Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2301 - 2310

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2301

"Caiden, please don't make a fuss, okay? We'll be arriving at the hospital very soon," Joan immediately cajoled.

"I'm not making a fuss. I know what I'm doing, Joan. I don't want to go to the hospital, so don't waste your time persuading me anymore." As Caiden said that, he climbed out of the car and strode away.

"Caiden Owens, what exactly are you trying to do? No matter what, she's your mother! Without her, you wouldn't be here today, so you should be grateful to her!" Joan snapped behind him.

Yeah, I should really be grateful to that woman. I should be thankful for her indifference all these years. I should be glad that she's left me with my grandparents and caused me to be mocked for having no parents since young!

Lifting his head to stare at the sky, Caiden sneered.

Never had I imagined I would have such a bizarre life!

"Go and visit her, Caiden. If not, you'll regret it." Joan tugged at the hem of his shirt.

"No way!" Caiden snarled before he left.

Good heavens! Why is he so obstinate? What is more important than familial bonds? What grudge does he have against his own mother that he isn't at all concerned about her wellbeing?

"Miss, are you still heading to the hospital?" the driver called out in a booming voice some distance away.

"Yes!" Joan swiftly sprinted back.

In the hospital room, Caiden's mother was on an IV drip, looking incredibly frail on the hospital bed. Jaden and Noelle sat at the side with their eyes pinned on the woman on the bed, afraid that they would miss the slightest twitch.

"How did it go? Did he go home?" Jaden demanded anxiously as he clutched at Joan's arm.

He grew up with Caiden, so he naturally understood his temperament. Thus, he actually hadn't expected to see Caiden. I just thought that Joan could sway him, but unexpectedly...

"Yeah, he went home," Joan replied in a mere whisper.

"Caiden. Son, I'm sorry..." the woman on the hospital bed muttered, seemingly dreaming.

"How's Mrs. Owens doing? Has her condition improved?"

"Yeah, she has just undergone an operation. Mr. Owens actually wanted her to see Caiden before the operation, but he wasn't back yet," Jaden replied with his head lowered.

At that very moment, Joan felt nothing but guilt. If it weren't for me, perhaps Caiden would have come to visit his mother.

Meanwhile, Noelle kept shooting daggers at Joan.

This is all on you, Joan Watts! If it weren't for you, Caiden would never have abandoned me! She clenched her hands tightly and her gaze turned vicious.

"All right, you should go back and rest. Also, please continue to convince Caiden," Jaden told Joan.

That's not a problem at all. As long as he's willing to come and visit his mother, I won't mind doing anything at all!

Meanwhile, Caiden was sprawled on the sofa in the living room. Staring at the ceiling above with his eyes opened wide, he zoned out. The cell phone beside him rang incessantly, but it was as though he didn't even notice it.

Ugh! What is he doing now that he's not answering the phone? Stomping her foot in a fit of pique, Joan swiftly left the hospital and went straight to Caiden's house.

"Open the door, Caiden Owens!" Joan roared outside the door.

However, Caiden made no move to get up.

He knew why she was here, so he wasn't planning on allowing her into the house.

"Open up!" Joan bellowed unceasingly as she pounded on the door.

Finally, someone opened the door. However, it wasn't Caiden but several neighbors of his.

"Goodness gracious, what's with the awful noise out here? If you are arguing with your boyfriend, go and do it elsewhere. Be considerate, okay? How are we supposed to rest with all the shouting going on?"

"Hear, hear! This is considered a public nuisance. Let me warn you that we're well within our rights to lodge a police report!"

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"Miss, why didn't you bring your keys when you went out? What if your husband's not at home?"

"I'm sorry for disturbing you! Sorry!" Joan apologized.

As Caiden had heard the conversation outside, he stood up and slowly walked to the door.

"Come in!" he said with a cold, monotonous voice.

The instant Joan saw him, she shot him a fierce look and gritted her teeth.

She had a strong urge to hit him right then. How dare he abandon his own mother!

"Why are you here? If you're going to persuade me to go to the hospital, save it," he replied in a straightforward manner.

Wow, he really doesn't care. She then glanced around his apartment. Snacks, fruits, beer cans, and wine bottles were scattered throughout the place. Basically, it was a mess.

"Is this how you've been living the past two days?" she asked.

Yeah, I've been living well. I can eat whatever I want and do whatever I want. He shot her a glance but did not say anything else.

