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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2371 - 2380

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2371

Jake visited Joan in her ward very often. As time went by, Abigail grew increasingly worried when she saw them chatting away happily.

In fact, Jake was already fully recovered, but he stayed at the hospital because he couldn't bear to part with Joan.

In the yard at the hospital, Joan burst out laughing. "Really? I didn't know you had such a great sense of humor."

"Nah. I was still in school at that time, so I was just a little naive," Jake explained.

When laughter and genuine happiness filled the air, alarm bells started to ring in Abigail's head.

Picking up her phone, she discreetly dialed Larry's number. "Larry, haven't you finished settling matters over there?" There was a hint of urgency in her tone.

"What's wrong? Are you that eager to get me to buy you a meal?" Larry read through some documents while speaking into the phone.

Abigail closed her eyes and took a deep breath to calm herself.

It's just a meal. I'm not that desperate!

"If you don't finish your work and come here as soon as possible, Joan might be whisked away by someone else," she exaggerated.

Larry immediately stopped what he was doing as confusion clouded his eyes.

"What's going on? Be more specific!"

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"There's a patient in the hospital called Jake Wilson who's been coming over very frequently to chat with Joan..." Abigail quickly elucidated.

Even at a hospital, she managed to gain herself an admirer? Larry stood up and walked to the windows, staring into the distance.

"I know that now." With that, he ended the call.

After a long time, he took out his phone again to make a call, wearing a helpless look on his face.

"Caspian, is there anything else in the company that needs my immediate attention?" he asked.

Caspian deliberated for a moment before answering, "No. There are just some minor matters left that can be handled by the executives."

"Good. Book me a flight." It's time to bring Joan back. He spun around and walked out of his office.

Meanwhile, Joan was still chatting with Jake in the yard. Her phone on the table had already rung several times, but all the calls went unanswered.

"Joan, your phone's ringing!" Abigail raised her voice.

Only then did Joan notice her phone ringing and hastily picked up the call. "Larry?"

"What are you doing?" Larry queried.

"Oh, I'm chatting with someone," she replied.

"With who?"

"Another patient."

"Where are you both chatting?" he continued probing.

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She frowned at his series of questions. "In the hospital yard."

Pausing briefly, she asked him a question of her own. "What is this about?"

"Nothing," came his terse reply.

Their bland conversation lacked warmth, causing Joan to feel slightly uncomfortable. Larry admitted that he had overreacted this time, but in his defense, it was all because he was worried about her.

Jake gauged her expression and asked, "What's wrong? Does your friend need something from you?"

"Huh? Oh, it's nothing." Joan brushed it off.

When an unfamiliar man's voice drifted across the line, Larry immediately went on high alert as he sensed danger.

If he and Joan hadn't divorced, he would never doubt her fidelity. After all, he understood her character well. But at present, they were already separated. Thus, Joan had every right to date another man.

"Who was the man talking to you just now?" Larry inquired.

"Haven't I told you already? He's a patient here!" A hint of impatience laced her tone.

Since when has he become so sensitive? I'm only chatting with a friend. Does he have to act like this? He's making it sound like I'm cheating on him. But then again, I'm single now. Theoretically speaking, whatever I do is none of his business.

"I'm going over to see you tomorrow," Larry announced.

Is he done with the company matters already? Then, what about Jessica? How is he going to deal with her?

"Why are you coming here? I'm doing fine on my own." She feigned nonchalance.

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2372

Is she trying to say that she has another man by her side and doesn't need me anymore? Larry's grip on his phone tightened, and the temperature of the air around him plummeted.

"What? We've only just divorced but you're already looking for a new target?" Larry fumed.

He's being unreasonable! Not wanting to waste her breath on him, Joan hung up the call directly.

"What's wrong?" Jake asked concernedly when he noticed the anger lining her features.

"It's nothing. Anyway, where were we?" She wasn't going to let Larry ruin her good mood.

Not far away, a trace of worry peeked from Abigail's eyes as she watched this scene. Is it really that difficult to coax a woman, Larry? After a while, she shook her head in resignation and walked away.

The next day, Joan and Jake went to the same place to chat again. Halfway into their conversation, Jake paused, as if in a dilemma. Finally, he asked cautiously, "Was that your boyfriend who called you yesterday?"

