Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2581 - 2590

Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2581

Sigh! She's hopeless! I'm trying to save her, but she stands firm in her view! Thinking about that, Dustin grew anxious.

"Well, this problem will persist, so I advise you to give up!" He tried to calm himself down.

"I will never give up!" Joan responded loudly and turned away.

Dustin was rendered speechless and walked out of the ward immediately, feeling down.

He left the hospital and looked up at the pitch-black sky. A few stars surrounded the lonely crescent. It gave him the feeling of desolate loneliness. While walking down the street, Dustin lowered his head and kicked the stone on the ground.

She still doesn't trust me! Oh well, forget it and let her be!

Initially, he was interested to acquire the photography studio, but he gave up that idea after he learned that Joan took over the studio. Unfortunately, Abelyn got involved in the plan, and Dustin began to panic.

This woman will go all out to achieve her goal. Since she treats Joan like an enemy, she will definitely carry on with her plan to acquire the studio. Thinking about that, Dustin was distressed.

As soon as he stepped into his living room, Abelyn approached him. "What's wrong? Feeling sad?"

"Don't touch me!" Dustin shouted.

Huh, why did he lose his temper? Was it because of Joan? She sat next to him, looking at his expression and making a guess.

After a while, Dustin finally spoke. "Abelyn, can you just quit? Don't get involved in my affairs!"

Suddenly, his anger turned to pleading.

What? I don't think so! This is a competition! Whoever has the ability can own that photography studio! It is natural and just for the strong to dominate the weak. The same should apply to business.

"No way!" Abelyn replied without hesitation.

"Dustin! Seriously, you choose love over your career? Is it worth it? Oh well, I won't give up even if you don't want to continue with the plan!" Then, she picked up a piece of apple and put it into her mouth with an indifferent look.

In fact, she had a point, but Dustin did not want his close friend to go against his beloved woman.

Abelyn continued, "You've got nothing to do with this incident, so stay out of it!"

"You were behind the studio incident, weren't you?" Dustin questioned her.

"Yeah! So what? This is just the beginning, and the best is yet to come!" Abelyn replied nonchalantly and admitted it unhesitatingly.

"What exactly do you want? Why can't you just let Joan go?"

"Dustin, this matter is between Joan and me. It has nothing to do with you!" With that, Abelyn went upstairs.

Sigh! Why is he so anxious? Joan has yet to say anything or take any action! Her lip curled in disgust, and she slammed the door.

Meanwhile, Joan was recovering, and Jake had helped her to chase away those troublemakers at the entrance of the photography studio.

She was still lying on the hospital bed. "Jake, thank you!"

"It's nothing! You should get some rest! Don't think too much! By the way, you have a great assistant. She has handled a lot of things for you."

Joan noticed Jake smiled unconsciously when he complimented her assistant.

Haha! He must have fallen for her! She took a sip of tea and carefully observed his expression.

Then, Joan purposely said, "Well, my assistant is pretty, capable, and has a good personality. She is outstanding in all aspects!"

What is she trying to say? Jake raised his head and looked at Joan in confusion.

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"Are you having a crush on her?" Joan poked Jake in his arm and asked inquisitively.

He immediately responded, "What are you talking about? That's impossible! We just met. Don't talk nonsense!"

I could so feel my face burn up, probably blushing!

Oh Gosh! Did I fall for her?

No, that's impossible! I've fallen for Joan! With that, Jake shook his head vigorously, trying to clear his mind.

"Don't deny it! After all, the onlooker sees most of the game!" Joan deliberately stretched her voice.

Knowing that Jake had fallen for someone, she felt a sudden flare of joy. It was not because he would no longer pester her, but because he finally understood the meaning of love.

Jake was an heir to a wealthy family and the president of a corporation. He was handsome, kind-hearted, gentle, and decisive. However, he had never been in love and did not understand what love was. This man had been pestering Joan just because she helped him up from the ground in the hospital before. He misunderstood the real nature of love.

Instead, Joan knew Jake had confused love and friendship. His feelings toward her were nothing more than friendship. Hence, she was happy for him upon knowing that he had a crush on her assistant.

"Joan, you're the one I love!" Jake looked seriously at her.