Noticing his reaction, she continued, "Relax. I'm just here to see you."

I sure don't think so. Caiden simply sneered in reply.

It was the first time he was acting that cold and indifferent to Joan. It was all because of his mother. However, he could not forgive his mother for everything that she had done to him previously. For so many years, he had never once been able to experience maternal love, nor had he called her "Mom."

"What do you want to eat? I'll cook," said Joan as she headed for the kitchen.

Joan was someone he held dear to his heart. He was willing to accompany her on travels and was willing to be injured for her. Similarly, she would care for him when he needed someone the most, simply because they were friends.

"I want to eat baked ribs and steamed clams!"

A while later, the food was cooked and they began to eat. Although Joan felt relieved watching him eat so heartily, she was still a little worried.

Don't tell me he'll never forgive that woman in the hospital?

Judging by her expression, Caiden could guess what Joan was thinking. However, he pretended as if he did not know and swiped on his phone as he ate.

"Caiden, about..."

"It smells so good. Your cooking skills have really improved a lot," he interrupted.

"No, about the hospital..." CLICK HERE TO JOIN OUR TELEGRAM CHANNEL FOR FAST UPDATES https://t.me/NovelsFuns

"Quick, try it. It's really delicious." He picked up a piece of meat and stuffed it into her mouth.

His action was so abrupt that Joan choked on the meat. Reflexively, she immediately spat it out.

"Are you okay? I'm sorry, I didn't do it on purpose." He instantly patted her on the back, trying to help her feel better.

He clearly did it on purpose so that I can't talk about his mother! Joan then shot him a cold look in reply.

He, on the other hand, acted as if nothing was wrong. "Are you okay now? I'll continue eating, then."

This idiot only thinks about himself and never considers others' feelings! Whatever. It's up to him now. One day, he'll regret it.

"I'll leave first," she said before she picked up her phone and walked off.

However, as soon as she opened the door, she was confronted with a cold gaze.

"Why are you here?" Noelle shouted, her voice carrying a tone of complaint.

"Who's yelling so loudly? What are you trying to do?" Caiden shouted from the dining room.

Upon hearing his voice, Noelle trembled and took a few steps back. However, the bitter look in her eyes never faded.

"What exactly do you want, Joan? You already have a husband and child. Why do you keep pestering Caiden?" she asked rudely.

Because he's my savior. Because I want to help him reconcile with his mother.

"Ms. Ford, you've misunderstood. Nothing's going on between Caiden and me," Joan explained.

Noelle did not buy that. Who'd believe that? A woman who goes to another man's house to cook for him surely has other crooked thoughts. Does she really think she can coax and trick me so easily?

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"Just admit it. You don't have to be so hypocritical in front of me. I've seen too many unfaithful, cheating women like you..."

Noelle's words were very harsh; she did not show Joan any mercy. Meanwhile, Caiden, who was in the dining room, could vaguely hear the sounds of two women talking but could not clearly make out the content of their conversation.

"Joan, come again tomorrow, okay?" he shouted.

Upon hearing those words, Noelle fumed.

Slap!

Instantly, Joan's cheek turned red.

"B*tch, do you think you're so great just because you cooked him a few meals? Do you think he can't leave you anymore just because you fed him? What a vixen..."

"Shut up!" All of a sudden, Caiden appeared in front of both of them.

"Are you okay? Does it hurt?" He sounded heartbroken and immediately pulled Joan behind him.

"I'm fine. I'm going to go now." Joan was about to leave.

She did not want to stay there any longer.

"Caiden, this b*tch keeps trying to get close to you. You can't fall for her tricks!" Noelle shouted.

"Get lost right now. Get out!" he shouted back at her.

Noelle froze in surprise at his sudden roar because she had never seen him that angry before. It's all because of this b*tch!

"Joan is a vixen! Why are you even still friends with her? She's not worthy..."

Slap!

This time, Caiden struck Noelle.

Shocked, Joan hurriedly grabbed his arm and tried to stop him from doing more.

"Caiden Owens! How dare you hit me!" yelled Noelle as she slowly raised her head, shooting him a cold glare.

Huh, what don't I dare to do? You were the one who hit Joan first. Count yourself lucky that I didn't give you a few more slaps!

"Noelle, I don't want to see you ever again. Don't come back here. If you don't want this to affect your brother, then you'd better do as I say. Otherwise, I wouldn't mind forcing him to move out immediately!" he replied fiercely.

