up something to divert her attention. He asked, "Joan, how's everything going for you these days? Are you okay?"

Nancy interrupted their conversation and demanded, "Huh? Have you not heard what I've said? Are you trying to divert our attention? Joan, please ignore him until he reverts back to me!"

She's definitely the nastiest woman amongst the ones I have encountered. Perhaps it's true when they say it's tough to deal with a pregnant woman.

"Hurry up and tell us everything about this woman you have a crush on!"

Wait! That sounds so wrong! I just have a slight crush on Jessica. Larry is the one she has a thing for!

Caspian lowered his head and muttered, "I have not done anything! I mean, how was I supposed to go around and hit on others when I have spent most of my time in the ward? You need to stop being so paranoid."

Nope! Something's definitely going on! With her arms folded, Nancy was lost in thought, trying to come up with a way to get the man to confess.

As silence fell in the ward, the trio exchanged glances with one another; each had different concerns in mind.

Nancy had her eyes glued to Caspian because she was determined to get her hands on his secret. Meanwhile, Joan glanced at Caspian before shifting her gaze to Nancy, but the one she had in mind was Larry.

After he took a peek at his watch, Caspian suggested, "Joan, I'm pretty sure you have a lot of things on your plate, don't you? Why don't you head back first? I will be fine!"

When Joan was about to leave, Nancy rushed over to her side and gestured for her to take a seat and stay for a little longer.

Smirking, Nancy approached the man on the bed and queried, "Caspian, how could you try to chase us away when we came here to see you out of concern?"

Whenever she put on a goofy front, Caspian knew she was up to no good. After all, he knew her like the back of his hand after being married to her for years.

Glancing at his watch, he muttered, "Nah, I just don't want to take up too much of your time."

Oh, God! If Jessica makes her way back when they're still around, how should I introduce them to one another? I can't possibly tell Jessica that Nancy's my ex-wife who has become a close friend of mine, can I? It sounds ridiculous on so many levels!

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Joan had no idea what Nancy had up her sleeve, but since the latter seemed to be having a great time, she decided to play along.

"Caspian, what should I get you for dinner?" Jessica asked while making her way into the ward.

When she raised her head and saw the women before her, she was dumbfounded.

What's going on? Why is Joan here? What about the pregnant woman by Caspian's bed?

"I—" Staring at Caspian on the bed, Jessica couldn't bring herself to carry on with her sentence.

Before she knew it, Nancy had approached her and initiated a handshake. "Hello! I'm Nancy, Caspian's sister!"

His sister? Why don't they resemble each other at all? After sizing up the woman in front of her, Jessica gave Caspian a once-over.

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In the end, she decided to pay no heed to their relationship since it had nothing to do with her. On the other hand, Joan, who happened to be there, took her by surprise.

Jessica greeted, "Hello, Ms. Watts."

Joan replied in a courteous manner, "Hello, Ms. Zimmer."

Since she wasn't entirely sure about her relationship with Larry, it was only natural for her to treat Jessica courteously.

Suddenly, Jessica suggested, "Since you guys are here, care to join me for a meal?"

The person who had piqued her interest was Joan instead of Nancy. Similarly, Nancy got increasingly curious about Jessica, who had shown up out of the blue.

Joan tapped on Nancy's shoulder and asked, "What's wrong?"

"I can't be sure, but I think Jessica is up to no good."

Nancy had always been known for her oddly precise hunch. Thus, Joan was certain that Jessica had some hidden agenda. At that thought, she sighed and did not say another word.

Right then, Nancy regretted her decision to join Jessica for a meal and insisted on having Joan tagging along.

Jessica said courteously, "Please have a seat and order everything you want. It's my treat today."

Huh? Why is she offering to buy us a meal? What makes her think she's in a position to do that? Since it's our first meeting, isn't it better for us to pay for our own meal?

Nancy rejected outright, "That's very generous of you, but I don't think that's appropriate because we have always footed our own bills."

Oh? She's quite a cautious woman!

Jessica shrugged her shoulders and replied with a sneer, "Sure! I don't mind!"

There was a tendency for people to expose their true colors over a meal, especially when it involved three women.

Jessica went on to ask, "Ms. Watts, aren't you pretty occupied lately?"

Nancy was taken aback by her question, and it took her a while to snap out of her confusion and put on a straight face.

