

Luckiest Bride

### **Chapter 191: Worried About Brandon**

For a second, Ethan was at a loss, But then a thought occurred to him. In a low voice, he whispered to her, “Everyone’s staring. Just text him a ‘thank you’ message. You don’t have to keep staring at the men’s room. People might think you’re a pervert.”

Only then did Janet realize that everyone who passed by the bathroom had looked at her strangely. Perhaps it was because she looked as though she was guarding the door.

“Fine, I’ll text him.”

Then she took out her phone and tapped away, typing out a message to Brandon. Sure enough, when she hit send, the phone in Ethan’s pocket vibrated. He didn’t dare to take out his phone to check the message she texted him just now. The text remained unread.

She had sent him two messages, but they were both unread. Wouldn’t Brandon check his phone in the men’s room? Why were her texts still unread?

“I’m a little worried. Do you think something bad happened to him? Should we ask the staff to go in and check if he’s alright in there?” Janet turned to Ethan worriedly.

“What if he fainted?” Ethan closed his eyes. His temples throbbed.

Judging from the look on Janet’s face, it looked like she wouldn’t leave until she saw Brandon come out safe and sound.

Fortunately, just then, Garrett showed up.

“What are you two doing outside the men’s room?” Garrett unbuttoned his two suit buttons and smiled politely. Just as he was about to walk inside, Janet stopped him.

“Mr. Harding, Mr. Larson has been in there for a long time. I’m starting to worry about him. Can you ask someone to go in and check if he’s alright?” Panic was written all over Janet’s pretty face, her eyes wide with worry. Garret glanced at Ethan, who was winking at him furiously, and he immediately understood what was going on. Speechless, he racked his brains for a solution.

“Okay, I’ll call someone over in a bit”

Finally, an idea occurred to him.

“Do you want to meet the new spokesperson of the Larson Group? I heard from Tiffany that the design department is preparing for the winter collections already.”

Garrett forced a smile, although internally, his stomach was doing flip-flops. If he couldn’t get Ethan out of this sticky situation as soon as possible, he might lose his job.

When it came to matters about work, Janet was serious. After giving it some thought, she turned to Ethan and held up her phone.

“I’ll go with Mr. Harding. Call you later.”

Ethan smiled at her gently and nodded. Glancing at Garrett gratefully, he turned around, walked out of the hall, and slumped into a chair.

Then, Garrett quickly led Janet to the center of the ball. There was a bar counter there, where men and women in all kinds of fancy clothes were talking and laughing merrily.

Garrett looked around the people in one of the booths then his eyes lit up. He held up his hand in greeting to the woman sitting in the innermost corner. Under the dim lights, the woman then approached him with a bright smile on her face.

Emani strode over to them. When she saw that it was Janet who was standing next to Garrett, her expression changed dramatically. Janet smiled back at her politely, but there was no mistaking the fierce look in her eyes. Garrett didn't know what had happened between the two girls just now, so he introduced the two to each other.

"This is Emani Gomez. You've probably heard of her before. She starred in a lot of famous TV dramas as well as a lot of commercials."

With a calm look on her face, Janet stretched out her hand to Emani and said, "Nice to meet you."

## **Chapter 192 Complaint**

"Janet Lind is a promising and talented designer. We're about to start our winter collection. Emani, if you have any ideas or suggestions, just tell Janet." Garrett was grinning as he introduced the two ladies, but then he saw that Emani looked a little disgruntled, while Janet's attitude seemed a bit strange, too.

"Have you two met before?" Garrett glanced at Janet questioningly.

He had only done this to separate Janet from Ethan in order to buy Ethan some time.

"I just met Miss Gomez in the bathroom earlier," Janet answered dryly. She didn't want things to get nasty.

Janet had nothing to fear. Emani was the one who started the fight, and Janet didn't do anything wrong. Still, she didn't want to make things awkward for Emani since she was a celebrity

Emani rolled her eyes and sneered. Earlier, she had worried that Janet was from some rich and powerful family. After all, the Larson Group had invited many important figures tonight.

So when they had the small scuffle earlier, Emani was scared that she might've offended someone she shouldn't

have. Now that she knew that Janet was indeed just an ordinary employee of the design department of the Larson Group, she guessed that Janet must've just borrowed the designer dress from the company.