Caiden was a man who could tolerate many things, but seeing Joan getting bullied was not one of those things, especially when it happened right in front of him.

"Calm down, Caiden. Don't be impulsive!" Joan persuaded.

Noelle felt wronged. He's the same Caiden who grew up with me since we were kids. He's the one who willingly let me bully him. He has changed! He's actually siding with others now!

"Noelle, don't blame him. He only did it on impulse..."

"Shut up! This is all because of you! If it weren't for you, why would he hit me? Can you even call yourself a man, Caiden? Do you have a conscience? Do you have any idea what my brother's doing right now? He's keeping your mother company and even feeding her himself! He stopped all of his work to help take care of her and even got me to come over to check

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on you. He's also afraid you'd be hungry, so he made me buy your favorite dumplings! But what about you? You're here flirting with this b*tch!" shouted Noelle as her tears fell endlessly.

She took a deep breath before she continued, "I was so damn blind to fall for a b*stard and an ingrate like you!" As soon as she was done, she turned around and ran off.

Taken aback by her words, Caiden remained in his place as he contemplated what she had just said.

Yeah, Jaden's been the one beside me since young. Caiden recalled that Jaden had always taken care of him when his own parents and grandparents were not around. What's wrong with me right now? Confused, he held his head in his hands as his expression turned into a painful one.

Joan did not have any time to think further. Since she knew that Caiden was emotionally unstable so she chased after Noelle immediately.

"Noelle!" she shouted as she ran.

However, there was no trace of her anywhere.

Where did she go? She'd only just left. Where has she disappeared to?

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"Noelle! Where are you!" Joan continued to shout as she searched for her.

At the same time, Noelle was sitting by the side of the road, crying as she called someone on the phone.

Once the other person picked up, she immediately said, "Jaden, Caiden hit me. You need to help me!"

"What? Why did he do that?" Jaden anxiously stood up as soon as he heard his sister's words.

I knew it! Nothing good happens when those two are together!

"He slapped me! My face still hurts right now," she muttered.

Hm? Did she do something wrong? Caiden's not the type to slap others without reason.

"Noelle, what did you do?" he asked cautiously.

Instantly, Noelle fell silent. She did not dare tell him that she had slapped Joan first.

"I didn't do anything else. All I did was bring him the dumplings as you told me to!"

Just then, a weak voice came from the haggard woman lying on the hospital bed in front of Jaden. "Are you busy with something, Jaden? It's fine. I can handle it myself then."

He looked at his phone and then at the woman in front of him. Eventually, he left the ward and headed over to where Noelle was.

As soon as he arrived, he began to comfort her. He asked worriedly, "What exactly is going on? Okay, okay. Stop crying and tell me what happened."

"It's all because of that b*tch, Joan! If it weren't for her, Caiden would never hit me!" Noelle shouted.

Looking at her red cheek, the man felt heartbroken.

Caiden's too cruel. How could he slap her like that? They've already known each other for so many years. Although they sometimes don't get along very well, things have never been so bad that they needed to get into a fight... Unless it's really related to Joan?

"Tell me exactly what happened," he said, pulling her to take a seat.

"I bought some dumplings and wanted to take them to Caiden..." Noelle began to explain.

Throughout her explanation, she spoke in exaggeration, pushing all the blame to Joan. Her behavior made Jaden skeptical.

He asked in a low voice, "Did you miss something out? Although I haven't interacted a lot with Joan, I know her personality quite well. She's a reasonable, serious woman."

Damn it! What's he trying to say? Is he doubting me? Noelle gazed at her brother in contempt.

"Don't tell me you've also fallen for that woman? I knew it! She's a vixen!" she scolded maliciously.

It looks like she really hates Joan. He sighed upon his realization, knowing that Caiden liked Joan and did not have the slightest bit of affection for his sister.

Furthermore, Jaden understood that relationships could not be forced. If it was truly meant to be, there was no need to force anything. Once forced, things would only turn out badly. Therefore, he knew that even if Caiden really married Noelle in the end, their marriage would not be a happy one. It would be equally unhappy if Caiden were to end up with Joan.

"It's okay. Don't be angry anymore. I'll clarify this with Caiden later on. Go home now. Dad and Mom are waiting for you," he said, patting her on the shoulder.

"Jaden, I told you. This isn't Caiden's fault at all. It's all Joan's fault," she reminded her brother.

He smiled at her in response but otherwise kept silent.

