

## Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1481

"I know why you decided to leave me. Why didn't you tell me the first time we met?"

Larry caressed her face affectionately.

Having heard Larry's words, Joan knew that she had to come clean with him.

Taking a deep breath, she looked at Larry and replied, "Larry, it's time we clear the air. The reason I left you then was because I had a tumor in my head that needed to be treated overseas. Furthermore, I didn't even know whether I could survive. To save you the pain, I told you that I was in love with someone else, hoping that you would forget me."

She continued, "After that, I traveled to A Nation and there was where I met Dustin. He was my doctor then and treated me exceptionally well. His care and concern were both attentive and meticulous. However, I only ever saw him as a good friend."

Joan slowly immersed herself in her own memories.

"All these years, there was never a moment where I wasn't thinking about you. However, I kept reminding myself to forget you. Just when I finally buried you deep down in my heart, I ran into you again only to find that your heart had been stolen by someone else."

Pausing for a moment, Joan sneered at herself. So what if I still love him?

Although Larry was aware of most of what Joan told him, his heart still ached when he heard her say it out loud.

However, he was also delighted that the reason she didn't tell him the truth was that he already had a girlfriend.

Holding that thought, Larry smiled. "You have always been the only one in my heart. Do you really think I have a girlfriend?"

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Stunned by his response, Joan asked doubtfully, "Isn't Gabriella your girlfriend?"

Everything suddenly clicked for Larry. Joan must have assumed that Gabriella's my girlfriend when I pretended to be intimate with her.

"You foolish gal. How can she be my girlfriend? I was only faking it in front of you," Larry explained with a smile as he stroked her head affectionately.

"Really?" Joan asked, tilting her head. Her silly expression simply made her look adorable.

"Of course."

Now that the misunderstanding had been cleared up, Larry was overjoyed.

As for Joan, she giggled like a child when she found out the truth. Never in her dreams did she think that it was all just a mistake.

"Do you blame me for hiding the fact that I'm leaving?" Joan asked with a serious expression.

"Of course I do!"

Larry's expression changed as he glared at her. "When you decided to leave without telling me, did you ever stop to consider my feelings?"

It seems he has yet to forgive me.

When she saw the look on Larry's face, Joan's buoyant mood was suddenly gone. She felt so depressed that she was on the brink of tears.

Noticing the shift in mood and the disappointment on her face, Larry quickly cheered her up. "Since you didn't tell me you were leaving, your punishment will be to stay by my side forever!"

When she saw Larry's mischievous expression, Joan wasn't confused for once and quickly realized that Larry was just teasing her.

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"You scoundrel!"

She waved her fist at him and almost pounded him on his chest.

Beaming in response, Larry pulled her into his embrace.

Just like a kitten, Joan curled in his arms and relished in the warmth of his body. At that moment, she was overwhelmed with a sense of bliss.

Larry, everything is perfect when you are by my side.

Joan whispered to herself.

As Larry's injuries were minor, there was no need to stay overnight in the hospital. Hence, he was discharged on that day itself.

Before long, his bodyguards arrived at the hospital and prepared to send him home.

After helping Larry into the car, Joan felt reluctant to see him leave. However, without any excuse to stay back, she had no choice but to say goodbye.

"Larry, rest well at home. I'll visit you when I'm free," Joan remarked.

"Joan, I'll likely have trouble moving around for the next few days due to my injuries. Can I trouble you to take care of me?"

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Reluctant to see Joan leave, Larry decisively came up with an excuse.

"Don't you have a maid at home? Why do you need me to look after you?"

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Joan felt ambivalent as she thought Larry was joking.

"No, I stay alone. There's no one else at home," Larry quickly replied.

"Really?" Joan was skeptical.

"Of course, why would I lie to you?"

Just as he spoke, he shot his bodyguard a glance.

As Caspian had been working for Larry for a long time, he recognized the cue at once and added, "Ms. Watts, Mr. Norton has bought a new place where he is staying by himself."

Larry gave him a satisfactory nod. Good job Caspian. I'll definitely give you a raise after this.

"Aren't you living with your boss to protect him? Don't you consider yourself human?"

Joan's candidness stumped Caspian. "Besides, even if you don't have a maid, you still have your bodyguard. Why must it have to be me?"

Larry laughed wryly as he wondered if Joan was playing dumb. Despite how obvious his intentions were, she didn't seem to get it.