Joan hesitated for a split second before denying, "No."

He really isn't my boyfriend. Why should I feel guilty? She mentally reassured herself.

"Actually, I don't have a girlfriend either," Jake abruptly confessed with a bashful look on his face.

Why did he suddenly bring this topic up? Embarrassed, Joan fidgeted slightly.

"When are you getting discharged? You seem to have fully recovered," she deliberately pointed out.

"Joan," Larry called out from behind right then, interrupting her conversation with Jake.

Jake was an optimistic person. Hence, Joan enjoyed talking to him because his sunny personality never failed to fill her with positive energy.

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“What are you doing here?” Joan shot up from her seat.

“Did you forget what I said yesterday? I told you I’d be coming here to take you home today,” Larry reminded.

Joan was dumbstruck.

He never mentioned anything about taking me home!

Before she regained her senses, he added, “C’mon, let’s go pack your stuff and go home together.”

“Are you getting discharged?” Jake interjected.

“I-”

“Yes, the doctor said she can be discharged now,” Larry answered for Joan before tugging her away.

Jake stood rooted to the ground with anger swelling in his chest as he stared after the two figures.

Whipping out his phone, he made a call. “Run a background check on the man who came to pick Joan Watts up from the hospital. I wanna know who the hell he is.” With that, he hung up the phone.

“Larry, what the hell are you doing? Have I said anything about getting discharged?” Joan shook off his hand and yelled.

Why? Does she want to continue chatting with that man from just now? Larry scoffed as he was jealous.

“Do you plan on staying here forever then?”

Who said anything about staying here forever? I only wanted to recuperate here and go home once I’m all recovered. That way, Ms. Young and Lucius wouldn’t be able to tell that I was injured.

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“Larry, can you stop being so childish and act your age, please?”

“What do you want from me, Joan? You chose to ignore all that I’ve done for you, yet, you were having so much fun chatting with a male stranger?” Larry raged.

Has he lost his mind?

Is it wrong to be in a good mood? Besides, it can speed up my recovery too! If only he could be calm and positive like Jake when we talked instead of flying into a rage, I would be more than willing to listen to everything he said!

“I’m tired. I don’t wanna talk to you anymore.” Without giving him a chance to speak, she burrowed underneath the covers.

Larry tried his best to control his temper and spoke in a gentle voice, “Let’s go home, Joan.”

He admitted that it was his fault for allowing his jealousy to get the best of him just now.

The woman lying on the hospital bed blinked a few times, her gaze gradually softened.

“Larry, it’s not that I don’t want to go home, but I can’t. Ms. Young and Lucius will worry if they see me like this,” she explained, hoping that the man in front of her would understand.

That’s fair enough. Larry walked toward the windows and stared into the distance in an attempt to recollect himself.

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“Larry, do you still need me to help Joan pack her stuff?” Abigail asked from beside him.

“No,” Larry replied succinctly.

Awkward silence hovered in the air as the three of them looked at each other, lost in their own thoughts.

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Abigail only felt that it was a pity that they weren't going home together.

"Won't Jessica be mad that you came here?" Joan broke the silence.

"Where I go is none of her business," Larry replied blandly.

Abigail respectfully left the ward to give them some space.

Joan expressed her disapproval. "Larry, now that you already have Jessica, you shouldn't have come looking for me."

Is she trying to say that I'm standing in the way of her plans to pursue a new relationship?

"And?" he prodded.

"And you should start a family with her. You know, live a happy life together."

What about you? Are you going to marry that man I saw just now and start a life with him? A vicious glint appeared in Larry's eyes and he stated bluntly, "I don't love her."

Surprise flashed across Joan's face when her mind registered what he had just said.

I clearly saw how intimate he was with Jessica. Why is he denying their relationship now?

Don't tell me he's moved on to another woman?

"Larry, when you fall in love with a woman, shouldn't you be responsible for her? Only scum will change women faster than they change their clothes, you know that, right?" Joan hinted.

You've always been the one I love, Joan. Can't you see that? Or are you avoiding me on purpose? Larry strode toward her with conflict swirling in his eyes.

"What are you doing?" Joan's guard went up as he approached her.

