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Never Late, Never Away Chapter 1426 - 1430

She was unsure if she could source the information alone. Even if she could, it would be quite difficult for her to bring Felicia to justice.

Felicia was Leo's wife. If anything were to happen, Leo would certainly not stand on ceremony. With his wealth and manpower, Felicia would escape the situation unscathed as long as he could whip up enough cash.

"Hannah, I understand everything. If you need any help, just tell me. I'm here for you," Natasha assured her after giving it some thought.

She decided to report what she heard to Fabian later.

Hannah nodded and replied with a smile, "Of course I will."

But in actual fact, Hannah did not think Natasha could be of any help. After all, from her point of view, the woman was a foreign student from Remdik who was not familiar with Chanaea, so what kind of help could she possibly provide? However, it was nice to know that Natasha was willing to offer her services.

"Alright, let's not talk about this. It's getting late. Let's go get something to eat," Hannah suggested after she managed to calm down.

"Okay, just give me a minute. I need to use the loo," Natasha said as she rose from her seat and headed to the toilet.

After she entered the toilet, she turned back to observe Hannah and realized that the woman had not left the room. She seemed to be packing something.

Natasha closed the washroom door and turned on the faucet to prevent Hannah from overhearing her. After she had done all that, Natasha fished out her phone and called Fabian.

"Hello, Mr. Norton. I'm Natasha," Natasha declared her identity to Fabian.

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“Huh? Why are you calling me at this time? Where’s Hannah? Shouldn’t you be with her?” Fabian asked, equal parts surprised and worried.

If Hannah discovered Natasha’s identity, it would only complicate things.

He knew that, based on Hannah’s character, the woman he loved would definitely order Natasha to leave if she ever found out about her identity. If that happened, Natasha could no longer serve as Hannah’s companion. In case of any imminent danger, no one would be able to protect Hannah.

Natasha was aware of Fabian’s worries. She peered out the door before she proceeded to explain to him quietly over the phone, “Mr. Norton, don’t worry. Hannah doesn’t suspect me. We are currently in the house which the company has assigned to her. We’re going to grab a bite later but before that Hannah has just revealed some information to me. I’m calling from the washroom to report to you what I’ve just learned.”

“What is it?” Fabian asked Natasha inquisitively.

He was quite familiar with the woman and trusted that she knew when to act and how. To call him at a time like that, he supposed she must have something urgent to tell him.

“Mr. Norton, do you know how Hannah’s birth mother died?”

There was a short pause, and then Natasha went on without waiting for Fabian to respond.

“Hannah found her mother’s diary at her family home. It turns out that her mother did not suffer from severe depression, despite what others have claimed. So, Hannah suspects that someone must have drugged her mother. Hannah returned this time in order to get to the bottom of her mother’s death.”

“Okay, I see. Thank you. Also, Natasha, if you have updates for me next time, don’t call. Text me instead. Remember, you must not reveal your identity. If there’s nothing else, I’m going to hang up the phone now.” Fabian let out a long sigh after Natasha relayed the information to him.

“Yes, Mr. Norton.”

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Natasha responded and hung up the phone too. She got up from the toilet seat. In order not to arouse suspicion from Hannah, she even flushed the toilet before stepping out of the washroom.

After the phone conversation ended, Fabian grimaced. His eyes turned cold, so much so that the air around him practically froze. He did not have to spare much thought to deduce that Hannah's suspect was none other than Felicia of the Blackwood family.

In the past, he spent very little effort to investigate the case, since Hannah considered it her family's private affair and, therefore, did not allow Fabian to intervene. Unexpectedly, that particular mystery turned out to be Fabian's "saving grace". Otherwise, Hannah might not have returned.

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"Come to my office."

Fabian pondered for a moment before picking up the phone on his desk and giving his order.

Soon, Fabian's trusted aide came as he was called. He stood before Fabian's desk in a respectful manner, awaiting instructions.

"I want you to make an announcement to the company. Tell them that I can let everything slide and pretend as though it had never happened, but they have to understand that I have tolerated as much as I could. If this occurs again, which I hope not, they have to take into consideration the consequences and whether or not they have what it takes to bear it."

Fabian assigned the tasks to his aide. Some time ago, Lyna managed to find evidence of corruption committed by some of the top leaders of his company. That was how she won them over. Now the whole company was in a constant state of panic, for fear that they would be Fabian's next target.