Does that mean they're acquainted with one another?

Joan answered with a sheepish grin, "N-Not really."

Jessica pressed on in a sarcastic manner, "Oh? Haven't you been taking care of another man in the hospital?"

What does she mean by another man? Who's the man she's talking about when Larry is the only one Joan truly cares about? Nancy glanced at Jessica with a puzzled expression before looking at the equally befuddled Joan.

Joan replied, "Ms. Zimmer, I'm afraid I don't get you."

Are you sure? Stop pretending like you're a fool! Jessica snorted in disdain, deeming her a pretentious woman because she hadn't kept a distance from other men when she had gotten married.

Thus, she thought Joan wasn't serious about her relationship with Larry.

Little did she know that Caiden once saved Joan from a life-threatening incident.

Jessica remarked sarcastically, "Stop acting like you're not aware of the things you have done! I have never seen a married woman taking care of another man apart from her husband! If you're not serious about your husband, why don't you file for divorce as soon as possible?"

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Hearing the woman's increasingly brazen words, Nancy's frustration was written all over her face. She was certain that Joan had a good reason for her actions. Moreover, she knew that the latter was not a loose woman like Jessica had accused her of being.

Hence, she was completely irked by Jessica, the busybody who had poked her nose into other people's business without a clue about the truth.

Unable to contain her rage, Nancy finally rebuked, "Please mind your words in the future, Ms. Zimmer. I have personally witnessed the things Larry and Joan went through as a couple. They are a pair made in heaven, and you need to stop defaming others and making baseless accusations."

There was no way she would allow others to push Joan around.

Who the heck is this woman? Who gave her the audacity to pick on Joan? How is she related to Larry and Caspian? Staring at Nancy in the eye, Jessica caressed her chin in contemplation.

Joan broke the silence by retorting, "Ms. Zimmer, I think you must have misunderstood something because I'm not having an affair with another man. Things are fine between my husband and me. Speaking of which, you need to mind your own business and get yourself a spouse as soon as possible because you're not getting any younger. Otherwise, I'm afraid you'll have to get used to being single for the rest of your life."

Since she had never done anything behind Larry's back, she had no reason to tolerate the vicious woman's defaming remarks at all.

On top of that, she was not afraid of offending Norton Corporation's potential partners at all because the deal had been sealed.

Glancing at Joan, Jessica remarked in a contemptuous manner, "Are you sure? But I have seen you taking care of Caiden in the hospital, doing his laundry, preparing his meal, and wiping him down."

Where did this baseless accusation come from? Indeed, I prepared Caiden's meals and did his laundry, but I never once wiped him down! Who was the one who spread the rumor? Could it be her? Joan's eyes burned with rage as she thought about it.

With a smirk, Jessica asked, "Oh? Are you trying to deny it? I saw it a few times when I dropped by the hospital! Hasn't Larry brought it up? Judging by your expression, he must have not, huh?"

It was all part of her plan to make Joan feel bad.

"I was just returning the favor as Caiden once saved my life! Besides, Larry is aware of that too! Why don't you ask him instead? It's getting late. Since we're done with our meal, allow us to excuse ourselves."

After Joan finished her sentence, she got up from her seat, but Jessica had no intention to let her off the hook just yet.

"Huh? Can you stay? Otherwise, I'm afraid Larry will put the blame on me."

What does she mean? Why would Larry blame her? He doesn't have time for these trivial and silly matters when he's occupied with work!

Joan announced while making her way out, "That's none of your business because I'll explain everything to him on my own!"

"No! You're not allowed to leave just yet!" Jessica tried to stop Joan from leaving as she still had more to say.

Joan replied in a hushed voice, "What else do you have in mind? I'll spare you another few minutes."

Sneering once again, Jessica tried to pull herself together. She refused to believe Joan wasn't influenced by her remarks at all.

"Ms. Watts, I have been keeping this to myself, but since you're here today, allow me to make myself clear. I have a thing for Larry, and I will never leave him. So please return him to me," Jessica blurted out everything she had in mind without any hesitation.

Nancy was taken aback by the confession, yet she tried her best to calm herself down and regained her composure after a short while.