Things were over between them, so of course it wouldn't be appropriate to do anything overly intimate.

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He stopped inches away from her face and whispered hoarsely, "Tell me, Joan. Do you still love me?"

His deep voice only served to enhance his masculinity.

I do. In fact, I've never stopped loving you, but reality can be cruel sometimes.

Joan had zero intolerance for infidelity. She couldn't accept a man who cheated on her, let alone one who was so fickle-hearted. Instead of putting herself through the torture of staying with such a man, she thought she might as well die alone.

"I don't," she answered in a monotonous voice.

Upon hearing these two simple words, Larry felt as if he had been plunged into an abyss.

How can she be so heartless?

"Larry, find a woman you love and love you in return. You should live your life to the fullest with her."

It was obvious that the woman she was referring to was none other than Jessica. She knew that Jessica had lost her parents not too long ago and was in desperate need of love and care. It just so happened that Larry could provide her with that.

"What about you?" he asked while gently caressing her hair.

"What I do is none of your business anymore." Nervous, she turned her face away to look at the sky through the window, but her actions betrayed her true feelings.

She's lying!

Larry cupped her face and forced her to meet his gaze, then carefully studied her eyes.

I am right. She really is avoiding me.

"You still love me, don't you?" His voice was as tender as his gaze.

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“Let me go, Larry. I’ll call the cops if you keep this up!” she threatened, but was actually panicking on the inside.

She must really hate me. Larry released her as per her request.

“I’ll wait for you until the day you marry me.”

“Don’t wait. Who knows? Maybe I’ll marry someone else one day,” she intentionally provoked him.

“Don’t you dare!” he roared and rammed his fist into the wall.

I don’t owe him anything. He cheated on me, so why can’t I marry someone else?

Abigail barged in and castigated, “That’s enough! Stop arguing now. Eat first, then you can continue where you left off!”

This girl really has perfect timing, doesn’t she? Gratitude and relief flashed across Joan’s eyes.

“Here, Larry. This fish is for you. Joan specifically asked me to prepare it for you,” Abigail emphasized as she handed a lunchbox to Larry.

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This naughty girl! Why did she tell him that? Joan shot her a glare, signaling for her to keep her mouth shut.

However, she turned a blind eye to it. “Here, Joan. This is your favorite. Larry was the one who told me!” With that, she handed another lunchbox to Joan.

Larry and Joan exchanged glances before silently digging into their food.

Seeing the embarrassed looks on their faces, Abigail pursed her lips and stopped talking.

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Larry had already dealt with most of the issues at Norton Corporation. Since Joan didn't want to go back, naturally, he would also choose to stay by her side.

Although Joan would occasionally express her dislike for him, he believed that deep down, she still cared about him. It was just that she was too afraid to admit it, and constantly hid her feelings.

"You can go now!" the woman snapped from the bed.

Go? Go where? Does she expect me to leave her here alone? Well, there's no way I am going to do that.

"I'm not going anywhere. I'm staying right here with you." Larry was adamant.

Why is he being so stubborn all of a sudden? Joan huffed angrily as she trained her gaze on the newspaper in her hands.

"Joan, if Jessica never showed up, would you have divorced me?" Larry asked out of the blue.

Of course not! Joan flipped a page halfway, slightly dazed by his question.

But what's the point of saying this now?

"Just... don't talk to me, okay?" she muttered weakly.

Suddenly, Larry took large strides toward her and cupped her cheeks, imploring her with his gaze. "Answer my question."

Thrown into a frenzy, Joan retorted, "Larry, don't you think this is a stupid and useless question? It has already happened. There's no such thing as 'if'. We're all adults, so let's be realistic, okay?"

"You're right. Humans are realistic. Otherwise, you would never have divorced me. So please, answer this unrealistic question of mine." Larry was persistent.

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What's wrong with him? Joan pinned him a cold look, then sighed as she felt a pang of sadness. He's already a stubborn person, to begin with, but now he's taking it to a whole new level.

"Don't lie to me. I want you to tell me the truth!" he demanded.

"You want the truth? Fine, I'll give it to you. Even if Jessica never showed up, other women would, and I'd end up divorcing you anyway. It's that simple."