"Jake, you just need some time. As to who did you fall for, only time will tell!" Joan replied in all seriousness.

Upon hearing that, a confused expression crossed his face.

She then continued, "Well, my assistant should be very busy lately. Please help her out if you're free!"

"Okay!" Jake replied without hesitation.

They chatted for a while before he left the ward.

Jake did not go home, nor did he return to his office. He raised his head and glanced at the dark night sky. Suddenly, he turned the steering wheel, heading to the photography studio.

Meanwhile, Joan was standing on the balcony. She smiled as she watched his car leaving the hospital.

Eventually, Joan made full recovery and was discharged from the hospital. With the help of Larry and Jake, the photography studio incident finally ended.

However, Joan did not expect Abelyn to continue with her plan.

"Joan, why don't you sell the photography studio?" Delilah suggested.

Joan was upset and retorted, "Ms. Young, what do you mean? I won't sell the studio!"

Delilah was busy in the kitchen and frowned after hearing her words.

In fact, she was worried about Joan. I just don't want her to get hurt!

"Then, what are you going to do? Do you plan to continue running the business? But... how would you deal with the current problems?" Delilah reminded her.

Sigh! How am I going to solve this tricky problem? At first, Joan planned to look for those troublemakers personally in order to resolve the matter. Unfortunately, they were Abelyn's friends and had gone missing.

It was a vain attempt to locate them.

"Have you found those people?" Larry asked softly while sitting next to Joan.

"Nope!" She sounded rather helpless.

"Let me help you..."

"No! I'll settle it by myself!" Joan turned him down right away.

Delilah looked at them and sighed with disappointment. She then turned and left without saying a word.

While tidying up her closet, Delilah shook her head helplessly as she thought about the two. They must be quarreling!

Being young is great! At least, they have the energy to fight! For an old woman like me, being alive is a kind of blessing. I couldn't ask for more.

It was true enough that Larry and Joan had an argument the day before. They were still seething with anger.

The sudden appearance of Jake made Larry jealous.

Huh, what a jerk! He doesn't trust me! Joan was shoveling the peeled orange into her mouth with an exasperated expression.

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"It's getting late. Let's go to bed!" Larry said.

"I don't want to!" Joan shouted and shot him a fierce glare.

He was surprised by her outburst and was at a loss of words.

Huh, I should be the one getting mad instead! My goodness! She saw herself as the aggrieved party. Larry kept staring at her. After a while, he wanted to break the silence, but he did not dare to say a word.

Joan sensed his uneasiness and turned toward him. She met his gaze. "What are you doing?"

"I'm waiting for you!" Larry replied impassively.

"Why?" Joan retorted.

He yawned and responded, "Let's go to bed! I'm afraid that you will catch a cold if you fall asleep here."

Instantly, his words warmed her heart.

Joan got up and fell into Larry's arms, rubbing her head against his chest and acting cute like a baby.

"Are you still mad at me?" She raised her head to look at him and pinched his cheek gently.

"Joan Watts, you're such a rascal! I'm mad, and you are supposed to pacify me, but why is it the other way round..."

Before Larry finished his words, Joan stood on tiptoe and pressed a kiss on his sexy lips.

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"Is this compensation good enough?" She smiled shyly, blushing a little.

"It's just not good enough!" Larry pulled her into a tight embrace.

"Huh?" Joan's eyes widened in surprise.

"I want more!" With that, he carried her into the bedroom.

Meanwhile, Delilah was in her bedroom and overheard their conversation. She could not help laughing.

Youngsters are weird. Their relationship is an emotional rollercoaster.

The next morning, Joan woke up early and rushed to the photography studio.

They had restored the studio. The shattered glasses had been replaced, and the lobby had been cleaned up. None of the employees quit.

"Ms. Watts, welcome back!"

The staff split into two rows, standing in order, and gave her a warm welcome.

"How are you?" Familiar faces hove into view, and Joan greeted them with a broad smile.

Her assistant replied, "I'm fine!"

A lady suddenly pointed at her head and said softly, "Ms. Watts, I'm injured and I can't think clearly!"

"I'm so sorry! This incident happened suddenly, and I... I was not ready..." Joan stammered.