He knew his sister was willful and unruly, and even a little crazy at times. However, Jaden was not an unreasonable person. As soon as she left, he immediately took out his phone and called someone.

A while later, a woman walked into a café and, at a glance, spotted a man in the corner.

"You called me over because of Noelle, right?" Joan asked softly.

She knew that Noelle had probably already told Jaden everything. She also knew that Jaden had always spoiled his sister.

"Joan, can you tell me what exactly you are thinking?" he asked bluntly.

What I'm thinking? About the thing between Caiden and me? She sneered. Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2305

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"Honestly, I'm not thinking about anything. Caiden and I are just friends and I don't want to get involved in your lives. But, as you know..." Joan shrugged as she replied somewhat helplessly.

Indeed, Jaden knew all along that it was Caiden who was bothering Joan. She had never once taken the initiative to contact him. Sometimes, he did not understand why Caiden had to hold on to a married woman. Why can't he let her go?

"What exactly happened with Caiden today? Why did he hit my sister?" Jaden asked.

Here it comes. I can't avoid it now. Joan took a deep breath to prepare herself, then looked him in the eye and began to explain the situation.

Finally, Jaden finally understood the entire situation.

Basically, Noelle was the culprit! Joan was merely the one who ignited the fire in her.

"It's all because of you again," he said as he stirred his coffee.

Hearing his words, Joan immediately lowered her head as a trace of guilt flashed across her eyes.

Yeah, if I hadn't gone to cook for Caiden, all these wouldn't have happened.

"Sorry, I didn't expect this to happen," she whispered.

He took a sip of coffee before he said, "Joan, I have to remind you that you need to break some things off. Otherwise, you'll cause even greater problems. You really need to think it through properly. As for Caiden's feelings, as long as he's happy, I don't want to get too

involved in it. I've grown up with him since young. He didn't have it easy and was bullied by other kids back then. He was also looked down upon when we were in school. So if you like him, don't let go of him or make him unhappy ever again. If you don't like him, please keep a distance from him so that he doesn't have to continue to suffer. It's something that all of us, including you, don't want to see, am I right?"

He's right. If some things aren't stopped in time, they'll only become more complicated in the future.

Jaden knew that all along, Caiden had always been stubborn. The latter was not a person to give up trying so easily. However, Jaden also clearly understood that Joan was someone Caiden could never have.

"I understand. Thank you," she replied and prepared to leave.

"Also, I hope the best for you and Larry. If you still love him, you should try to get along with him," he reminded her.

Joan suddenly felt Jaden had matured a lot. The Jaden of the past was always sloppy and carefree and never did his job properly. But now... Joan continued to gaze at him curiously.

"Is it that weird? This is the real me," he explained.

Okay, then. This world is too complicated; I don't want to bother to understand it.

Joan smiled and left the cafe.

She walked on aimlessly, admiring the flowers by the side of the road as she was lost in her own thoughts.

How can I explain this properly to Caiden? He's already in a bad mood right now. If...

Forget it. I'll talk to him again in a few days.

As soon as she got home, Lucius ran into her arms. "Mom, you're back! I missed you!"

"Hi! Come taste the soup that I made for you," Delilah said from the kitchen.

"My dear, how have you been?" Joan asked, pinching the boy's cheeks.

"Very good! My teacher said that I'm the best child in class. Isn't that right, Grandma?" he shouted toward the kitchen.

"Yes, yes. You'll always be the best in my heart. You'll be even better than your Mom!"

At that moment in Larry's office, Caspian carefully handed the photo over to Larry. "Here it is." There was a hint of caution in Caspian's expression as he spoke.

"Thanks. You may go now," Larry replied slowly.

He's asking me to go out without even looking at it? Isn't he going to ask me any questions?

Without raising his head, Larry continued, "Go back to work first. I'll call you if I need you."

In reality, he was only acting that way because he was worried that as soon as he saw the photo, he would lose control of himself and vent his anger on Caspian.

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Caspian shot a worried glance at him, hesitant to speak his mind. Eventually, he decided that it'd be best to leave Larry alone.

Larry was certain that these photos were anything but ordinary or boring. He was curious to find out for himself, but he was also worried about the truth.

After much hesitation, he finally opened the envelope and poured out the contents on the table.

Unfortunately, it was just like what he had expected.

Laid out in front of him were intimate photos of Joan and Caiden. Every photo depicted them going about their lives in the village.