If she was being honest with herself, she never wanted to divorce him in the first place. In fact, she never thought she would really file for a divorce. However, during that period of time, their relationship was going through a really rough patch. Even Delilah couldn't take in anymore and suggested a divorce. Of course, it was merely a suggestion. But who would have thought that Larry would actually agree to it. That was something she had never expected would happen in her life.

What was more, Larry did not tell her that Dustin had become Norton Corporation's largest shareholder, let alone explain to her the real reason he agreed to divorce her.

"After all we've been through, you still don't trust me!" Larry had a displeased look on his face.

Suddenly, a phone rang from the table. It was Larry's.

He glanced at the screen and without hesitation, put the call on speaker.

Jessica yawned on the other end of the line and said lazily, "My dear brother, where are you?"

Dear brother? Why did she call him that? Joan eyed the phone in Larry's hand, completely baffled.

"I am out of town. Why?" Larry got to the point.

"Nothing. I just wanted to ask you a few things. Have you settled the issues at Norton Corporation? Do you need my help? Also, have you kissed and made up with Joan? I mean, what's a grown man like you waiting for anyway?" Jessica berated him through the phone.

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Larry glanced at Joan next to him before looking back at his phone with a satisfied expression.

As expected of my dearest sister. Who said we need to be blood-related to be in sync? She probably sensed that I needed help and called in such a timely manner.

“Mm, she’s beside me now,” Larry spoke slowly.

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Jessica instantly perked up when she heard that.

“Really? Quick, put the call on speaker. I wanna say a few things to Joan. Are you done? Am I on speaker now? Okay, I’ll begin now! Joan, I owe you an explanation about what happened before. Yes, I admit I had wanted to pursue Larry initially because I found him to be a very capable and outstanding man, but it was only sisterly love I felt for him. We see each other as siblings, so of course, there’s nothing going on between us. Don’t be mad anymore, okay? You’re still the woman Larry loves the most. He’s never cheated on you with another woman either...”

While Jessica earnestly described everything in detail, Joan listened intently with a cautious look in her eyes.

Meanwhile, everything in the ward had reached the ears of the man outside the door.

His name is Larry? He’s the president of Norton Corporation? So perhaps he’s a Norton? Jake clutched the thermos flask in his hand as his lips curved into a vague smile. Then, he walked away.

Abigail hastened over right then and asked, “Hey, Jake. Aren’t you going in?”

“Oh. There’s someone else inside. I don’t wanna disturb them.” With that, he left.

At least he’s not without sense. Abigail shrugged her shoulders as she watched the figure at a distance.

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Then, she entered the room without knocking and queried, "What are you both up to?"

"Nothing. We just talked on the phone earlier," Larry answered, looking unusually calm.

However, the woman on the bed was the exact opposite.

She was under the impression that Larry had cheated on her with Jessica, and that they were officially together. However, It turned out that everything was just a misunderstanding.

Jessica probably felt that her explanation wasn't clear enough because after Larry hung up, she called several times, wanting to eliminate all of Joan's worries and doubts.

"I'm telling you, Joan. Larry has always been a man of his word. Since he said he only sees me as a sister, you can trust that he really means it. Besides, he's like family to me too. And rest assured, I've never had indecent thoughts about him either..." Jessica laid it all out.

Listening to everything Jessica said, Joan suddenly felt like she had severely misunderstood Larry.

Seeing that Joan had finally known the truth, Larry kept gazing at her with an expectant look, hoping that she would finally give him the love he so craved.

"That's enough. I know I was wrong, okay?" Joan coaxed the man in a gentle voice.

"Then, can I get a kiss?" Larry offered his cheek out in emphasis.

Is this really appropriate? Joan looked around and at the speed of lightning, leaned forward to leave a chaste kiss on the man's cheek.

"Are you still mad?" he asked.

"No. It's all my fault for losing my temper and giving you the cold shoulder before figuring out the situation..." Joan bowed her head and admitted her mistake.

After a brief pause, she blurted out, "But you doubted me too."

Larry failed to smother his chuckle.

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How can she be so adorable?

"I know that you, Dustin and Caiden are just friends."

With Jessica's clarification, Joan was visibly much happier as she felt the knot in her chest loosen.

