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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1706 - 1710

Larry did not have any bodyguard with him, so he had to push through the mob like a lone ranger. He moved through it with much difficulty, listening to the many voices in his ears throwing around the word "interview". But he took no heed of it all, as he kept muttering to no one in particular, "Excuse me, coming through."

Once Larry got out of his car, the ruckus downstairs suddenly got so loud that even Caspian, who was upstairs, noticed the oddity. No way! I just got off the phone with him! I told him not to come! How did he make it here so fast?

Caspian wanted to take the elevator down, but it took too long and he did not have the patience to wait. He stomped his feet once and decided he might as well use the stairs. He glanced downwards from the stairway and, as expected, spotted Larry's tall, distinctive figure amid the crowd, surrounded by pesky media representatives and moving very slowly, with no one there to rescue him.

Caspian clenched his fists. Holding on to the handrails, he sprinted down the stairs, taking two to three steps at a time. When he reached the bottom, Larry barely managed to squeeze into the hall, blocked by a wall of humans. He did not see Caspian, and the latter, who had emerged outside, had lost the patience he once had.

When the commotion started, he still had the patience to confront the journalists and tell them, "Sorry for the inconvenience, but the president is busy. He will not be accepting interviews, but in time we'll clarify our situation." Now, witnessing these journalists and their stubborn refusal to back down, with little care for how other people feel, he decided that the time for niceness was over. He charged over, grabbed hold of a random journalist, and swiftly tossed him aside.

He was a soldier once. The skill had not completely left him. Since getting married, he had had one too many peaceful days, and never really had the need to practice. Surprisingly, the situation that day gave him a chance to exercise his muscles. One by one, he lifted the members of the press with ease. It did not matter they were male journalists at six feet tall, or female journalists weighing about a hundred pounds. Caspian picked them up like he was carrying chickens.

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After getting rid of the last journalist who got in his way, Caspian spotted Larry who was trapped with no way out. He rushed to his front and gave the scowling journalists a telling off, "Look, you're all well-known figures of the media. I'm sure you abide by your professional work ethics. The way you guys block the entrance to our company has greatly impacted our operations. If you still have the minimum level of conscience, please leave before we call the police. We will make an announcement about our company affairs in due time."

Caspian's statement had not completely fallen on deaf ears. Several journalists actually lowered their microphones, but there were still some restless troublemakers who would not take no for an answer.

"Then, tell us, sir. Why isn't Mr. Norton, the president, responding to any of this? Why must you stand up for him?" The journalist raised her microphone so high that it almost poked another person in the eye.

Caspian detested these people and wanted to throw them over his shoulder countless times. Fortunately, he had managed to send Larry into the building before the journalists got them. Otherwise, he feared that they would ask more loaded questions.

One troublesome journalist was like a stubborn piece of gum. She stepped forward and clung onto Caspian, leaning towards him with her microphone, its logo facing the camera. It was like she needed the audience to know that she represented a weekly online news agency in Marsingfill.

If it weren't for the fact that you're a woman, and I don't hit women, I would have taken you out moments ago. Gosh, these nosy journalists are even more insufferable than my wife! Those were the thoughts running through Caspian's mind. He soon realized that the journalists who had previously lowered their microphones were raising them again. Perhaps the irksome journalist's question happened to be right up their alley.

The situation escalated and got physical really fast. Some had resorted to grabbing Caspian by the sleeve, demanding an explanation.

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The tugging was the final straw for Caspian. He finally understood why there was always news about celebrities knocking down the camera crew's gadgets, or agents assaulting journalists and such popping up all over the Internet. In the beginning, he would have pitied

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the media reps who were just doing their jobs, but at that moment... Well, they probably deserved it.

He sharply yanked his arm away and almost tore his sleeve. Then, he glared at his surroundings. If this were a movie, there would be raging flames burning behind him. With a growl, the horrible din around him came to a standstill. "It's my pleasure to stand up for him. So what!"

Instantly, the mob fell silent. As soon as the words came out, Caspian wanted to bite his tongue. There were so many other ways to say it and he had to use those exact words! If that caused a misunderstanding of any sort, who knows what kind of news articles would show up online the next day?