Immediately, the man next to that lady retorted, "Well, it was just a minor injury, and the wound had healed! Don't make a fuss!"

With that, silence filled the studio, and there was a moment of awkwardness.

When Joan was at a loss for words, that injured lady suddenly pulled the gauze off her head and shouted, "Tada! I've recovered!"

"How dare you lie to us! Are you up to something?"

"Are you trying to cheat us?"

Instantly, the studio was buzzing with excitement.

"Is everyone alright?" Joan asked her assistant while walking toward her office.

"Ms. Watts, don't worry! The staffs are loyal and warm-hearted. They won't simply resign because of some accidents." The assistant tried to reassure her.

Upon hearing that, Joan was relieved.

"By the way, Jake has been a great help recently!" The assistant lowered her head, and her cheeks blushed in embarrassment.

Her expression revealed her feelings toward Jake.

Joan noticed that and asked, "Did you fell for him?"

Her assistant immediately denied, "Of course not!"

"Look at you! Your cheeks are as red as a tomato!" Joan teased her.

The assistant quickly touched her burning cheek and stepped back, feeling embarrassed.

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"It's no big deal. Be brave. Happiness might just be around the corner."

Faye pursed her lips, feeling a little inferior.

Jake was the president of a big company. How could he possibly fancy her?

After reporting her most recent work to Joan, Faye returned to work.

Joan rubbed her temples, stared at the stacks of documents on her desk, and continued flipping through it.

"Mrs. Young, I'll be working late tonight and won't be able to make it for dinner." Joan signed some papers as she spoke over the phone.

"Why are you so busy? Should I get Larry to come over to help you out?" Delilah asked worriedly.

"No need. He's quite busy these days. Don't need to tell him about it..."

Nevertheless, Delilah felt a little uneasy about how Joan was suddenly shifting her focus to her career.

"Are you coming back tonight then?"

"I'm not sure."

"Ms. Watts, aren't you leaving yet?" Faye knocked on her office door and asked.

"You can leave first. See you tomorrow!" Joan waved her arms.

Even though the photography studio's incident had come to an end, their reputation had been severely damaged. Their old clients refused to have their photos taken at the studio anymore, whereas potential customers would just take a detour when passing by the photography studio. It was hurting their sales. Joan did everything in her power to locate Abelyn and her friends, but to no avail.

Meanwhile, in Abelyn's office. "Ms. Chipman, do you know where your friends are at the moment?" Joan asked Abelyn anxiously.

Abelyn stood up and strolled to the window with a cold look.

Looks like Joan won't be much of a worthy opponent.

"I don't know." She was doing it on purpose.

"Ms. Chipman, please try to recall. Did they really not tell you anything before they leave?" Joan tried again.

"No. Why? Is the photography studio closing down?" she probed.

"No." Joan lowered her head.

Abelyn acted high and mighty in front of Joan.

"You can sell me the photography studio if you can't carry on," Abelyn suddenly said.

Her words caught Joan's attention. Joan wouldn't have been surprised to hear it from Dustin. However, she was shocked to hear it from Abelyn. She never expected for Abelyn to covet her photography studio.

"What do you mean, Ms. Chipman?" Joan lifted her head and queried.

Slap!

Abelyn threw a stack of photos on her desk.

"See for yourself. These are photos taken by your photographer." She pointed at the photos lying on the table.

Joan was aware of the photograph's poor quality. Nevertheless, these photos were taken as per Abelyn's request.

"Ms. Chipman, it was you who ..."

"I expect my portrait to be pretty when I chose your studio. But just look at how it turned out. Do you think this is appropriate? Plus, the photographer should be well aware of the purpose of taking photos no matter what I said." Abelyn sat on a sofa and said deliberately.

It was obvious she was expecting the photographer to make her portraits look as pretty as possible no matter what she asked of him.

"I kept quiet about it that day because I thought we would have a chance to work together again. Never would I have expected for you to repeat the same stupid mistakes to my friends as well!" Abelyn shook her head, acting innocent.

She sure is a good actress. Joan felt a little dismay as she stared at the woman in front of her.

"What exactly do you want?" She went straight to the point.

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"I want your photography studio," Abelyn said bluntly.

Joan's blood boiled as they glared at each other.