Initially, Fabian intended to execute a remediation of the company's internal management, but then there was Hannah's situation to consider. How could he have the extra energy to deal with work when his mind was very much focused on Hannah? Therefore, Fabian had decided to pardon his employees and not hold them accountable.

"Yes, Mr. Norton."

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The aide nodded in response.

“Right. I also want you to take Hannah’s companions to a concealed location. And find out who lives in the house opposite hers. You should know what to do,” Fabian gave more orders as he toyed with the teacup on his desk. His patience seemed to be wearing thin.

“Alright. That’s all for now. You may go.”

After his aide left, Fabian stopped what he was doing and sat up straight. He picked up the phone and dialed another number. He called the agency specifically in charge of collecting intelligence for the five prominent families.

There were at least one of Fabian’s men working undercover in each of the five prominent families, ready to relay confidential information at any time. This time, what Fabian wanted to investigate was none other than the death of Hannah’s birth mother.

“Hi, this is Fabian.”

Fabian spoke on the phone, remaining cool and collected.

“Agent 0027 at your service. How can I help you, Mr. Norton?”

Fabian had not accessed the intelligence network for quite some time. He believed that the vast network of intelligence could surely be of great help to Hannah.

“I would like to appoint you as the leader of a special unit. I’ll need you to gather some of your best people to investigate one case for me.”

After a pause, Fabian added, “It’s about the death of my wife’s mother, and the cause behind it. I want to know everything that led up to it. You know what to do.”

Fabian felt a lot at ease after leaving it to the agents. He hung up the phone after giving his instructions.

As Fabian sat by his desk, a worried look crossed his face. The only thing on his mind at that moment was Hannah’s refusal to return to his side. As for other things, he could set them aside for now.

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Hannah, at present, was unable to conceive. Because of that, he knew very well that his mother would be unwilling to allow Hannah to stay in the Norton Residence.

Fabian took some time to consider his options, and promptly stood up when he came to a decision. He would return to the main residence of the Norton family and speak to his mother. He planned to convince her to accept Hannah. And if Heather refused, Hannah would definitely not go back to the Norton Residence because she knew she was not welcomed there.

"Hey, drive slower," Xavier mentioned to his assistant, who was driving the luxurious sports car.

"Pardon, sir?"

The assistant was agog. What's the president up to? Has he spotted a girl he fancies? Wait, that's not right. Mr. Jackson likes Hannah, doesn't he? Ever since he started wooing her, he hasn't laid eyes on any other woman.

The assistant slowed down the car as he was told. Curious, he looked out the window too. Through the tinted car window, he caught sight of two young women walking side by side. One of them happened to be Hannah.

There we go. I knew Mr. Jackson wouldn't ask me to stop for no particular reason. He's actually spotted Hannah.

"Follow them," Xavier ordered his assistant again.

There was a pause.

Surprise fell on the assistant's face. Follow them? Mr. Jackson, you're joking, right? We're in a car. We'll be driving in the opposite direction if we follow them. I don't mind getting a ticket from the traffic police, but this is just too dangerous, don't you think so?

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The assistant gave it some thought but eventually chose to obey Xavier. There's no other way around it. Mr. Jackson likes this girl.

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For safety's sake, Xavier's assistant steered the car directly towards the single lane next to it. Usually, cars were banned from going up there because when that happened, more likely than not they would take up the entire space, which could lead to traffic jams.

And so, in accordance with Xavier's command, the luxury sports car could be seen moving along the narrow lane at a snail's pace.

At the same time, Hannah was clinging to Natasha as she looked up and down the streets searching for any diners she might like to try out. Her eyes fell on a pizza joint, and she stopped in her tracks. "Why don't we try out that place?" she probed Natasha.

"Oh, sure. I can eat anything."

Natasha nodded in agreement.

Hannah then dragged her into the shop.

Not giving it much thought, Xavier got down from the car and trailed behind them.

"Welcome. Table for two?" the server greeted them politely.

"Um, yes, please," Hannah replied with a grin.

"No, make that three."

Hannah frowned when she recognized the man's voice coming from behind them. Of course, it had to be Xavier, who had trotted over in a haste to join them.

"If you ladies don't mind, let's dine together."

Xavier looked to Hannah with a smile on his face.

At that moment, Hannah could not bear to refuse Xavier, who seemed so dashing and courteous. She nodded reluctantly.

"Okay, table for three. This way, please."

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And so the server led the three of them to a table by the window.

