Never Late, Never Away Chapter 2003 - 2004

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The three of them arrived at the studio together.

"Come with me, let's get you all ready. You'll have to change into a bikini..." the staff guided Joan to the changing room.

All of a sudden, Joan blushed at the sight of the bikini laid out for her.

"There's no need to be shy. Relax, it'll be over soon. Besides, nowadays people are more open to this kind of swimwear," the staff prompted.

Soon, the three of them changed into their respective swimwear and began shooting.

"That's it. Mr., please place your arm around your wife's shoulder. Stand closer to each other. A little closer."

"Good. Turn a little to your left. Mr., look at your wife lovingly. Yes, that's good..."

At that time, Lucius was so engrossed as he posed happily in front of the camera. He was totally unaware of how uncomfortable Joan was.

"Okay. This is the last shot. Mister, please place both of your hands on your wife's cheeks. Now, press your foreheads together..."

Both Joan and Dustin grew even more uncomfortable and embarrassed. After all, Joan was a married woman.

"Come on, don't be shy. We are all open now in this day and age. Even married female celebrities are fine with kissing scenes."

"Come, I'll help you." As he said that, one of the staff in front of him walked over to them.

With the staff's guidance, both of them stood so close until they were nearly pressed together. Just then, not only Joan was embarrassed, but Dustin's face was flushed as well.

"Okay. Let's begin..."

Finally, after what seems like forever, they completed the shooting for the poster campaign. At that time, there was a trace of sadness in Joan's eyes.

What will Larry think of this when he comes to know about it? Will he be jealous? Forget it. Why am I still thinking about him? We're about to be divorced soon anyway. Joan shook her head and sighed.

"Oh, look! Your shots came out really well! You guys look like a happy family." A woman came over and sang praises.

A family? We're definitely not a family!

"We're not a family," Joan said politely.

In an instant, the eyes of the woman dimmed, and she quietly backed off.

It was better to stay guiet than to continue on the embarrassing topic.

"It turns out that they are not a family. Are you guys sure it's okay to shoot like this? Will it..." the woman muttered.

"Take a look at this photo. His eyes are full of adoration for the woman. I'm pretty sure they'll become a family soon. Don't worry about it. They're probably in the middle of a lovers' spat."

But Dustin had overheard the exchange between the woman and Joan.

She wasn't going to have a second husband in her life. A cold glint flashed across Dustin's eyes.

"Mr. Dustin, do you like my Mom?" Suddenly, Lucius came running to him and blurted out that question.

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Why is he being so direct? Dustin tapped lightly on the child's forehead and smiled at him.

"Do you even know what it means by liking somebody?"

The child pouted, showing his displeasure.

"I know. Dad says that when you like someone, you'll think about her every day. You will miss her, and you will want to protect her and take care of her."

Dustin was astonished by Lucius's remark.

"I'll like whoever who treats my Mom well," the child uttered sensibly.

Dustin studied the child in front of him and thought to himself. He's really matured for someone his age.

Meanwhile, back in the office. "What's happening?"

"I don't know. Is Mr. Norton fighting with Mrs. Norton? Will they be getting a divorce?"

"Nonsense. They have a great relationship."

A few colleagues were chattering away, and they were completely unaware that there was a silent figure behind them.

"Do you think Larry is being cheated on?"

In an instant, the air in the room stilled.

The figure behind them gradually moved to the front. It was none other than Larry, and his face was grim.

"Give it to me," the man commanded.

The female colleague handed him the phone.

All of a sudden, a cold light flashed across Larry's eyes.

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On the screen of the phone, it was a poster of Joan, Dustin, and Lucius. They looked like a family in the poster photo. Joan was smiling shyly at the camera, and Dustin had a big grin on his face. Lucius looked the happiest among them.

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Bang! Larry slammed the phone down on the table and left.

All the staff looked at each other and fell silent.

Larry stood by the window and balled his fists so tightly that his nails were digging into the skin of his palms.

"Larry!" Caspian panted as he came rushing in without even knocking on the door.

"Joan..." Caspian hesitated as he didn't quite know what to say.

What's wrong with her? She's happy! She looks happy when she's with that man. Misery flitted across Larry's eyes.

There was nothing between himself and Gabriella, so why won't she believe him? In that instant, he felt so hurt that it felt like a stabbing pain in his heart.

There was only one woman he loved, and that was Joan. He had never touched another woman other than her, but she wouldn't believe him. How could she get herself involved in a family poster shot with Dustin and Lucius?

What a joke! That's the love of his life, the woman he loved for many years.

"She must have her reasons for doing that, Larry. Let's wait for her to return, and we'll..."

"No," Larry interrupted Caspian.

There's no need for that.

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Anyway, she went ahead with the family poster shot without having any consideration for his feelings. There was nothing for her to explain. Besides, she looked happy on the family poster.

In that instant, deep sadness pasted on Caspian's face.

Is their relationship coming to an end? Just like Nancy and myself.

He had been a witness since the start of Larry and Joan's romantic relationship. Like any other couple, they had gone through highs and lows, from quarreling to making up. But now, they were like strangers to each other.

Caspian let out a long sigh and left the office. After pondering for a long time, he decided to give Joan a call.

Ring! Ring! Ring!

Joan glanced at her phone and saw that it was Caspian.

"When are you coming back, Joan?" Caspian asked anxiously.

"In a few days. I'm having a getaway trip with Lucius..." Joan explained.

But she had no idea that the poster had already been circulating in her homeland.

"I suggest you come home soon, Joan. About Larry and Gabriella, it's not what you think. But it's not that simple, either. I promise you, there's nothing between him and Gabriella," Caspian vowed confidently.

Joan hesitated for a while. Why is Caspian calling me? Shouldn't it be Larry calling me instead? Why Caspian? Is he avoiding me? Or is it because he has nothing to say to me?

Joan clenched her fists and snorted inwardly.

"Caspian, this is between Larry and me. You don't have to worry about it. Also, Larry is not feeling too well lately. So, please take care of him." After saying that, Joan hung up the phone.

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She knows that Larry is not feeling too well, and she knows that Larry needs someone to care for him. So why isn't she here to take care of him herself? Why is she away and did the poster shoot with Dustin? How is Larry going to deal with these so-called rumors?

Caspian's brow knitted.

Ring! Ring! Ring!

Larry looked at his phone and ignored the incoming call.

Meanwhile, on the other side of the phone, Gabriella's eyes narrowed into a steely glare.

Why isn't he answering my call? Joan is no longer around, so what is he still busy with? It's obviously after work hours. Gabriella made another call to him.

Larry, who was annoyed by the constant ringing of his phone, turned off the phone and threw it on the sofa. Then, he rested his head on his arms at the table.

I'm sick and tired of all these.

He was not only physically tired, but he was also mentally drained to the brink of exhaustion.

Larry had never been so heartbroken until now. It only made matters worse when he saw the poster of Joan, Dustin, and Lucius together.