Finally, the misunderstanding between the two of them was resolved.

"Okay. Let's go home then." Before she knew it, Larry had started packing her things.

How can he be so bossy? Don't I have a say in this? Although Joan was dissatisfied by his behavior, she wasn't angry.

"Are you really leaving, Joan?" Jake walked in just then and stared at her longingly.

How could I forget? I'll be leaving a friend behind.

Feeling regretful that she was parting with her new friend, Joan walked up to him and said, "Yes, Jake. I'm going home. Take care of yourself, okay?"

Standing beside them, Larry was hit by a wave of jealousy when he witnessed this scene.

"Who is he?" Jake deliberately asked Joan.

"He's-"

"I'm her husband," Larry cut in and answered for her.

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Suddenly, Jake felt his chest constrict.

From the looks of it, they've probably made up. His expression hardened even as a trace of helplessness flashed across his eyes.

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"What are you talking about? You're not my husband yet, okay?" Joan hastily contradicted.

She's still denying! Larry stared at her pointedly, expressing his discontent.

"Alright, alright. He's my fiancé," Joan compromised.

It was the truth. They were currently divorced and had only just gotten back together.

Despite that, hearing her call him her fiancé was already enough to make Larry happy.

"I see," Jake responded emotionlessly.

It seems like I'll have to work harder! Because if I don't, this woman will be taken away from me.

Joan thought that she would never see Jake again after this farewell. Little did she know that this man had already devised an elaborate plan to make her his.

...

"Oh my, what happened to you, Joan?" Delilah hurried over to the woman and asked with worry lining her face.

"I'm fine, Ms. Young. Just some minor injuries I sustained over there," Joan played it down.

How is this a minor injury? As Delilah stared at her right arm, a hint of frustration entered her eyes. Why does this girl always make others worry about her?

"Whatever you say. From now on, I suggest you don't go anywhere and just stay at home." Delilah shot her a stern look.

Aware that it was her mistake, Joan did not refute it.

"Mom, what happened to you?" Lucius ran over with a worried frown.

"It's nothing. Have you been a good boy, Lucius?" Joan stroked the boy's head.

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“Of course. I listened to everything Grandma said.” Then, he hugged her tightly and pouted adorably. “You were gone for so long. I missed you, Mom.”

The mother and son sat together, filling each other in on the little things that happened while they were apart. Lucius talked about school, and Joan told him about her travel. It was a heartwarming sight.

She’s finally back.

Delilah observed the two of them from the kitchen, a happy smile gracing her lips. Larry was talking on the phone at the side, seemingly very busy.

“I need to see that file in half an hour!” With that, Larry ended the call.

Picking up his coat, Larry informed, “Joan, I have to go back to the company for a bit.” Before she could respond, he was already halfway to the door.

There he goes again. With a cloud hanging over her, Joan sighed as she watched him leave.

Forget it. It’s up to him. Norton Corporation needs him.

“What’s wrong? Where did Larry go?” Delilah queried while serving the food on the dining table.

“He has gone back to the company,” came Joan’s simple answer.

He’s still working at this hour? Delilah pursed her lips skeptically.

“He’s been very busy recently,” Joan explained, but her voice didn’t carry any emotions.

Despite being upset, she did not blame Larry.

The next morning, sunlight shone into the room onto the woman in bed. Joan flipped over and stretched out her arms. As expected, it was empty.

Seeing as his side of the bed was cold, it was obvious that he did not come back the night before.

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She got out of bed and drew the curtains open to look at the sky. Closing her eyes slowly, she breathed in the fresh air around her and found everything just the same as before.

“Joan?” A familiar male voice came from outside the door.

It’s Larry! Brimming with excitement, Joan sprinted to the door. Sure enough, it was the man who had been plaguing her mind day and night.

“Why are you back only now?” She threw herself into his arms and whined, a hint of disappointment lacing her voice.

“I’ve been busy at the company recently. You can understand, right, Joan?” Larry gave her a light peck on the forehead.

“Of course, I understand, silly. I just kinda miss you,” she admitted softly.

Hearing what Joan said, Larry’s heart felt warm and his face brightened up with a smile.

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“You must be tired. Come and get some rest.” She got ready to leave his embrace.