"The photography studio and the team belong to me. I won't let anyone take advantage of it." She balled her fists and said firmly.

Stubborn as a mule. Abelyn looked at her with disdain.

It was still uncertain who will own the photography studio in the end. The most capable person will own it.

"Do you have anything else, Ms. Watts? If not, you should leave." Abelyn was reading her newspaper as she spoke in a low voice.

Joan left her office in a huff before she could even finish her sentence.

After walking out of Abelyn's company, Joan pulled her phone out to make a call.

"How did it go? Have you gotten to the bottom of things?"

"Ms. Watts, they're out of the country," Faye said nervously.

Damn it! Those assholes! Joan headed straight for the airport without a moment's hesitation.

The airport was busy as usual. People from all walks of life hurried around with anxious looks on their faces.

"Ms. Watts, this is all of our security footage." The security control room's supervisor said to Joan.

"Okay. Thank you." With that, she sat down.

Her eyes were glued to the screen as she searched for the familiar figures.

"There. Stop. Rewind a little. I want to see what time they bought the tickets."

I knew it. They left on the day of the interview.

Looks like they already have everything planned out. At the end of the day, Joan realized she had been played. To think that I trusted Abelyn so easily. What a joke.

"Can you please zoom in? I want to take a closer look." Joan pointed at the few people on screen and said.

Very soon, she found out which country they were headed to. Joan held back even though she was now aware of their every move.

In Joan's office.

"Are you ready?" Jake asked in a low voice.

"Yes, I'm ready," Joan replied.

She sure is going all out for the sake of this photography studio. Jake sighed as he stared at Joan.

He wished she would just live her best life without having to busy herself with the photography studio. He used to wish Joan would be with him. However, the thought of being with Joan gradually disappeared and was replaced by Faye instead.

"What are you thinking?" Joan walked up to him and patted his shoulder.

"Nothing. I'll take my leave first since I have something else to attend to." Jake was about to walk out of her office.

"Wait!" Joan suddenly called out.

"Aren't you going to pay Faye a visit?" she quipped.

"Why would I want to do that?"

He still don't get it? Joan circled around him with a hand on her chin as if she was deep in thought.

"I'm leaving!" Jake suddenly shouted.

"Are you sure you're not going to pay Faye a visit?"

"What for? I'm here today to pay you a visit!" Jake explained.

"Ms. Watts."

Faye knocked on the door and greeted.

"Come in!" Joan practically yelled.

"These are the documents you requested. I would also need you to sign these papers." Faye handed her the papers, stole a glance at Jake, and blushed.

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"Send him off in my place please." Joan pointed at Jake and said.

In the living room back home. "Abelyn's friends are back," Larry said to Joan in a low voice.

"I know."

"What do you plan to do?" he asked.

"Go with the flow and ask them about it when the time is right."

Things won't be as simple as it seems. Larry stared at Joan worriedly.

A week flew by. Joan headed straight for the villa they were staying at without a second's hesitation after Faye found out their address.

Knock... Knock... Knock...

The few people in the living room jumped in fright when they heard the fervent knocking.

"Are we expecting a guest?" A middle-aged woman asked.

"No," another answered.

Joan didn't give up when nobody answered the door. After a long while, somebody finally gave in.

"Who is it?"

Joan kept quiet and continued knocking fervently on the door.

"Are you crazy?" The middle-aged woman opened the door and cursed.

However, she received a nasty surprise when she saw that it was Joan.

"W-Why are you here?"

"I'm here to see your... photos." Joan walked past her into the living room.

Everyone else in the living room was dumbstruck. Who would have thought she would dare to come here alone?

"What are you doing here?" A man stood up and asked in a hostile manner.

"Please show me the photos taken by my photographers." Joan went straight to the point.

She wanted to see for herself what they meant by poor-quality photos.

"Ms. Watts, what is the meaning of this? Why would we keep a bunch of bad-quality photos?" A man said matter-of-factly.

They threw it away? How cunning to destroy evidence. Joan peered at them menacingly.

"Why are you doing this? Who instructed you to do it? Is it Abelyn?" She asked the man sitting on the sofa softly.