He did not want to think about it. He wanted to get away from the mob as quickly as he could, but alas the place was tightly packed. Caspian could not stand it anymore. Lowering his head, he pushed through the stream of journalists, mumbling, "Let me through, let me through."

It took a while for him to break out of the crowd. He quickly ran towards the security guard at the entrance and muttered incoherently, "Shut the doors! Don't let those lunatics in!"

The security guard stared at him for a second, puzzled, but he knew the man was pretty close to the president. So, he obeyed, and closed the door quickly behind Caspian.

"Why did you come here? Didn't I tell you very clearly not to do that?" As soon as Caspian stepped into the office, he darted towards the water dispenser. Arguing with the horde of journalists had gotten him extremely thirsty.

Larry ignored him. He sat in front of the computer, fingers busy tapping away on the keyboard. He brows furrowed tightly, and for a moment everything around him became nothing more than an illusion.

"Boss, I'm talking to you. Are you angry?" Caspian gulped down a mouthful of water but he talked too fast and almost choked.

Larry still did not turn his attention to him. Impatiently, Caspian leaned forward to peek at the computer screen.

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Caspian rested one hand on Larry's desk and the other on the back of his chair. Larry's computer screen displayed a mixture of languages. Even Caspian, who claimed to be a computer expert, felt dizzy just looking at them.

"Isn't this... the exact IP address that belongs to S?" Caspian stared at the familiar string of codes before he realized what they were. This was the IP address that caused him so much confusion and grief back then! Difference being, Caspian found many IP addresses that time, while Larry only managed to find the one and only.

Larry merely glanced at him, and swiftly turned his attention back to the IP address on the computer screen.

"My gosh! How did you manage to find that?" Caspian exclaimed as he patted Larry on the shoulder. "Even I couldn't find it. And I've spent hours searching for it. Boss, where did you pick up this skill? "

Larry rubbed his chin and totally avoided the question. "Are the journalists gone?"

"Ah? No, I guess not. I asked the security guard to bar the door and not to let them in. Boss, you haven't really answered my question yet."

Larry simply grabbed a fountain pen and scribbled the address on a piece of paper. "This IP address belongs to Alpire Group, not S." Paying no attention to Caspian's stunned expression, Larry continued, "Thanks to your reminder, I've just realized that this address is the same as one of the many IP addresses we have come across which could be traced to S.

"I'm just taking a guess. S gave us a warning some time ago. That might indicate that he's somehow related to Alpire Group, whose target is to acquire us. He may have sent us different photos from different locations, and I'm guessing that one of those might just be Alpire Group."

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Caspian gave him a thumbs up. "Yes! That's right! If that's the case, Alpire Group and S are definitely related to each other. Besides, Alpire Group seems to have been plotting to acquire our company for a long time. I don't think they're after us for the money."

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Larry mulled over it for a while before replying, “Exactly, and that was what I worried about the most, but, alas, it’s now confirmed to be true. Anyway, what does S want from us?”

Meanwhile, Nancy was ordering coffee in a café. Her ears immediately perked up the moment she heard two of the servers gossiping about Norton Corporation.

“I wonder what’s the relationship between this guy and Mr. Norton.”

What kind of relationship could they be referring to? Countless questions flashed through Nancy’s mind as she sipped on her coffee, straining her ears to listen more.

“Yeah, it does look suspicious. Look at him—he is even publicly defending Mr. Norton.”

As the servers continued to chatter and giggle at their phones, Nancy could not wait to share what she heard with Joan and rushed back to her seat.

They bumped into each other while on their way to Norton Corporation. Thinking that she had not formally apologized to Joan for locking her out previously, Nancy decided to invite Joan for a coffee together at a café nearby. After all, their previous conflict was not something easy to be resolved.

“Joan, just now I heard the servers gossiping about Larry’s relationship with another guy. I wonder what’s that about.” Nancy eyed the counter, signaling Joan to look at the servers.

Joan could not help but roll her eyes. What relationship? What guy? Brushing aside the rumor, she told Nancy to pay no mind on the silly tittle-tattle. Just when Joan was about to take a sip on her coffee, Nancy sprang up from her seat, pointing at the phone in her hand. “Oh my God!”