Larry buried his head below her neck and pleaded, “Can you stay and rest with me?”

To her, his pheromone was like honey to ants, irresistible. She gently nodded and went back into bed with him.

The business was slow at the supermarket, possibly affected by the earlier incident, whereby Dustin faked a contract in his attempt to usurp Larry’s position.

Dustin was seated at the sofa, languid. He felt helpless. His plans to destroy Larry failed, and he did not win over Joan. What was worse was that he had lost touch with her as well. All the unexpected turns of events made him anxious and down.

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“Mr. Silverman, are we bringing out the new stock today?” one of the staff walked in to consult Dustin.

“No,” he replied.

The staff at the supermarket could see he was not in a jovial mood, so they left him alone.

“Do you think our manager is going to stay down in the dumps for long?”

“I hope not. He doesn’t look like such a weakling.”

“But he has been depressed for so long.”

A few of the staff were gathered in a corner, talking about Dustin. They were concerned for him.

They had developed a cordial relationship with Dustin, so they were willing to overlook the mistake he made. They knew he was just impulsive and was not an evil guy by nature.

“Shall we call Joan and ask her to come by to console the manager?”

“I think better not. That’s not very appropriate.”

“What is inappropriate? There is nothing wrong with showing concern to your colleagues.” However, the problem was that Dustin and Joan were not just colleagues.

“What are you talking about?” Dustin was running his fingers over his messy hair as he walked over and asked.

He came over because he heard them mentioned Joan’s name.

“Nothing much. Shall we get together for a meal tonight?” one of them asked, changing the subject abruptly.

“Joan, you are here,” Caspian greeted.

“Joan!” Jessica burst out. Joan was thrilled to be there.

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All the staff at Norton Corporation had their eyes on Joan and they seemed glad to see her.

“Oh my! Mrs. Norton is finally here.”

“Ya. But I thought they are divorced? Have they reconciled?”

“Who knows? But divorce is not permanent, so they can always remarry.”

The staff at Norton Corporation were secretly rooting for Larry and Joan to get back together. The two of them had been through thick and thin, and it would be such a shame for them to part ways.

“Why are you here?” Larry immediately stood up and asked.

“I came to visit you and brought you lunch.” She brought out the food and placed it on Larry’s table.

“The weather is getting colder out there, so don’t bother coming,” Larry remarked.

Why? He doesn’t want me here? Joan was offended, so she went to sit down on the sofa and ignored him.

Larry was not aware of her mood change as he was focused on his work on hand.

Joan stole glances at Larry as she mindlessly swiped on her phone. It did not take long for her anger to dissipate.

She could see how busy he was that he did not have time to get sufficient rest and eat proper meals. She felt sorry for him.

She stood up, walked over to him, and pleaded softly, “Larry, it is past working hours. Can you take a break and eat something?”

Larry looked up upon hearing her voice. He stared at the face in front of him that he adored, and smiled.

“Okay. Feed me,” he quipped and waited with his mouth opened.

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“Stop fooling around. This is the office,” she nudged him and protested.

“Then, I shall not eat.” Larry turned and continued with his work.

Since when has he become such a rascal? Joan tilted her head and thought for a little while. Then, she proceeded to open up his lunchbox.

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“This is your favorite fish. Delilah specially bought this for you as she said you need to eat better.” Joan picked up a piece of fish and fed it to Larry.

Delilah had always been observant. She knew the idiosyncrasies of Joan, Larry, and Lucius.

“Yummy! But nothing beats the fact that my wife cooks well!” Larry grabbed her by her waist and pulled her towards him. He had a naughty look in his eyes.

“Watch your image!” Joan chided and knocked him lightly on his head.

He did not have to put on any pretense in front of her. Larry put his face close to hers and blew gently into her ears

“Larry!” Jessica yelled as she barged into the room.

Joan immediately stood up from Larry’s lap, looking embarrassed. And there was an awkward silence in the air.

“I’m so sorry. I did not realize you are having your lovey-dovey moment. Please go on. I will get out of here.” Jessica jested and turned to leave.

“Stop there!” Larry grunted.

“Shoot. What’s up?”

Jessica stood by the door and hesitated. Should I stay or should I leave?