They shied away from Joan's gaze Abelyn's name was mentioned. At that moment, everything clicked.

"My photographer went through so much to take nice pictures for you without so much as a complaint, but you guys slandered our studio's reputation!" she bellowed.

The air went still as everyone ignored her.

"If there is nothing else, you may leave." Someone stood up.

Are they chasing me off? Perhaps because they are guilty as charged? Or are they hiding something from me?

"I need an explanation from all of you!" Joan said firmly.

"What explanation? Your photographer ruined everything. We don't have anything to do with it."

"My photographers didn't ruin anything. It was all you!" Joan shouted.

"How could you say that? Do you have proof?"

Shameless b**tards! Joan was so angry that she took a step back helplessly.

"If you're trying to find fault here, I'm sorry, you've got the wrong place." A woman spoke up.

Then, a man stood up and walked towards her with a dangerous glint in his eyes.

What does he want? A fight? Joan collected herself as helplessness flashed in her eyes.

"Get out. Or else..."

Joan was scared when she heard those words.

What a bunch of hypocrites. Talking with their fists instead of being the civilized gentlemen they presented themselves to be.

Joan decided to back out after much hesitation. She didn't want to die just yet.

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She headed straight for her office after she left.

"Ms. Watts," Faye greeted.

"Do we still need to compensate those people for their loss? They came yesterday when you're not around," she whispered.

How shameless are they? Joan gripped the corner of her clothes in an attempt to calm herself down.

"No need!" She walked straight into her office.

This issue was far more complicated than she had thought.

At the moment, Larry was watching security footage in his office when he frowned.

"Are you sure it's them?" He lifted his head and asked Caspian.

"Definitely. This is the security footage near their house."

They're finally back! Larry placed the tablet aside, rubbed his temples, stood up, and walked to the window, deep in thought.

"Follow them to find evidence," he commanded.

"Yes sir!" Caspian replied and left the office.

How dare they make a move against my woman? They must all have a death wish! Larry narrowed his eyes dangerously upon the thought.

"Larry!" Jessica greeted as she strolled into his office.

"What do you want?" Larry turned around and asked.

"Did Joan land herself into some trouble?"

"Yes. But it'll be all settled soon."

Jessica breathed a sigh of relief when she saw how calm Larry was.

Guess it's not a very serious matter. Why did Caspian look so anxious just now? Jessica walked over to the sofa and sat down.

"How have you been? Is everything settled?" Larry asked.

"Almost. Don't you worry, Larry. I will succeed once I put my mind to it." She smiled.

Larry smiled in satisfaction as he watched her excited face.

She had been so focused on the bookstore ever since the grand opening that she didn't even care much when Caspian was jealous. However, her professionalism was a relief to Larry.

"Do you need my help?" Larry offered.

"Not for now."

Oh. What a coy girl. Is she implying she's going to have to need my help in the near future? Larry lowered his head and continued with his work.

"Larry, I'm running out of money. Can you treat me to a meal?" Jessica sniffed.

This piqued Larry's curiosity.

"Where did you spend all your money on?"

"I invested all of it."

I must be crazy. How can I invest even my living expenses into my business?

After a few days in Larry's office.

"Jessica, what are you thinking?" Caspian yelled, his emotions spiraling out of control.

"I just wanted to try, and didn't expect to lose all." Jessica lowered her head and said in a low voice.

"Can you please use your brain in the future?"

Caspian was really mad. He never expect someone as organized as Jessica to invest in the stock market.

"Why are you yelling?" Larry asked as he strolled into the office.

"Larry, I... You tell him!" Caspian sat down furiously on the sofa.

It must be serious. I've never seen Caspian so mad. Larry gave Jessica a look as he waited for her reply.

"I accidentally lose some money," Jessica said in a low voice.

"Accidentally? Lose some money? Jessica! Explain yourself!" Caspian exclaimed and stood up.

"I lost a huge sum of money." Jessica looked at Larry with a pitiful expression.

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"What did you do?" Larry queried.

"Bought some stocks."

Larry was struck dumb.

Jessica told him she was investing all her money some time ago. Did she mean investing in the stock market? Is she in her right mind or is she suffering from a concussion? It's almost impossible for her to make a profit in the stock market since she didn't have anyone to lead her.