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What the heck? It turns out Jessica has a crush on Larry instead of Caspian! This is definitely beyond my expectation! I can't believe another woman has shown up out of nowhere after Gabriella! Just give me a break already!

The heavily pregnant Nancy approached Jessica and declared, "It's better for you to give up because there's nothing you can do to drive them apart. In other words, things will never work out between both of you."

It's unfair! Why do they get to live a blissful life together, yet I can't even stay by Larry's side? Why are they head over heels in love with one another, yet he refuses to reciprocate the affection I have for him?

The diffident Jessica added, "N-No! I think I stand a pretty good chance! He started hesitating after finding out about the affair she had with another man! On top of that, he's aware of the extra miles I have taken for his sake!"

Overwhelmed by emotions and questions, Joan's eyes dimmed.

It turns out he's aware of everything all along! If that's the case, why hasn't he confronted me yet? Is he disappointed in me as well?

Jessica added, "You're the one who should give up! As someone with a complicated background and messed up relationships, you don't deserve him!"

I'm sure something's wrong with her! No one in their right mind will ever speak so blatantly! Forget it. I can't let her push me around. Once Joan gathered her thoughts, she left the private room.

"Joan!" Nancy brought herself up and went after the departing woman immediately.

As she was running up to Joan, Nancy yelled, "Hey, Joan! Please slow down! I can't keep up with you!"

She patted her chest and said, "What's Jessica's deal? You can count on me to get your revenge, but why don't you tell me everything first? What's going on? Who's the other man she has been talking about?"

Joan was slightly taken aback by Nancy's words, but let out a chuckle almost immediately.

Her friend could be a pain in the ass at times, yet she had always been the same sprightly person.

Confused by Joan's response, Nancy asked, "What's so funny? I'm being serious, okay?"

Joan knew that Nancy meant her words, yet she found it unnecessary to take any action against Jessica because she had faith in Larry.

No matter what happened between them in the past, Larry would never turn his back on me!

Joan's eyes gleamed with joy as she orated, "Alright, you need to calm down and prioritize your child's wellbeing for now. When Gabriella tried to take me out, Caiden put his life at stake and saved me, so I offered to look after him because his friends and family members weren't around to help him. It was beyond my expectation for Jessica to make a fuss out of it, but it's not a big deal at all. So don't worry."

So that's what it's all about. But isn't that a normal thing to do?

Why is Jessica making a fuss when Joan is merely returning the favor to the person who saved her? It's not like she's offering herself to him! Hold on! She mentioned that she had a thing for Larry. If that's the case, everything makes sense!

When that particular thought crossed Nancy's mind, she warned, "Joan, you need to watch out for her because I don't think she's going to give up on Larry just yet."

Joan knew how persistent Jessica was because she had seen that woman in Larry's office almost every time she went there, and the latter would stay in his office against his will. Truth be told, she was quite impressed by Jessica's boldness in pursuing what she wanted.

"I'll leave the rest to Larry because there's nothing much I can do to turn the tables around," Joan replied with a hint of despair in her eyes.

Will he even listen to me when he doesn't even want to return home? I wonder if he has been staying away from me on purpose or if he's really occupied with his work. Joan's mind was all over the place after the meal with Jessica.

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Others had always considered marriage the end of a couple's relationship. Joan wondered if that would apply to them as well.

Nancy tapped on Joan's shoulder and said, "You know what? You need to stop overthinking things. I have you covered!"

"Actually, you need to take good care of yourself until your child is here with us. Don't let other things get to you, okay?"

Nancy lowered her head and caressed her tummy with happiness written all over her face. Ever since she was pregnant, she would be overjoyed for no reason, and even the little things Jory did were amusing to her.

"It's getting late. I'll send you home." Joan wrapped her arm around Nancy's and showed her the way out.

Meanwhile, Caspian was on pins and needles in the ward because of Jessica's suggestion to have a meal together with the two women.

"Hey, I brought you some soup." Jessica entered Caspian's ward with a thermos flask.

When Caspian heard the woman's voice, he jolted up from the bed.

"What about the other two? Where are they?" he asked anxiously, wondering if Jessica had mentioned anything she should have kept to herself in front of Joan.

The woman replied nonchalantly, "They made their way back after our meal."

Is that all? What did they talk about throughout their meal? He couldn't be bothered about Jessica finding out that Nancy used to be his spouse or even the fact that Nancy had cheated on him with another man.