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"I'll go to the washroom." Joan made an excuse and left the office.

"Well done, Larry! You have made quick progress with Joan!" Jessica ran over to Larry and slapped him on his shoulders.

She had dispensed with formality and was acting pally with him. Larry looked up at her solemnly.

Jessica had a look of guilt in her eyes and was smiling sheepishly as she knew she hit him too hard earlier. "Hehe..."

"Out with it, and stop being a nuisance," Larry groused.

He doesn't have to be so cold to me just because his wife is back, does he? Jessica glared at him and protested in silence.

"Are you going to just keep mum? Then get out, or I'll call for the security."

"Alright, I'll speak. My bookstore business has improved, so I thought of exploring with you about starting a franchise," she stated.

That's good news! Larry looked pleased. This meant her career is taking off!

However, as franchising was a complicated matter that involved many issues, Larry asked, "Have you given it thorough considerations?"

"Not yet. That is why I am here to discuss this with you. I don't have much experience in business and need more information on many matters, so I thought of seeking some advice from you," Jessica added.

She has grown up and becomes more mature. Larry stood up and stared out of the window, deep in thought.

He disagrees? Or is he contemplating? Jessica looked at him and wondered anxiously.

"It is fine. But the bookstore is yours, your business, so you are ultimately responsible. I can only play a supportive role. You cannot rely on others, understand?" Larry lectured solemnly.

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At the end of the day, she would have to learn to be independent and manage her own business!

He could only give her support for now, but that would not be a sustainable long-term arrangement.

"Noted," Jessica responded.

Larry's intention was clear. He wanted her to make her own decisions. He had confidence that given her intelligence and savviness, she would be successful. She would gain the experience to become a better business person in no time.

"I'll make a move then." With that, she left.

Joan entered the room and asked, "Why did you not help her?"

"I know there is nothing between the two of you, so you don't have to worry about me getting jealous," she added.

The issue would not bother her anymore since they cleared up the misunderstandings.

"It is not because of you," Larry assured, as he held her in his arms and gently caressed her hair.

"Running a business is like fighting a war. Your foes and competitors are out to defeat you. If she constantly relied on me, what would she do if I were not with her someday?" Larry explained.

Alas, Joan understood his good intentions.

"Hey, you have been paying lots of attention to Jessica lately, so keep a lookout for her," Larry said.

On the other end of the line, Caspian was baffled by what Larry just said.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2379

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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2379

"What happened, Boss?" Caspian was worried.

"She is contemplating starting a franchise to expand her business, so she will have to handle many things and may also encounter some issues with jealous competitors..." Larry explained.

She is such a career-minded lady! Caspian smiled and hung up.

No wonder she was not keen to get involved in a relationship. I guess she planned to dedicate herself to running the bookstore.

Caspian was very understanding and willing to wait for her.

"I heard you plan to start a franchise?" he asked.

"Yup." Jessica admitted.

Why is her attitude so cold all of a sudden? Caspian frowned, and he was troubled.

"Are you okay? Why do you sound so languid?"

"Nothing. I am studying," she replied.

After Larry lectured her, she brought a pile of books home from the bookstore. She planned to read up on as much information about business in the shortest possible time.

"Joan, where have you been?" Caiden yelled from a distance.

"I went out for a while. What's wrong? Are you looking for me?" she asked. He was the bane of her life.

"I miss you." Caiden went up to her with a tender look in his eyes and confessed.

Not again! Joan was embarrassed.

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She had made it clear to him that there was just friendship between them, not love. However, he would have none of that and kept on pestering her.

"If you have no other matters, you can leave now," she responded coldly.

Is she chasing me away? How could she be so heartless!

"Joan, you have changed! What happened?" he queried.

What a nuisance! Even if something did happen, it had nothing to do with him. Joan was getting a little impatient.

She turned to walk into the garden and ignored him.

"I'm busy. Please leave." As she was about to close the door, Caiden ran in to block her and grabbed her arms.

"What do you want?"

"Why can't you accept me? Can't you spare a thought for me? You have disappeared for such a long time. I really missed you!" Caiden implored.

"Caiden, take a hold on yourself. We are friends and nothing else. Please don't bother me unnecessarily." She was harsh and cold, and she did that on purpose.