So she grew complacent and threw caution to the wind.

"Yes. We met earlier. She left a deep impression on me," Emani said in a voice that oozed with sarcasm.

Garrett raised his eyebrows. He could keenly feel the highly charged atmosphere here. Initially, he had planned to leave the two ladies to talk after introducing them. After all, they were both women so he figured they would find out something in common.

But now it seemed that he couldn't just leave. Emani was an arrogant, self-centered, and domineering woman, which left Janet at a disadvantage.

"Did something happen between you two?" Garrett asked with a straight face. As he spoke, he plucked a glass of champagne from the tray of a waiter passing by.

Now that Garrett had asked, Emani grew emboldened. "Mr. Harding, I do have some ideas, but your designer

doesn't seem to have any manners."

"Mr. Harding, that's not—" Janet started to protest. But Garrett raised his hand to show that he didn't need any explanation from Janet. Knowing that Emani was just going to speak ill of Janet, he played dumb. "Janet is still young and inexperienced. Emani, even you used to be like that before. Now you're matured and much experienced. Why can't you be more tolerant of our new employee?"

Emani was infuriated by his words. She pointed at Janet and said in a shrill voice, "Mr. Harding, you don't know what happened. She wore a dress similar to mine, but your designer had the audacity to ask me to change my dress!" Emani jutted her chin out arrogantly. She was a popular star now. Janet was below her. Now that she had explained what had happened to Garrett, she thought that he would finally take her side and put Janet in her place.

Sipping his champagne, Garrett looked Emani's dress up and down. "I think the dress you were wearing earlier didn't suit you. You look much better in this one." .

Emani was dumbfounded. She never expected that she would hear such a thing from Garrett. Everyone in the circle knew that Garrett was a smooth operator. He had always been gentle and privy to women. While Garrett hadn't blatantly insulted Emani, it was still obvious that he was on Janet's side.

### **Chapter 193 Misunderstanding**

As far as Emani could think, there seemed to be only one possibility as to why Garrett was protective of Janet.

Janet was either his girlfriend, or he was planning to ask her out.

Thinking of it, Emani couldn't help but glance at Janet's dress again.

Garrett was famous for his generosity. She wondered if the dress was his gift to Janet.

Emani then turned to look at Janet. She was indeed a beautiful woman, so it wouldn't be a surprise if Garrett liked

her

"You're right, Mr. Harding." She forced a smile at Janet, her eyes no longer domineering as before. She looked calm and composed even though she wasn't happy about it. "This dress does look better on you than it did on me, Miss Lind."

"Thank you, Miss Gomez," Janet could still sense the sarcasm in her words. She was impressed at how fast Emani had changed her attitude. The woman would make a fortune if she acted for a living.

Garrett didn't say anything more. He took a sip of the champagne and glanced at the dancing floor. Ethan was walking toward the hall. Garrett looked away and glanced at Emani. "You guys carry on." Emani wasn't in the mood to talk with Janet. She looked down upon women who seduced men and then slept their way to the top. But she couldn't afford to offend Garrett. Therefore, she had no choice but to smile at her and carry on a polite conversation. "Did Mr. Harding gift this dress to you?" Janet shook her head. "The company held a dinner party last time, and my evening dress got stained. So he lent this dress to me."

However, Emani didn't believe it. She assumed Janet was ashamed to admit her relationship with Garrett simple because she was just his mistress.

There were many such women in the industry. Besides, Garrett was a well-known playboy. Sensing that Emani had misunderstood her, Janet hurriedly waved her hand to clarify herself. "Mr. Harding and I work in the same company. That's all." Emani arched an eyebrow, still doubting her words. "Right, of course," she said perfunctorily Garrett had brought Janet here just to distract her so she would cut Ethan some slack. Seeing Emani now eye Janet with suspicion, he quickly explained, "Emani, when did you become inquisitive? You shouldn't jump to conclusions." Garrett looked stern.

He feared there would be another misunderstanding. After all, Ethan was here; he didn't want to make him unhappy and face his wrath.