"How much did you invest?"

"Five hundred thousand," Caspian answered.

"She used up all of her savings," Caspian continued.

Jessica spent all of her savings on the chain bookstore some time ago. Just when she finally made a small amount of profit from her business, she spent it all in the stock market.

Caspian was mad that she didn't tell anyone that she had spent all her money on stocks.

"Why didn't you get help?" Larry walked over to Jessica and asked in a serious manner.

"Isn't it better to find a professional?"

"I was afraid you wouldn't let me," Jessica replied.

How funny. Larry turned away from her.

It's not out of the norm for people to invest in the stock market now that we're in the twenty-first century.

"Don't do that anymore in the future!" Larry gave Jessica a cold look and yelled.

"Noted," Jessica replied guiltily.

However, Caspian was still furious about her actions.

"Don't be mad. I'll earn all of the money back. Don't worry." Jessica walked over, tugged Caspian's hand, and whined coquettishly.

"I'm not mad because you lost some money. I'm just worried about you." Caspian explained loudly.

Jessica stopped bickering with Caspian. She knew he was just being a worrywart.

The both of them finally left the office after fussing around for a bit.

Shortly after, Joan arrived.

"What happened to them?" She pointed at Jessica and Caspian.

"It's nothing." Larry replied without even looking at her.

"Here, some meatloaf for you since you said you wanted some yesterday." Joan placed his lunchbox in front of him.

Larry immediately stopped what he was doing and gave Joan a grateful look.

"I'll be leaving. There are still a lot of things to attend to at the photography studio." Joan left right after.

Warmth filled Larry's heart as he watched Joan leave the building.

Joan looked around the photography studio worriedly as everyone lazed around.

"What happened to them?" she asked Faye.

"Everyone's morale is down because business is slow these days even though enough time has passed for people to stop talking about the incident." Faye shrugged and replied helplessly.

"I thought we were doing okay. What's happened?" Joan asked anxiously.

"I don't know."

Joan was at a loss of what to do next.

Is someone plotting behind my back again? Is it Abelyn? Joan picked up her bag and walked out of her office.

The photography studio's reputation will forever be at stake if those people refuse to clarify the truth.

"Ms. Watts, where are you going?" Faye hurriedly followed after Joan.

"To find them!"

Joan meant Abelyn's friends who started the nasty rumors about her photography studio.

"Ms. Watts, calm down. You can't go alone." Faye tugged her arm.

Joan hesitated for a bit as she stared at Faye.

Ring! Ring!

It was Larry.

"Don't be rash. I'm on to them already."

Joan froze.

What a timely phone call.

"Ok." She turned and entered her office.

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"Faye, what do we do? We can't just laze around every day."

"That's right. I'm still waiting for my paycheck so I can return home to visit Granny."

"How are we going to survive without our clients?"

The employees whispered among themselves outside the office. Obviously, they were getting impatient with the whole situation.

"Be patient, guys. Ms. Watts will come up with a solution! Please be patient!" Faye piped up.

Faye's heart ached for them when she saw their disheartened faces.

Joan also felt very anxious as she watched the scene unfolding before her eyes. But all she could do now is wait.

"Larry, this is the recording and the video clip. However, one woman did not show her face throughout the clip," said Caspian.

Larry's face darkened as he checked the evidence cautiously. Who dares make such a move against Joan?

"Where are they now?" Larry pointed at the computer screen and asked. "At home." "Take them to the hotel for lunch tomorrow. Tell them it'll be on me." Larry busied himself with work after that. "Yes sir." Caspian walked out. Who is the woman in the video clip? Larry furrowed his brows, feeling frustrated. The next day, the few of them showed up early at the hotel. They were very excited when they heard that the president of Norton Corporation will be treating them to a meal and rushed right over after changing. "Sorry, I'm late." Larry apologized as he walked into the room. "Don't worry about it. You're a busy man. We mustn't make you wait." A middle-aged man stood up. "I shan't beat around the bush then. I'm here today because of Joan." Larry sipped on his tea. Everyone around the table exchanged looks, suddenly at a loss of what to do. "What's their relationship?" "I don't know." They whispered among themselves. They had not heard about Larry and Joan's complicated relationship since they had just arrived in the city. The only thing they knew about Larry was that he was married for a while

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but had filed for divorce now. However, they didn't know that Joan was Larry's ex-wife, and

would have never had expected for them to get back together again.