Those who did not know better would believe they were a matching couple. Larry trembled as he held the photos, his gaze icy and murderous.

Joan, you still betrayed me in the end! I won't forgive you for this.

"Mom, where's Dad? It seems like he hasn't been back for quite a long time." Lucius whispered as he hugged Joan.

Joan was slightly stunned but soon recovered her composure.

She had no idea what Larry was busy with or where he even was. What was she supposed to tell Lucius?

"Well, Dad has been very busy with work," she mumbled.

"But it's been so, so, so long since he came home. Mom, did you and Dad fight?"

Thinking back, Joan realized it had indeed been a while since she had a proper conversation with Larry. Her eyes filled with sorrow as she lowered her head. If she could, she would love to have a heart-to-heart talk with Larry and let him know how much she missed him when she was away.

Unfortunately, there was always something pulling her back.

No matter how hard she tried, she couldn't get the photo of Jessica kissing Larry out of her head. Her heart would be struck with terrible anguish whenever she thought about Larry's betrayal.

After a bit of chatting, Lucius became tired and went off to bed. Joan glanced up at the ceiling as she lay on the sofa. She was perturbed.

Why hasn't Larry come home? Should I give him a call?

"Joan, why aren't you sleeping yet?" Delilah asked gently as she slowly made her way toward Joan.

"Oh, I'm not tired yet. I'll sleep in a while."

"You're probably up waiting, aren't you? Well, Larry's away on a business trip so don't wait up for him." Delilah gave Joan's shoulder a light pat.

A business trip? No wonder he hasn't been home! For some reason, Joan found the news incredibly disappointing.

"Do you miss him? Why don't you call him? Do you know how depressed Larry was when you moved out? Seeing him then really broke my heart."

Really? If so, why didn't he take the initiative to call me? Joan cast a doubtful look at Delilah, unable to tell if the latter was telling the truth or just speaking up for Larry.

"Fine, you can ask him yourself when he's back," Delilah replied when she saw how skeptical Joan was. Following that, Delilah got up and returned to her room.

Joan finally understood the saying that love brings with it as much torment as it does joy. But what could she do when Larry still seemed to be angry?

After much hesitation, Joan finally picked up her phone and dialed his number.

"Hello?"

Larry's voice sounded clear over the phone. It was a voice she hadn't heard in a while, yet there was still the sense of familiarity.

"Hi, when will you be back?" she asked, slightly embarrassed that she had followed through with the call.

"I won't be going back tonight," he replied, with nary a trace of emotion in his voice.

Why does he still sound so cold? Why must he continue to be this cruel? Joan had already taken the initiative to call and make peace with him. She could not fathom why that was not enough to appease him. Shouldn't he be happy that I called him? Why does he still sound so angry and gloomy? A flood of thoughts and emotions made Joan feel even worse than before.

"Is there anything else? If there isn't, I'll be hanging up now. There's still work to do," Larry replied curtly.

It had become clear to Joan that he still was not in the mood to talk to her. The feeling of helplessness overwhelmed her to the point that she let out a deep sigh.

"No, there isn't. Carry on with your work," she said and hung up.

Hang on. Why is he even angry in the first place? Shouldn't I be angry instead? There was such an outcry when news broke of the relationship between him and Jessica. I'm the victim here! So what's the problem with him now?

Joan became increasingly frustrated the more she thought about it. Rather than continuing to worry herself sick, she decided it was time to get some sleep.

The next morning, sunlight shone through the windows, filling the room with warmth. Joan stirred from her sleep and began feeling around the other side of the bed. She once again sighed in disappointment when all she felt was emptiness.

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True to his word, Larry did not come home the previous night. Joan slowly opened her eyes and stretched lazily.

In the beginning, she was upset that Larry had not come home, but soon she had other ideas in mind. One of those ideas was to visit him at his office.

Perhaps I could send him breakfast?

She liked the idea so much that she decided to roll with it. She sprang out of bed and got changed.

"Ms. Young, I'll be going to the Norton Corporation office today!" Joan shouted as she made her way downstairs.

Delilah showed a satisfied smile upon hearing Joan.

Silly girl. She should have done this a long time ago.

"Okay, let me know what you'd like to eat and I'll make it," she replied happily.

"Oh, no, I don't want to trouble you, Ms. Young. I'll do the cooking myself. You just sit back and relax!"

Preparing a homemade breakfast for Larry? That's what I call sincerity! Delilah was overcome with excitement; her grin became even wider.