“Mr. Jackson... is there anything you don't eat? Or anything in particular that you like?”

Hannah asked Xavier politely as they sat down to order their food, but she found the question to be quite intrusive after inquiring. She quickly rephrased her question as she handed him the menu. “Why don't you order first, Mr. Jackson?”

Xavier pushed the menu away as he waved at Hannah. He said, “No worries, I'm not picky. I can eat anything.”

To be honest, Hannah was starting to feel at odds with Xavier and his impeccable manners. She might not like the fact that Xavier was obviously pursuing her, but she would never slap the smiler. She was beginning to feel weary.

“Okay then, I'll order for us,” Hannah concluded.

She then ordered some food based on her own preferences, most of which were spicy, and did not order anything for Xavier. She had her intentions, and it was not that she wanted to embarrass him in public. She merely wanted Xavier to get it into his head that she had no interest in him, and it would do both of them some good if he could just stop pursuing her.

“Alright, I'll have these.”

Hannah finished the order and handed the menu back to the server.

With Xavier around, the two ladies could not engage in conversation, and the atmosphere at the table turned awkward.

Eventually, Xavier broke the silence. “Ms. Young, how have you been recently?”

How have I been? Hannah considered everything that had recently occurred in her life. I'm separated from the one I love. As a woman, I've just found out I'm infertile. My mother committed suicide under the influence of drugs... Wait, wait. Hang on a moment. What is this, a series of unfortunate events?

The weight of her burdens made it difficult for her to breathe.

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But would she tell Xavier all that? Of course not. Faced with Xavier's questions, Hannah gave a wry smile and simply replied, "I'm doing fine. Not too happy, but not too bad either."

Xavier nodded at her reply. He knew deep down that Hannah was quite discouraged at the moment and spared little thought for himself. But would he give up just because of that? Clearly not!

"Ms. Young, as your friend, I want you to know that you're always welcome to talk to me about your problems anytime you wish."

"I thank you for the kind offer, Mr. Jackson. I'll definitely drop by for a visit when I see fit."

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Hannah responded with a smile. Of course, she was just being polite—she knew very well what was happening between Xavier and herself. The man was actively pursuing her. Since she would never accept him, why would she ask for his help?

In order to avoid that particular topic, Hannah asked Xavier in turn, "So, Mr. Jackson, what brings you here?"

"Oh, I was just passing by when I happened to see you. I was thinking, since we're old friends and all, maybe I could pop by and say hello. You don't mind that, do you, Ms. Young?" Xavier stated courteously.

Hannah, putting up a smile, replied, "Of course not, Mr. Jackson. You're my friend after all. I certainly don't mind."

Hannah was treating Xavier with utmost courtesy. If he were someone else, she would have lost her patience a long while ago.

After all, Xavier politely having a conversation with Hannah was already an act that transcended the status quo. He always treated Hannah with utmost sincerity. Despite the fact that he was trying to woo her, Hannah had never accepted his advances.

Even so, he had never resorted to any desperate measures. This was the twenty-first century, after all. If Xavier really wanted Hannah for himself, it would have been as easy as

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ABC. Furthermore, Xavier was one of the major clients of Hannah's company. It made sense for Hannah to treat him with equal respect.

"I'm pleased to hear that."

Xavier chuckled wryly. Since he misunderstood Natasha last time, it would be embarrassing as well as impossible to hope that he would have more to say in front of Natasha.

Fortunately, the pizza joint was quite efficient when it came to serving food. Soon, the food which Hannah ordered were brought to the table, the soup hot and its aroma mouth-watering.

While Hannah was carefully dealing with Xavier, Fabian had also returned to the main residence of the Norton family. As soon as he stepped into the house, his mother's voice rang out bitterly, "Oh, Fabian. You're actually back?"

"Of course, Mom. You wouldn't want me to wallow in my sadness, would you?" Fabian chuckled in response.

For someone like him who wielded great influence in the business circle, he acknowledged his mother as a difficult "client".

After all, Heather was the only elder left in the Norton family, and thus he would take her opinion into consideration when it came to making decisions. He also understood that his mother would only get older. If, by any chance, Heather could not agree with something Fabian did and fell ill because of it, that would be bad.

"Oh, Fabian! I thought you'd forgotten about this family. I thought you intended to drown your sorrows!" Heather chided unceremoniously.

Frankly, as a mother, she was very worried about Fabian's emotional state, but she could not do anything about it.