Since she had reconciled with Larry, she knew she had to draw a line with people like him. Joan was very straightforward when it came to love. She would not accept an unfaithful man, and she would never get involved in any love entanglement.

"But you are divorced, ain't you? So I have the right to go after you." Caiden was adamant.

That is ridiculous! He knows that I do not like him, yet he is so persistent. What is wrong with him? Did I not make myself clear enough?

"Caiden, listen to me. Larry and I may have divorced, but we still have feelings for each other," Joan confessed.

Does that mean she is going to reconcile with him? Caiden stood there, dejected.

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Thump! Someone kicked the door open.

"Who's that?" Caiden hollered.

"It's me!" It was Larry who showed up unexpectedly.

When Larry heard this man came to look for Joan, he immediately dropped everything and drove over.

"Why are you here?" Caiden asked.

"I should be the one asking you," Larry retorted.

Joan could clearly feel Larry's hostility.

Oh my! I should get Caiden to leave now.

"Go, quick!" Joan muttered under her breath as she pushed him out.

Why should I leave? Caiden turned to face her, stubborn refusal clearly written on his face.

"I'm not leaving!" he thundered.

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2380

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2380

"Fine. Let's have a chat over a meal then," Larry proposed.

That was the outcome he was hoping for. Caiden walked towards Larry and nodded affirmatively.

For men, there's nothing that could not be resolved over a drink. They could go from stranger to buddies after a drinking session. Joan had never imagined in her wildest dream that Caiden would be closer to Larry than to her after that meal.

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“Larry, you are shameless. Why are you still pestering Joan even after the divorce?” Caiden demanded, drunk.

“Because I like her, I love her! Are you jealous? Then have a fair competition with me!” Larry was also tipsy.

Both men were drunk with flushed faces but did not have any intention to stop drinking.

“But I am at a disadvantage! Joan loves you, not me. If she likes me, I will definitely not give up,” Caiden roared as he gulped down another drink.

“I am glad you knew. Let me tell you something. She belongs to me, and only me. No one can take her away from me, and she will never leave me for another man!” Larry laughed out loud, pleased as punch.

In the private room, the two men were laughing and singing, screaming and yelling. Larry was far from his usual image of a high and mighty CEO, while Caiden looked nothing like his poised self. They were both very high, as it was more like they were venting all the suppressed emotions they had.

“Come, Larry, let’s take a wefie together as a memento,” Caiden raised his phone and said out of the blue.

“No! Look at the two of us! How can we take a photo in this state?” Larry refused.

“Come on! Why not? I can’t win over Joan, so I’m going to make her jealous. As revenge for rejecting me.” Caiden said, with a mischievous twinkle in his eyes.

A drunk Larry thought that made sense, so the two men started posing and snapping away.

It was late the following day when they woke up. They lay on the opposite side of the same sofa, rubbing their own temple, trying to open their eyes.

“Oh... My head hurts!” Caiden groaned.

“Me too!” Larry moaned.

Instantly, Caiden jumped up from the sofa.

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“Why are you here? What did you do to me?” he exclaimed in horror as he looked at Larry.

Is he out of his mind? Can't he remember a single thing from the night before? Larry pounded his head and gradually sat up.

“What would I do with a skinny and ugly man like you? First of all, I am straight. Then, the one I love is Joan.” Larry muttered.

How dare he looked down on me! Caiden turned around and drew the curtains. He could see it was almost noon, and he should get going.

“I'm leaving now. Let's pretend nothing happened last night,” he declared.

No way! He promised me he would give up on Joan last night!

“Caiden Owens, are you a man? How could you not honor your words?”

“What did I promise last night?” Caiden questioned, unsure.

“You said you would give up your desires on Joan and be her friend. You also said you would be nice to me.” Larry hooted with laughter.

Caiden was bewildered. He could not associate this garrulous man with the confident and poised Larry Norton he knew.

Both men were not really sober at this point in time.

“Did I really say that?”

“Do you want to listen to the recordings?” Larry countered.

What an evil man! He even recorded that as evidence! Caiden waved him off, rejecting his offer.

They were both suffering from hangovers, but memories from the night before gradually came back to them. Incredulously, both men became buddies after that.

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