Even while Joan was preparing the food, she could not help but think back to her call with Larry. She convinced herself that his lackluster reaction was most likely due to him being exhausted. Yes, that must be it.

Before long, Joan had prepared a delightful spread of food. There were fried eggs, bread, milk, and fruits. Not only did they look good, but they also tasted delicious.

"Wow, Mom! You're amazing! There's so much good food today!" Lucius squealed in excitement as soon as he saw the mouth-watering breakfast spread.

"This is for your dad. Your breakfast is over there," Joan said as she pointed to a small plate of food on the table.

Lucius pouted at this. "Aren't you being unfair, Mom? I'm a growing boy, you know?"

Delilah quickly blinked at Lucius. Thankfully, the boy caught on to her hint almost immediately.

"But if the breakfast is for Dad, you should leave now, Mom. Otherwise, he won't have time to eat."

Joan was touched by how considerate her son had become.

After bidding goodbye to Lucius and Delilah, Joan quickly made her way out. Her smile was still plastered on her face.

Joan was at the point in her life where nothing else mattered more than her family. Whenever she ran into trouble during her travels, the first thing that came to her mind was always Larry. It was not that she wanted him to fly over to protect her, but she was afraid she might never see him again.

When Joan finally arrived at the Norton Corporation office, she saw Caspian from afar and made a beeline for him. "Hey Caspian, is Larry in his office?"

"He is, but he isn't in a good mood. I think it'd be best if you don't disturb him now." Caspian then walked away.

Joan knew Larry had been in a foul mood. But does he have to be grumpy for so long? The more she wondered about it, the more worried she became.

Larry was flipping through his documents on the sofa when Joan slipped into the room. He was so engrossed in his work that he did not even realize her presence until she spoke.

"Larry, I've brought you breakfast. Would you like to have some?"

"No. I'm busy. You can leave now."

The outright rejection from Larry stunned Joan. He's chasing me away? Is he okay? Or is he sick? Joan strode toward him and felt for the temperature on his forehead before comparing it with hers. Everything felt normal, so she knew he hadn't come down with a fever.

"What are you doing?" Larry barked and brushed her hand away in frustration.

"Larry, what's with you? Are you okay? Or are you feeling unwell?" Joan asked worriedly.

"It's none of your business! Get lost!"

Joan's heart sank right there and then. That was the first time that Larry was so angry at her. It was also the first time he had shown her so much contempt. She could not understand why he had to be so rude to her when all she did was bring him breakfast.

"Fine. Don't forget to eat your breakfast," she said as she prepared to leave.

"Take it away. I'm not eating."

Joan's heart sank even deeper into the abyss at his cold, harsh words.

What on earth has upset him this much? Or rather, why is he treating me like so? CLICK HERE TO JOIN OUR TELEGRAM CHANNEL FOR FAST UPDATES <u>https://t.me/NoveIsFuns</u>

"Hi, Mr. Norton!" Jessica greeted as she came running into the room, also with breakfast for Larry.

Jessica was a little taken aback when she saw Joan but still had the courtesy to place her food aside as she offered a smile.

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"I'll leave your breakfast here, Mr. Norton. I've got something on, so I'll leave first."

Before Jessica could make her exit, Larry suddenly shouted, "Wait, bring the food over! You can feed me."

Wait, what? Is he out of his mind? What is he up to? Jessica was in total shock at Larry's outrageous request. When she turned to look at Joan, she felt a flush of embarrassment.

"I still have work to do, Mr. Norton. Since Joan is here, she can feed you!"

"Get over here, Jessica!" Larry bellowed.

Jessica had no choice but to do as instructed. After all, she was in no position to offend the person who could heavily impact the future of her life and career.

"I'll just go over for a bit, Joan," Jessica said sheepishly as she took the breakfast to Larry.

Just like that, an awkward silence filled the air. Joan froze in her spot, not knowing what to do.

Standing beside Larry, Jessica leaned in and whispered, "What are you trying to do, Larry? Your wife is here, for goodness' sake!"

All of a sudden, Larry grabbed her by her neck and pulled her forward.

"Do what I tell you to and quit yammering," he replied with a glint of mischief in his eyes.

Jessica felt a cold chill down her spine and shuddered.

What is this man up to?

Never mind. I guess I'll just play along. Nothing is going on between us anyway.

"Feed me!" he once again ordered.