The thing that concerned him the most was Joan's condition. He was afraid Joan and Larry would get into another conflict. After all, they had been through all sorts of ups and downs before their relationship finally stabilized.

"Is there anything else you wish to share with me?" Caspian looked her in the eye and asked in a serious tone.

Huh? Is he worried about Joan? Why is he getting so worked up when she's not his wife? Larry should be the one who's anxious!

"What else do you want to know? It was nothing more than a simple meal. On top of that, I have asked her to leave Larry alone."

When Caspian heard Jessica's reply, his eyes widened in disbelief.

Is this woman out of her mind? How could she say such a thing to Joan? Oh, God! Joan is going to overthink things again!

Irked by Jessica's attitude, Caspian reprimanded, "Why did you bring up something like this during the meal? Aren't you aware that Larry will never leave Joan for you? So what are you attempting at?"

Stop behaving like it's such a big deal! Most importantly, it has nothing to do with you! I don't get it! What's so great about that woman? She's not even a match for me! Why won't Larry give up on her?

Since he won't fall in love with me, I won't allow her to have her way either!

"That has nothing to do with you! Why don't you mind your own business?" Jessica tried to end the topic.

Does he even know how it feels to be in love? Stop nagging if you aren't aware of the things going on between them! If they were really in love with one another, the affection they had wouldn't waver just because of an outsider's baseless accusation!

Out of the blue, she asked, "Speaking of which, who's Nancy? Are you guys close?"

Caspian closed his eyes and gasped out his reply. "I consider her a sister of mine."

A sister of yours? Is that all? Well, since she's already pregnant, she can't possibly be romantically involved with Caspian, can she?

"I think she's not half bad."

Caspian shrugged. Duh, I have good taste in women.

Nodding, Jessica continued, "I enjoy being around a bubbly woman like her."

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What the hell? Has she a thing for Nancy? Does that mean she has a unique sexual preference?

Caspian gaped at the woman in front of him and asked, "Have you grown fond of Nancy?"

"Yes!"

As Jessica replied without a second thought, he had a hard time comprehending the rationale behind the woman's words. Although they used to be married, Caspian still found Nancy's actions unpredictable.

"When will I be discharged?" Caspian asked.

"What exactly are you up to? The doctor said it would take at least another fortnight."

Why does it take so long? Caspian was worried about Larry who dealing with the troubling matters involving Norton Corporation on his own, and his displeasure was written all over his face. The situation will drag on indefinitely if there's no one around to help Larry.

"If it's regarding Larry, you don't have to worry because things are fine on his end."

He heaved a sigh of relief when he heard her reply.

On a side note, he couldn't figure out the proper way to break the bad news to her. Afraid she couldn't embrace the truth of her parents' death, he had been keeping her in the dark.

Staring at her warily, he replied, "Jessica, I have a question for you."

Annoyed, she answered with another question, "Are you sure you're a man? Can you cut the small talk and get to the point already?"

How am I supposed to bring this up? Conflicted, he stuttered, "I-I'm sure you understand that our parents won't be able to keep us company until the end of our lives. If your parents leave this world way ahead of you, what are you going to do?"

He directed the question at her as though he was talking about a hypothetical situation while his eyes flickered in curiosity and trepidation.

Jessica replied with a smirk, "What sort of nonsense are you spouting? Nothing can possibly happen to my parents because I'll ensure their safety at all costs. Once they retire, I'll keep them company until the time comes."

The people she loved the most were none other than her parents, and needless to say, they felt the same about her. It had never occurred to her that misfortune would befall her family. Perhaps that was the fundamental of destiny—it would always be unpredictable until the very moment of manifestation.

"It's just an assumption, okay? What if it happens sooner than you thought?" Caspian probed further.

It was something that had never crossed Jessica's mind before because her parents were in the pink of health.

Did something happen to them?

No! It can't be! They have always been so kind! God will never bring them away in such a brutal manner!

Jessica rebuked in a quivering voice, "I won't allow that to happen! You need to stop bringing this up because my parents are just fine! Can't we talk about something else?"

What's gotten into her? Why did she get so worked up all of a sudden? I haven't mentioned anything about the accident, and yet, her eyes are already brimming with tears. Has she figured out the truth? Does she know that we have been deceiving her all this while? Caspian looked at the woman with sympathy and wondered if he should carry on with the topic.

