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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1714

Jory was certain that no one would trace the letter S to him since he wasn't acquainted with Larry, let alone Joan. Furthermore, his connection to Joan was one-sided as he knew her, but she didn't know much about him. Alpire Group had never collaborated with Norton Corporation before this, so nobody really knew of his name.

Although he had meticulously planned out everything, he neglected that Nancy had known him long ago. Even if they weren't close, she could easily draw a connection between S and his family name, Synder. Their families had also been business partners for many years, so it was a given that she knew of Alpire Group. To top it off, Jory recently bumped into her on his way to meet Simon, and Larry had figured out Alpire Group's IP address. Hence, Nancy could easily guess who S was.

The IP address, Alpire Group, S—Nancy had connected the dots and found that they all led to Jory. She sat before him now, questioning if her guess was right. Jory wasn't sure what to say. He could have easily avoided her or even ditch today's meeting if he really hated her. Yet, he couldn't quite bring himself to leave her.

For some reason, he couldn't lie to her face. So he asked instead, "If I asked you to keep it a secret, would you tell anyone?"

If Jory hadn't said this, Nancy would have without a doubt told Joan and Larry. However, Jory told her that this secret would be theirs alone. He asked her to keep it between them and not tell anyone else about it. It was as if Nancy fell into a trance, making a mental promise to keep her lips tightly sealed.

So she nodded almost immediately. Jory stared at her for a moment, taking in the trust and resolution in her eyes before finally letting his guard down. He then nodded back in acceptance.

"But why did you do it?" Nancy felt confused by everything. Jory wasn't even close with Joan or Larry, and Alpire Group had no existing business relationships with Norton Corporation. It made more sense if Jory was attacking Nancy and the rest of the Barrymore family since she refused his hand in marriage. After all, it was only natural for her family to bear the cost of causing him so much pain. But how did any of this involve Larry's family? And those pictures. Are they Jory's doing as well?

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Note: Not sure if the whole thing should be narrative or inner dialogue.

Unless... he has feelings for Joan and wants to break her and Larry up?

This speculation popped into Nancy's mind and startled her. But the more she considered it, the more reasonable her speculation seemed. Nevertheless, the thought of Jory trying to split up Joan and Larry still made her uncomfortable.

Nancy had mumbled her doubts in front of Jory, who choked on his water and emptied the liquids in his mouth onto the floor. At this, Nancy fished out some tissues from her bag as she frantically apologized, "I'm so sorry, I was just casually blurting out my thoughts. If I misunderstood anything, then please don't take offense or be mad."

"How could I possibly have feelings for some married woman who has also given birth? With a post-pregnancy body? Tsk. Tsk. Forget it," Jory muttered flusteredly.

Back then, Jory often expressed his doubts towards Dustin; he never understood why Dustin devoted himself to Joan when there was plenty of other fish in the sea. Dustin could have found any girl that he liked, yet, he remained hung up on Joan. At that moment, Jory realized that he couldn't comprehend Dustin's stubborn feelings because he wasn't experiencing things from Dustin's perspective. After all, how could anyone truly understand if they haven't experienced that kind of situation for themselves?

Perhaps it was because men didn't indulge in gossip as much as women; Dustin seldom brought up the topic of Joan before Jory, despite Jory helping him all this while. Jory now understood that an indifferent man like Dustin would also have moments where he would lose his cool—all of Dustin's indignation and resentment were sparked by Joan. Jory understood that he and Dustin experienced the same kind of unrequited love—one where they stood no chance of pursuing the ones they loved.

Doesn't everyone have equal rights to love? So why are some people destined to never be with the ones they love?

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