Jessica looked at the breakfast she had brought and then at Joan's. She then sensibly pushed hers aside and picked up Joan's food.

"Wow! There's fried eggs, sandwiches, and even milk! Look how thoughtful Joan is!" she exclaimed as she turned to smile at Joan.

For some reason, Jessica's smile made Joan feel a lot more at ease.

She knew Jessica wasn't gloating and that the smile was genuine. After all, women know women best. Even though she couldn't explain it, Joan knew Jessica was being considerate of her feelings.

"What would you like to eat first?"

"The eggs," Larry replied.

Jessica started to slowly feed him mouth after mouth of the egg Joan had so lovingly prepared. As she watched on, Joan became increasingly frustrated.

"Seriously, can't you be more careful? You've got food all over your mouth. Here, let me wipe it," Jessica said as she dabbed at Larry's mouth with a napkin.

That was an instinctive reaction on Jessica's part; she had not done so to irk Joan. Larry, however, was the one who deliberately left some ketchup stain on his mouth for Jessica to clean off.

Regardless of their intentions, Joan could no longer put up with the intimacy unfolding between them.

You've crossed the line, Larry! What have I done to make you treat me with so much disdain? Her eyes welled up with tears as she walked out in a huff.

"Joan, wait... "

Before Caspian could finish his sentence, Joan had already run away.

Inside Larry's office, Larry and Jessica carried on like nothing had happened. Larry was still typing away as Jessica fed him.

"All right, that's enough. I'm full," he suddenly said.

How can he be full from just this little bit of food? That's not right. And is he getting rid of me after using me? Just wait and see. I'm not going to let him off that easily.

"But this breakfast looks so good, Larry! Come on, have a bit more!" Jessica said as she shoved a sandwich into his mouth.

"Hey! What the hell are you doing? I'm busy. Stop playing!"

"I'm playing? You started this first! Now that you've pissed off your wife, she's going to think I've come between your relationship!" Jessica yelled angrily at him.

Getting Joan riled up had been Larry's intention all along. It was his way of getting back at her for being so close with Caiden and Dustin. After all, no man could tolerate his wife being intimate with other men. His actions were cruel, no doubt, but he just wanted her to have a taste of her own medicine.

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"What's the matter, though? What happened between the two of you?" Jessica asked out of concern.

In the past, when Jessica relentlessly wooed Larry, fights between him and Joan were not uncommon. However, Jessica was now over Larry. Shouldn't the two of them have made up?

"It's nothing. Why is a girl like you so nosy anyway?"

Jessica took offense at his remark and stood up in a huff.

"Excuse me, Larry. I'm no longer a girl! Look at me. I'm a woman! A mature, smart, and beautiful woman!"

Upon hearing her, Larry couldn't control himself and spat out his sandwich.

A coughing fit ensued as he choked on some remnants of his food.

"Must you overreact?" she scolded.

Unbeknownst to them, Caspian had been observing them from outside the office. He felt a twinge of disappointment when he saw the interaction between them.

Recently, Jessica had been treating him unusually well and Caspian thought he might finally have a chance with her. But after what he had just seen, he started to have second thoughts.

"Stop playing. I'm busy! Hurry and clean this up," Larry hollered in displeasure.

"Fine. I was just kidding, all right? You don't have to be so petty."

Larry shook his head as he stared at her. Jessica was good in many ways, but she could be so wilful at times.

But since he had accepted her as his godsister, he was willing to overlook it.

"Caspian? What are you standing there for? Come in, come in! There's breakfast here. Would you like to have some?" Jessica beckoned for Caspian to enter the office once she saw him lurking outside.

Busted. Caspian was overcome with embarrassment in that instance. He did not want to go in but it would be rude if he were to walk away. After a few seconds of contemplation, he finally went in reluctantly.

"Larry, Joan has left," Caspian said hesitantly.

Larry only hummed in response.

His apathetic reaction only made Caspian wonder if he had completely given up on Joan.

A coy smile tugged at Jessica's lips when she saw Caspian's pained expression.

"Why are you so nervous, Caspian? Don't worry about Larry. Here, have some breakfast. I bought it," Jessica said as she threw the breakfast set over to Caspian.

Caspian stared at the food in his hands. Should I have this? Is it such a good idea?

Caspian's biggest fret was Larry's intention toward Jessica. Will he really ditch Joan for Jessica? The more he thought about it, the more uneasy he felt.

"What's the matter?" Jessica walked closer to him.