“Gosh, Nancy, stop being so jumpy. I’ve had enough of stress at the company these few days. My poor little heart can barely take it anymore,” Joan said, patting her chest.

Nancy continued to stare wide-eyed at her and smiled stiffly, handing her the phone. “Okay, I’ll shut up. Have a look at this yourself.”

In the video, a group of journalists was swarming a man in the middle. Since this clip was taken by one of the onlookers in the jostling crowd, the whole footage was so shaky that it made Joan dizzy.

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As the clip went on, the crowd got even denser. As such, Joan could not see the face of the man who was surrounded. Nevertheless, she clearly heard the journalists asking questions related to Norton Corporation. Before the clip ended, someone among the crowd shouted, "I don't care! I'll help him no matter what!"

Wait a minute. That's Caspian's voice. Turning towards Nancy, she saw her burying her face in her hands as if she was so embarrassed that she could not bring herself to face anyone.

The short clip immediately spread throughout all entertainment news with the headlines: 'The Commotion in Front of the Norton Corporation', 'Norton Corporation's Staff Is Gay', 'Staff of the Norton Corporation Provokes the Journalists'. At the time of their viewing, the footage had about fifty thousand likes and twenty thousand comments.

The majority of the comments were about the relationship between Larry and the staff. Joan could not help but sigh at the speed of the news became viral on the internet—probably faster than the speed of a rocket launch. The media is taking the content in this video out of context. It clearly shows that the man is only trying to get his friend out of a sticky situation. Yet, the media misled the audience into thinking it was something else.

Joan handed the phone back to Nancy, speechless. Nancy threw her phone into her bag and stepped out of the café with a grim expression, muttering, "I'm going to see him now!"

After leaving a tip on the table, Joan hurriedly took her bag and trailed behind Nancy to look for the protagonists in the video. Have the words about the company's crisis spread out? Otherwise, why are those reporters flocking the company?

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When Nancy and Joan arrived there, the entrance was not as crowded as the video clip just now, but there were still a few journalists left. Some of them were pestering the security guards while the rest were hanging around, waiting for the people from Norton Corporation to come out.

As they were about to step inside, one of the journalists recognized Joan as Larry's wife and yelled about her presence. In an instant, all the others whipped their heads around and looked at her like a pack of hungry wolves before rushing towards her and seizing the opportunity to take all the photos they could.

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Joan immediately realized the incoming trouble. She shielded her face with her arms and picked up her pace, trying her best to pass through the journalists. But whenever she took a step forward, they would block her way and refused to budge.

Unlike Joan, Nancy could no longer stand the reporters' questions. I'm not scared of them. I've got a black belt in Taekwondo. She then raised her phone in the air and put on a stern face to scare them off. "Get out of our way! I'll call the police and let you guys be arrested for being a public nuisance."

As expected, as soon as they heard the word "police," most of them quickly lowered their microphones and cameras. Meanwhile, when the others saw their fellow journalists had chickened out, they also gave up on interviewing the two ladies. Indeed, instead of risking their careers to get some shocking news, it was better to let the ladies through. Therefore, they glanced at each other before allowing a path for them.

Nancy let out a snort deliberately and walked into the building with Joan, leaving the annoying reporters behind.

Before they even reached the office's door, they could hear Caspian laughing and cheering inside the room, like a kid who was given candy.

"I bet you're happy because you know you've gone viral on the internet, aren't you?" Nancy went forward and knocked Caspian on the head.

Baffled, Caspian had two questions in his mind. Why is Nancy here? And how have I gone viral? He had absolutely no clue.

Seeing right through his mind, Nancy chucked her phone to him and said, "Look at this."

Caspian caught it fluidly and watched the video with Larry, who had leaned closer to the phone out of curiosity. After they finished viewing it, they stared at each other, dumbfounded.

Caspian's expression immediately turned livid as if he wanted to burn the phone in front of him with the fire in his widened eyes. "Who the hell filmed this? And what on earth are these nonsense comments? Do they have a death wish? I'm more than happy to end their lives!"