"Mr. Norton, aren't you here to talk business today?" A middle-aged woman asked with an awkward look on her face.

"I want you to clarify the truth about the photography studio's incident," Larry continued.

The few of them lowered their heads, displeased.

They didn't want to offend neither Larry nor Abelyn.

"Mr. Norton, I think you've got the wrong people. We have nothing to do with it. We were just telling everyone what really happened at the photography studio," a young man piped up.

In actual reality, they had fabricated the truth. Larry lifted his head and stared at them coldly.

"You have two options now. One, clarify the truth and live a peaceful life in this city, or get out of here crippled," Larry said placidly.

At that moment, everyone in the room was shocked.

This is a trap!

"Sorry, Mr. Norton, we're here to talk business, not to have a casual chat. I have something else to attend to, so please excuse me." The middle-aged woman was about to leave the room.

A few burly bodyguards suddenly stood in her way when she opened the door. The woman jumped in fright and quickly took a few steps back. Larry continued to sip on his tea as if nothing had happened.

"Mr. Norton, what are you doing? We can talk it out." A young woman said, flustered.

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"This is all I have to say. Give it some thought." Larry stood up and left.

"Wait!" A middle-aged woman suddenly shouted.

"You'll let us go if we clarify the truth?" she asked.

She was very much aware that she couldn't afford to offend Larry. They can worry about Abelyn after all this is over.

"That's right. I just want the truth. Perhaps you can get my help if you run into any trouble in the future." Larry said.

"No need. As long as you don't come for us!" The middle-aged woman piped up.

What a clever woman! Larry looked at the middle-aged woman with admiration.

The few of them gathered around for a discussion and finally came to an agreement.

"We can post a video clip clarifying the truth," the woman continued.

Great! This is the best outcome. Larry smiled and nodded in approval.

He left them alone after hearing the woman's promise.

"Mom, what are you doing? How are we going to explain ourselves to Ms. Chipman?" A young woman tugged the middle-aged woman's hand

"Don't worry. Our lives are more important," she comforted.

At the moment, Joan was wrecking her head on how she could get her business out of the sticky situation.

"Ms. Watts, you should go home and get some rest." Faye walked over.

"No need. I'll just lie on the table for a short nap," Joan replied.

"Come check it out, guys. They're clarifying the truth."

"Really? Why are they suddenly being so thoughtful?"

"It's true. Look. This is the video clip."

All of a sudden, the office's corridor buzzed as everyone smiled joyfully. Joan's curiosity was piqued as she looked in from the outside.

"What are they doing?" she asked Faye.

"I don't know. I'll go take a look." Faye walked out of Joan's office.

"What are you..."

"Faye, come check it out!" A girl cut her off and pulled her over to watch the video clip showcasing the men explaining everything that happened at the photography studio.

"When did it happen?" Faye asked.

"Just now."

"Ms. Watts, you don't have to worry anymore." Faye burst into Joan's office with a tablet.

When did Faye become so immature? Joan was rendered speechless as she watched Faye ran towards her.

"Lower down," Joan said.

"Ms. Watts, look. They've clarified the truth." With that, Faye handed the tablet to Joan.

Joan repeated the clip three times before she could finally register what was happening.

"Does that mean our photography studio will get to resume normal operations soon?" Joan asked excitedly.

"Yes, Ms. Watts." Faye played along.

That's not right. They chased me out the last time when I paid them a visit. Why did they... Joan tilted her head and stared at the ceiling, deep in thought.

Are they doing it on purpose again? She rubbed her eyes in an attempt to see the video clearly.

"We will have more opportunities to work with Norton Corporation in the future..." The men on the screen said pretentiously.

At that moment, Joan's eyes gleamed with joy. Everything finally clicked.

Someone had been helping her out behind her back! She suddenly felt at ease knowing that she still had someone to back her up.

Abelyn's office.

"What did you say? They clarified the truth? Are they crazy?" Abelyn paced around her office anxiously as fury raged within her.