Larry looked at Caspian again.

People like us will always have to sacrifice for the boss, huh...

Caspian sighed in his heart before adding. "To be honest, Ms. Watts, other than protecting Mr. Norton, I'm not really good at anything else. Even for my own laundry, I have to send it out to the dry cleaners. Hence, it'll be better if you take care of Mr. Norton."

"Oh, you really are useless, then," Joan murmured softly to herself.

"Fine, I'll take care of you for a few days."

"Great."

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Overjoyed, Larry patted the glum-looking Caspian on his shoulder. "Come on then, let's go now."

In a short while, the car arrived in front of a villa.

"Come with me."

As Caspian helped Larry into the villa, Joan followed closely behind them.

"Your house is really big and yet, you live alone?"

Joan was puzzled as it felt troublesome to do so.

But of course! Larry was proud of his quick thinking. On the way home, he had ordered everyone to leave so that he could maintain the illusion.

After helping Larry to his bedroom, the bodyguard left, leaving Joan and Larry alone in the massive villa.

"Joan, you should take a look around since you will be staying over for the next few days. Your room is next to mine, so you can just call me if you need anything," Larry explained to her.

Joan was still apprehensive about staying alone with Larry in his villa. But, she did agree to take care of him and couldn't bring herself to go back on her word.

Since I'm already here, I'll just go along with it. Joan told herself.

The next few days, Larry enjoyed the meticulous attention that Joan showered on him. Under her attentive care, Larry "recovered" very quickly.

In truth, there was nothing wrong with him and he could move his limbs just fine. He simply pretended to have restricted mobility just so that he could be together with Joan.

"Time for dinner, Larry."

As usual, Joan would bring the food into his bedroom.

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"Feed me."

Larry clung to Joan like a child. For the past few days, it had always been the same as he was reluctant to part with her even for a single moment.

"Sure," Joan replied helplessly.

Despite his clinginess, Joan seemed to enjoy every moment the two of them spent together.

Over the last few days, Larry and Joan's affection for each other grew significantly. Although they never reaffirmed their status as a couple, it was just a formality by now.

"Here, open up."

Joan's voice was gentle as if she was coaxing a child.

As Larry opened his mouth, his gaze was fixed upon her. The warmth emitted from his eyes felt as if it could melt her heart.

Staring at Joan longingly, he observed her exquisite oval-shaped face, bright sparkling eyes, and alluring lips. The serious expression she had while feeding him made him feel as though she had taken root in his heart and no one else would be able to pull her away.

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"Joan, be my girlfriend," Larry mumbled.

"What did you say?"

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Joan couldn't hear properly because Larry's voice was too soft.

"Be my girlfriend."

Larry sat up straight and looked at her in all seriousness with passion in his eyes. "I love you and want to be together with you forever. I want to laugh and cry with you as we watch the sunrise and sunset together. Happiness to me simply means hugging you to sleep every night and see you the moment I'm awake. Say yes and we will never be apart from each other ever again."

Joan was overwhelmed with happiness at Larry's confession. She had always dreamed about it but never believed that it would become reality.

"Yes! I will be with you!"

Joan's eyes were filled with tears of joy. "Being with you is the one thing that I desire the most in this world."

Hugging each other tightly, they relished in the truth of each other's words.

After a while, Joan whispered in Larry's ear in a bashful tone, "Larry, let me tell you a secret."

"Hmm? What secret?" Larry asked softly. He was stroking her hair as she lay in his arms.

"I... I think I'm pregnant."

Just as she spoke, she buried her face in Larry's embrace.

"Oh, it's good that you're pregnant." Larry didn't grasp the full magnitude of the situation.

"Wait... What? You're pregnant!"

Larry grabbed Joan's shoulders in shock. "Is the child mine? I'm the father, right?"

When Joan saw that Larry wasn't making any sense, she couldn't help but roll her eyes.

"Who else can it be if not you?"

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Having heard Joan's confirmation, Larry burst into hearty laughter.

"Hahaha, I didn't expect to not only have a new girlfriend today but also a child. This is really a joyous case of 'buy one get one free!'"

Joan wondered if Larry had gone crazy as his ramblings made no sense at all.

"Joan, I love you."

Larry was so ecstatic that he swept her off her feet and whirled her around in his arms.