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Judging by Larry's expression, he was obviously displeased with the video. However, Caspian's reaction was so amusing that he wanted to laugh out loud. With a stern expression, he said, "How could they spew nonsense? They can be sued for libel."

Caspian continued to grumble, "Was I wrong to defend Larry? These people are a bunch of shameless bastards who have nothing better to do in their lives!"

At that point, Larry suddenly remembered what he and Caspian had discovered just now. Turning his laptop to Joan, he said, "Hey, take a look at what Caspian and I have found regarding the IP address of S."

Hearing his words, Joan retracted her gaze from Caspian and bent down to look at the laptop screen. "I thought you guys previously said that S sent each of the images using many different IP addresses. What have you guys found this time?"

Nancy was also curious about their findings and waited patiently for Larry's explanation. "Do you remember the warning S sent a long time ago? I was thinking if the warning was actually a foreshadowing of Alpire Group's intention to buy our company and if S and their company were related to each other. So, I checked the IP address of their company, and Caspian then accidentally found that out of the many IP addresses that S used, one of them was exactly the same as the IP address of Alpire Group," Larry spoke solemnly.

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"So, you're saying that S might be someone from Alpire Group and that there's a possibility that S had sent one of the images from their company," Joan replied.

Caspian shook his finger. "No, it's not a possibility; it's a certainty. He must be someone from Alpire, and they must have been plotting to buy our company for a good amount of time."

As the three of them continued to discuss the matter, no one noticed that Nancy's expression was turning grimmer by the minute. Sure enough, it's Alpire Group who did it. Suddenly, she remembered the guy who quarreled and fought with her on the roadside and hurt her finger in the elevator.

Oh my, is he the one who did it? But he looks so cheerful and positive. However, if he is really the one, it means he has the upper hand because he knows so much about the Norton

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Corporation, but none of us knows anything about him. Most importantly, if he is S, the fact that he can act so casually in front of me, despite his schemes, really makes my blood run cold.

Nancy gulped anxiously, trying her best to conceal her emotions. What will happen if Caspian found out about our past? Judging by his character, the matter would definitely be spiraled out of control. I would best pretend like I know nothing, then everything would stay as it is.

Therefore, Nancy opted to zip her lips and remained silent. Who is Jory Synder actually? Now it seems he's not just an ordinary playboy. Wait, Jory Synder? Synder? S? Could he be the mysterious S we've been looking for?

Although Nancy did not know much about Jory, her gut was telling her that he was not S. So, instead of telling the rest about the conjecture in her mind, she decided that she should go and ask Jory herself if he was S. If he really was S, I'd like to know why he did that! If he wasn't, then we might become good friends! I sure hope he isn't though... No matter what, Nancy hoped that he was not the person who had been sending weird images to Norton Corporation.

"Nancy? Nancy?" Joan waved her hand in front of her. Crap! I was so lost in my thought that I didn't realize that she's been calling me.

She hastily turned to Joan. "Yes, Joan? Anything?"

Joan teased, "Did you really get shocked by the news just now?"

Unable to contain himself, Larry burst into laughter upon hearing that.

Caspian immediately turned red.

On the other side, Jory thought he must be out of his mind. Ever since the last time he met Nancy, he had no idea why he would come to the place where they first met every day. There was one time the traffic was so congested that he had the urge to take a shovel and remove all the obstructions in front of him.

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Seeing the then empty road, his heart felt inexplicably empty, and he yearned to have something to fill the vacancy in his heart. Feeling frustrated, he turned his steering wheel and wanted to get out of here as soon as possible.

Suddenly, he saw a red Bentley passing by and without a second thought, he immediately floored the accelerator and sped down the road. However, the red Bentley was also moving very fast. Hot on its tail, Jory fixed his eyes on the rear of the car for fear of losing sight of it.

The sound of the honks from the other vehicles grew louder and louder, but he heard none of them and continued to weave through the traffic like a madman, ignoring all the angry glares from the other drivers.

Finally, the red Bentley came to a stop, but Jory was so out of it that he only realized that when he was about to crash into the rear-end of the Bentley. He hit the brakes immediately, lurching forward. After he moved back to his original position, only then did he realize that his forehead and his palms were drenched with sweat. He then opened the door mechanically and stepped out of his car.

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