"It's nothing."

"Jessica, why don't you go out first? I need to speak with Caspian," Larry suddenly said.

She frowned slightly as she looked at the two men. Even though Jessica felt snubbed, she still did as instructed and left the office.

"Go ahead. What's on your mind?" Larry asked without even looking up at Caspian.

"I think Joan was crying when she left."

Larry's stopped what he was doing. His gaze darkened.

So, she was sad?

"Larry, I think you'd better go check on Joan."

Larry silently agreed with Caspian. But now isn't the time yet.

As long as the issue with Caiden was left unsettled, how could Larry put aside his ego and apologize to Joan for his behavior just then?

"I got it. You may leave now," Larry finally replied.

Caspian looked like he had something to say. After much hesitation, however, he remained silent.

Larry noticed how uneasy Caspian was and walked up to him with a smile.

"I'm sure you have questions about Jessica, right? It's okay. Go ahead and ask," Larry said reassuringly, patting Caspian's shoulder.

Although not surprised, Caspian was still impressed at how Larry could always pick up on such subtle changes in emotions.

"So, Larry, will you and Joan be getting a divorce?"

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Caspian knew how ridiculous his question was but he had to hear it from the man himself. As long as Larry stayed with Joan, Jessica would have to stand down, which would allow Caspian to woo her.

"I think what you're trying to ask is if I'll be with Jessica in the future?" Larry clarified Caspian's question.

After some hesitation, Caspian admitted it.

"Don't worry. First, I'll never divorce Joan. Second, there's no way I can ever be with Jessica. Are you satisfied with that?"

Without a doubt, Caspian was more than satisfied with Larry's answer. Gone was the anxiety he felt earlier; he was exuberant again.

Knowing Larry was a man of his word, he felt even more hopeful about his future with Jessica.

"Happy now?" Larry asked.

"Нарру."

"Very happy?"

"Very happy."

"Then why aren't you going back to work? Do you want to work overtime?" Larry suddenly yelled.

"Oh, right! Sorry, Larry. I'll go back to work now!" Caspian muttered as he ran out of the office.

Larry smiled after Caspian's retreating figure. What a big goof. Why did he even think I'd snatch the woman he loves? His smile was soon wiped away as other thoughts came into his mind.

I wonder what Joan's doing now. Have I gone too far earlier? He felt more guilty the longer he thought about it. He only wished Joan could be more aware of keeping her distance from those problematic men. If she had, neither of them would be suffering now.

The park was bathed in warmth and joy as people went about their activities. A group of elderly people was enjoying a yoga session while children were running around, playing with their pets. Everything seemed so heartwarming and peaceful; the only fly in the ointment was Joan. She was seated on a bench in a corner of the park, quietly sobbing away.

"Miss, are you okay? Why are you sad?" asked an elderly woman as she went up to Joan.

"Oh, it's nothing." Joan hurriedly wiped her tears away and tried to regain her composure.

"Did you argue with your husband?" the elderly woman added as she sat herself down beside Joan.

Joan had always doubted the saying that people were more perceptive as they got older. But from the looks of it, there was indeed truth to that.

"How could you tell, Madam?"

"Most of the time, people cry because they feel emotional. While there are many emotions, I'm pretty sure yours has to do with love. So that's how I concluded that you might have fought with your husband," the elderly woman replied with a kind smile.

Joan was filled with admiration for the woman seated beside her.

"But don't you worry. The two of you will make up soon enough. Men can be so rash at times, so don't panic. Everything will be fine once this blows over."

As the elderly woman left, Joan called out, "Thank you, Madam! Have a nice day!"

It had not been a long conversation but the woman's words had struck a chord with Joan, whose mood brightened considerably.

She was still thinking about those wise words when her phone rang. Upon seeing the caller's name, Joan immediately answered.

"Joan? Where are you?" Nancy asked anxiously.

"What's the matter? I'm outside."

"No, what I meant was, are you still overseas?"

"Oh, don't worry. I'm already back."

That was the best news Nancy could ask for and she immediately let out a sigh of relief.

Larry had only just stepped into the house when he saw Delilah and greeted her.

"Oh! You're home!" Delilah replied with a smile.

"Dad, I've missed you so much!" Lucius lept into Larry's arms and started planting kisses all over his face.

Even though he was happy to see Lucius and Delilah, Larry still could not shake the feeling of disappointment when the face he most wanted to see wasn't there.

Where could Joan be?