Well, of course I can't allow Fabian to bring Hannah home. That's out of the question. Hannah cannot conceive. What will happen to the Norton family if I accept her as a daughter-in-law? Won't that be the end of the Norton family bloodline? I'll not stand for it.

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“Mom, how can you say that? I know you’ve been extremely worried about me. But I’m here to assure you that no matter what happens, I know what I’m doing. I won’t let you worry about me, Mom.”

Fabian made an attempt at flattery. If he wanted to bring Hannah home, the first thing he had to do was to get his mother to accept her. But, to do that, he would have to quell his mother’s ire first.

“Hmph!”

Fabian’s mother snorted, but the expression on her face had already betrayed her inner joy. Her son had managed to overcome his depression. As his mother, how could she not be happy for him?

“It’s alright. Let’s put the past behind us and stop mulling over it. You’re still young. You can still get a wife and I have hope yet of becoming a grandmother. Look at me. I’m getting old, son, and I don’t have a single grandchild yet. My poker buddies, on the other hand... why, their grandchildren can already walk on two feet and talk. You’re ruining my reputation, Fabian.”

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Heather passed off her response as a joke, but those were exactly what she was thinking. She understood that Fabian had barely gotten over Hannah, and that it was impossible to ask him to find someone to marry and have children so soon. Hence, Heather was prepared to face her son’s rebuttal.

“Mom, let’s talk about that some other time. I came home today because I have something else to discuss with you,” Fabian told her in a calm and collected manner.

It was not that Fabian did not take the matter to heart. On the contrary, he was aware that if he came off too strongly, his mother would definitely not agree to Hannah’s return. Hence, Fabian softened his approach, and opted to discuss with Heather in a much gentler manner.

“Oh, what is it? I knew you’d have something to tell me. Otherwise, for a man of your position to come home, it’d take a miracle,” Heather grumbled.

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Apparently, she had more than a few complaints against Fabian and his knack for not coming home for long periods of time.

“Mom, before I tell you, you have to promise not to get mad,” Fabian assured his mother cautiously.

“Oh, dear. Fabian, stop beating about the bush, out with it already! As your mother, whatever it is, I’ll support you all the way.”

Heather thought that as long as her son admitted his mistakes and agreed to turn his life around, all was well.

Moreover, Heather had seen Fabian lose control of his emotions because of what happened with Vivian. For a long time after that, he had not been himself. As his mother, seeing her son in such a sorry state distressed her just as much.

“Okay then. Here goes nothing.”

Fabian smiled at the notion of finally being able to broach the subject. He said, “Mom, to tell you the truth, the reason I can get over my despair so quickly is, first and foremost, because of one particular individual.”

Fabian’s face turned grim, his expression a stern one.

“Who’s that? Is it someone I know?” Heather asked repeatedly.

She might not be one to nag and pester, but she wondered if the person whom Fabian spoke of was related to what had just come to pass. Possibly not. Who is it, Fabian? Who’s this person who’s so capable of enlightening you? Heather was curious to know.

“It’s Hannah.”

Fabian bit at each syllable.

Heather could not help but sigh when she heard that name. What do you mean by that? Hasn’t Hannah left? Unless... she’s back?

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Heather had not known that Hannah had returned. She juggled the various possibilities that her mind could conjure.

“In all seriousness, there’s someone else I have to thank. I wouldn’t be able to locate Hannah without his help. I’m talking about Jason, the son of the Goldstein family. Our families are very close. You know that, Mom. Anyway, Jason’s the one who figured out where Hannah might be, and I wouldn’t be able to find her if not for him.”

Fabian ignored his mother’s surprise as he went on.

Fabian had to admit that after everything that happened, he had a renewed respect for Jason. Even the young fellow knew of perseverance of a virtue, yet the president of the largest company in Chanaea gave in too quick.

He felt bad just thinking about it. It was under Jason’s great influence that Fabian made up his mind to pursue Hannah again, and to tell his mother everything as calmly as he could.

As Fabian spoke, the surprise in Heather grew. Jason? Hendrick’s godson?

Heather wondered how the man had gotten involved in all this, but of course that was not the focus of the issue at hand.

What she worried about was that Hannah’s return this time round would spur Fabian to win her back. If for whatever reason Hannah had a change of heart, Heather could not promise Fabian would cope well.

She knew her son best. If his temper were to rise, even the strength of ten oxen would not be enough to drown his misery.

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