Joan exclaimed in surprise but quickly realized something was wrong. "Larry, aren't you supposed to have trouble moving? How are you able to prance around like that?"

Larry gasped at his mistake. He had forgotten about his charade in the midst of his joy.

"Ouch, it hurts! My arm!" Larry pretended to moan in pain.

"You scoundrel! You can drop the act now!"

Joan was infuriated. She had been puzzled as to why Larry was taking such a long time to recover when the doctor told her that he only suffered minor injuries. She now realized that it was a hoax all along.

"I'm going to kill you!"

"Please have mercy!"

As both of them argued affectionately, the air was filled with bliss.

"Enough, enough, let's take a break," Larry said to Joan with a smile as both of them were tired.

Only then did Joan bother to stop her exacting her revenge.

"Joan," Larry whispered into her ear as he pulled her into his embrace.

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"Hmm?"

She felt her pulse race the moment his warm breath brushed across her ear, causing her to blush.

"Since you're now my girlfriend and carrying my child. It's time I take you to see my parents."

"Isn't that too hasty?"

Joan was shocked. "I'm still not ready yet."

Are you kidding me? I haven't even prepared anything. How do you expect me to see your parents just like that?

What if I get on their nerves? It will all be my fault!

Holding that thought, Joan suddenly realized that they had to think through the matter carefully.

Despite her concerns, Larry didn't seem to think they were warranted.

"It'll be fine. My parents are easygoing people and won't mind at all. After all, we will be a family soon. All you need is to just be yourself."

"No! No! Definitely not!"

Joan shook her head vehemently, "I must get myself ready before I meet them."

Given Joan's response, Larry had no choice but to agree. At the same time, he was secretly delighted at how seriously Joan took the matter.

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Without any delay, Joan grabbed Larry as they headed out together.

Their first stop was a clothing store where Joan bought some new clothes.

As most of her clothes were for casual occasions, she figured she needed something proper for such a momentous occasion.

"Larry, what do you think of this?" Joan asked as she emerged from the changing room.

"Looks good," Larry responded.

"How about this one?"

"Not bad."

"What about this?"

"Looks good on you too."

Joan tried out many different outfits while Larry patiently waited to provide his objective opinion.

"Hey, can you treat this more seriously?"

Joan grumbled, "Don't just keep saying that it looks good. You have to provide more constructive suggestions."

"But they really do look good."

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Larry wasn't lying at all. Given Joan's exquisite features and curves at all the right places, she could easily carry anything she wore.

"In that case, just pick one for me, then."

Joan insisted on Larry choosing for her.

"That's easy. Miss, please pack everything up. I'm taking all of them."

With a wave of his hand, he handed his card to the sales attendant and bought everything.

"Of course, Sir. Please wait for a moment."

The sales attendant was ecstatic as she was able to achieve two months' worth of sales in one go.

"Larry! That's too much. I won't have the chance to wear them all."

Joan quickly stopped him.

"Don't worry, you look good in all of them. Besides, I'm the president of Norton Corporation while you are my girlfriend. There's nothing wrong with you splurging on some clothes."

It didn't bother Larry at all as he just wanted to buy her whatever she desired.

Given how persistent Larry was, Joan relented and felt pampered at the same time.

"Sir, your clothes are ready for pick up. Here's your receipt."

The sales attendant politely handed over Larry's card and receipt while giving Joan an envious look. I would willingly give up twenty years of my life just to have a boyfriend like that.

"Let's go. Anyway, you look great in that outfit. So, just leave it on," Larry commented with a smile while holding Joan by her waist.

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"Alright," Joan acknowledged submissively. After all, she had to admit that she did indeed look great in her current outfit.

Holding Larry's arm, Joan left the store under the envious stares of the sales attendants.

"Shall we buy some gifts for your parents?" Joan asked for Larry's opinion.

"Sure."

He obviously had no issues about it. As both of them chatted cheerfully while walking down the street, their bodyguard, Caspian, had his hands full with shopping bags and a glum expression on.

"Shouldn't the boyfriend be doing this? Why am I carrying the bags?" Caspian's grumbles were unfortunately heard by Larry.

"What did you just say? If you are upset about something, please don't keep it to yourself." Larry glared at Caspian.

"No, it's nothing. I'm not upset about anything." Caspian was so stressed that he almost burst into tears.