All of a sudden, he said, "Jessica, don't you think it's about time to stop lying to yourself?"

The woman was taken aback, but she regained her composure in no time.

Then, she turned around and asked the man on the bed, "What are you talking about? When did I ever lie to myself?"

"Jessica, are you sure you're not aware of the truth? Your parents are no longer around, and you need to stop torturing yourself. If you're willing to spend the rest of your life—"

"No! You're lying! My parents are currently on a trip abroad! They can't be dead! Shut up, Caspian!" Immediately after she yelled at him, she sprinted out of the ward.

It turned out that she was aware of the heartbreaking truth all along, yet she just didn't want to accept it.

Caspian reached for his phone and made a call. "Hey, Larry? Could you please keep an eye on Jessica? She has figured out her parents' death."

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"Alright." Once Larry hung up the call, he walked out of his office.

He wasn't in the condition to leave the ward, and it was obvious that Jessica didn't want Caspian anywhere near her.

Larry's assistant asked when he was about to leave, "Mr. Norton, where are you going? Are we still conducting the meeting?"

Larry replied, "Yes, I'll be back soon."

Meanwhile, Jessica stared into the distance, sitting on the beach by herself.

Why? God, why did you take them away from me? Her eyes started brimming with tears then.

She couldn't believe she lost both her parents when they were about to have the best time of their lives together.

Back in the day, she was transferred to different schools because of her arrogant attitude. In the end, she was sent abroad. Nonetheless, they had been keeping in touch through phone calls until the night the accident occurred.

On that particular night, she tried to reach her parents through phone calls, yet no one picked up. About an hour later, she received the devastating phone call from the hospital.

They're really gone.

Overwhelmed with sorrow, Jessica wrapped her arms around herself for solace. Her phone had been buzzing for some time, yet she couldn't hear it at all.

Out of nowhere, a woman showed up and said, "Miss, I believe you have an incoming call."

When she returned to her senses, it was already evening. The tide had risen above the horizon, yet she did not feel like going home at all. She wished to stay away from the place that reminded her of her grief. After all, she would be alone from then onwards.

After she picked up the call, the haggard woman asked in a barely audible voice, "Hello?"

"Where are you?"

"I'm at the beach."

Once the person on the other end hung up the call, she let out a wry smirk. Ultimately, people only care about themselves.

All along, she had been lying to herself that her parents were still on an overseas trip and refused to make their way back because they were having a great time. She held onto the belief that they would definitely return to her once the trip was over. However, Caspian's words earlier on pulled her back to reality.

In the end, she was forced to brace herself through the fact her parents had passed on.

"Jessica!"

Right then, Larry dashed toward her and looked at her in confusion while panting for breath.

Is she trying to commit suicide?

After she brought herself up, she asked, "Why are you here?"

"Caspian said he was worried about you because you were nowhere to be seen." Larry avoided the topic of her parents' death.

Weeping, she asked, "Larry, you're aware that my parents aren't around anymore, aren't you? I'm all alone from now onwards."

"What do you mean you're alone? You still have your friends. Caspian and I will always be here for you."

It will never be the same! No friend can replace family... She could show her true self and even throw tantrums in front of her parents, yet no friend of hers would tolerate her unreasonable behavior.

The dejected woman demanded, "You should get going and leave me alone."

"Since Caspian isn't around, allow me to keep you company." He ended up sitting down by her side.

Then Larry comforted her in a soft voice, "Actually, you don't have to put on a strong front in front of me. If you feel like crying, just let it all out."

Unable to contain her emotions anymore, she wailed hysterically in between his arms.

He didn't try to console her as he thought it might be better for her to release the emotions she had been holding back.

Nothing he said could possibly alleviate the grief she felt. In fact, some might never move on from a traumatizing incident like that, especially when the ones they held dear were involved.

Caspian and Larry understood what Jessica was going through, yet they couldn't be of much aid because it was something she had to deal with on her own.

While they were within one another's embrace, a mysterious figure hiding in the dark had his eyes glued to them.

Click!

He started taking intimate photos of the duo.

After crying to her heart's content, Jessica dozed off in Larry's arms due to emotional exhaustion.