"That's more like it," Larry remarked smugly, causing Joan to giggle aloud.

Joan was struggling to decide on what to buy for Larry's parents. Finally, based on Larry's suggestion, she bought a box of premium exotic tea and some health supplements for Larry's mom.

When Larry was about to pay, Joan stopped him and insisted to do so instead.

"This is the first time I'm buying gifts for your parents. So, I must pay for them myself," Joan explained to which Larry agreed.

Despite the fact that both items would cost her a lot, Joan didn't feel reluctant at all. Instead, she was overjoyed at the opportunity.

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When Larry noticed how sincere she was toward his family, he swore to himself that he would treasure her for the rest of their lives.

After buying the gifts, both of them got into the car and headed for the Norton Residence.

“Larry, do you think your parents will like me?”

Along the way, Joan agonized over the question. She was so stressed that her palms were sweating profusely.

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“Don’t worry Joan, my parents will definitely love you,” Larry reassured her while stroking her hand.

“Really? In that case, do I look presentable today? Is there anything wrong with how I look?” Joan asked again.

She was wearing a fitting, white full-length dress. Her flawless fair skin, slender neck, and delightful makeup accentuated her exquisite features, making her a stunning sight to behold.

“Don’t worry. You look gorgeous today,” Larry replied with conviction as he looked at Joan.

In my heart, you will always be the most beautiful, Larry whispered in his mind.

While they were still chatting, the car finally came to a stop.

Larry patted Joan’s hands. “Come on, time to get down.”

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That's fast! Just when Joan had managed to calm herself, her pulse began to race again.

Noticing her anxiety, Larry beamed at her. "Don't worry. Once you meet them, you will know how friendly they are."

Larry's words had a mysterious way of calming Joan. Just by looking at him, her racing heart rate began to slow down.

Hand in hand, they stepped into the Norton residence.

"Let's go, it's time to meet your in-laws," Larry remarked with a laugh.

"You're making me nervous!"

Feeling annoyed, Joan rolled her eyes at him.

Larry's joke had caused the last of her anxiety to melt away. Holding onto his hand tightly, Joan was filled with anticipation as they walked into the living room.

There, Larry's parents were seated and having tea.

"Mom, Dad, I'm home."

He led Joan toward them.

"Welcome home, son."

When she heard his voice, Vivian put down her cup and look in Larry's direction.

When she saw a beautiful and elegant girl beside him, she was stunned. She asked thoughtfully, "Son, who is this you have brought with you?"

Despite not saying a word, Finnick was quietly scrutinizing Joan. Is she Larry's girlfriend?

"Mom, Dad, let me introduce her. This is my girlfriend, Joan Watts."

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Just as he spoke, he looked at Joan. "Joan, these are my parents."

"Hello, Mr. Norton, Mrs. Norton."

Although Joan felt nervous when she met Larry's parents, she didn't forget her manners and greeted both of them with a sweet voice.

"Hello."

Vivian was so ecstatic to see Larry's girlfriend that she sprang to her feet. "Joan, come closer. Let me take a closer look at you."

The last of Joan's nervousness faded away when she heard Vivian's warm tone. Walking up to her confidently, Joan remarked with a smile, "Mrs. Norton, I have heard a lot about you from Larry. Especially about how stunning you are."

Delighted by Joan's words, Vivian held her hand warmly. "You sure know how to flatter me. Look at how beautiful you are, Larry must be really lucky to have found a girlfriend like you."

"Mom, I'm not that bad, alright. Joan and I aren't even married yet and you're already siding with her. What's going to happen when we do?"

Larry was overjoyed to see how well Joan was getting along with Vivian. It was obvious to him that Vivian was happy with her.

"Joan, did Larry ever bully you? He has always been spoilt by us. So, if he does, you have to tell me and I will definitely punish him."

Vivian reminded Joan as she was worried that Larry didn't treat her well enough.

"Mrs. Norton, don't worry. Larry has been very good to me," Joan replied at once. She, too, had a good impression of her future mother-in-law whom she found to be down to earth.

"That's good. That's good."

Vivian shot Finnick a glance as he had yet to say a word throughout. "Hey, Finnick, why haven't you said anything? Your son has brought his girlfriend home."

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Finnick returned her glance helplessly. "You have been talking non-stop since just now. I had no chance to get a word in at all."

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