Hearing that, Emani returned to her booth without uttering another word. "Shall we go back, Mr. Harding, or should we go and check on Mr. Larson?" Janet didn't want to talk to Emani from the very beginning. She hated the woman for what had happened earlier. Janet would never get along with such an arrogant woman.

"Mr. Larson is fine. He is busy with his work and has already left," Garrett said, pretending to look at his phone.

Janet took her phone and found that Brandon had texted her back. "You are welcome." The message was brief and concise.

### **Chapter 194 Are You Sleeping Together**

With one last glance around the banquet hall, Garrett surmised that Ethan was no longer in danger of being exposed.

"I'm sorry but I need to help my girlfriend with something. Shall I walk you to your husband?" With a smile, he gestured in the direction of the gate. After a moment's consideration, Janet nodded and followed him into the garden.

Ethan was seated in one of the benches outside, his legs crossed, a glass of wine in his hand.

Garrett didn't linger. He all but fled the scene after escorting Janet to her husband.

"What are you doing out here? Aren't you cold?" Janet plopped down on the bench opposite Ethan's with a huff. Her eyes were clouded with disappointment.

She had come here for nothing. She didn't even get to see Ethan and Brandon together.

"It's too noisy in there," Ethan replied softly. He took a sip of his wine as the music from the ballroom started to dwindle down. He heaved an inward sigh of relief.

The party was finally coming to an end. Ethan glanced at Janet and found her fiddling with her fingers, seemingly deep in thought. He walked over and held out his hand. "Shall we go home?" His voice jolted her back to her senses. Janet nodded and accepted his hand. There was no point in staying when Brandon had already left.

The Larson Group had pre-arranged for cars and chauffeurs to send the guests home. Wearing a mask, Sean pretended to be the driver and opened the door for Ethan.

Janet slumped in the backseat, her eyes fixed outside the window. She remained quiet and dejected throughout the

drive.

Despite her best efforts to distract herself, she just couldn't stop thinking about the relationship between Ethan and Brandon. She would sneak glances at the man beside her from time to time. Janet considered asking him once and for all, but ultimately decided against it.

It wasn't an easy question, after all, and who was to say that Ethan would tell her the truth?

As for the man in question, he had sensed that something was bothering Janet since the moment she had joined him back at the garden. And yet, he somehow knew that she was still unaware that he and Brandon were the same person. Otherwise, she would have confronted him there and then. Ethan reached over and closed the window on her side. A slight tension fell in the car, which Sean took as his cue to

slow down.

Ethan gathered Janet into his arms. "Is there something in your mind? Perhaps something you would like to ask me?"

He always wanted to know what she was thinking, especially when her thoughts started bothering her.

They might have grown closer recently, but Ethan couldn't shake off the feeling that Janet had put up a wall between them. A couple of times, she had instinctively recoiled from his touch, and other times, she would avoid it altogether.

Janet snuggled into his tight embrace and pondered her options. After some hesitation, she decided it would be

better to just ask him directly instead of repeatedly overthinking matters without reaching a conclusion.

"You and Brandon... Are you..."

Her voice was so quiet that Ethan had to lean close to hear her properly. "Are we what?" he prompted.

Janet took a deep, fortifying breath, then pulled back and looked Ethan in the eye. "Are you sleeping together?"

### **Chapter 195 Prove It To You**

Ethan choked on air with shock. His hold on Janet slacked as he covered his mouth and coughed violently. He was flushed and out of breath by the time he recovered, and even his ears were burning.

Sean was just as startled by Janet's question that he lost control of the steering wheel. The car swerved to the side of the road and almost ran into a tree before he finally got it back on track. Sean thumped his fist against his chest and bit his lips in an effort to compose himself. "Where in the world did you get that idea?" Ethan asked, his face a mask of disbelief.

It was Janet's turn to blush. By all accounts, she was still a conservative and rather pure woman, and this topic was throwing her out of her comfort zone.

She lowered her head and fiddled with her fingers nervously. "When you said you were going to see Brandon, you made it sound like you two are very close. And remember the big fight we had over Christopher? Shortly after, he was transferred to Snape. I heard that Brandon was behind it, but what reason could he possibly have to do that all

of a sudden?"

Ethan let out a short, helpless sigh. "Have you ever considered that it might all be just coincidence?"

"Oh, please. There can't be so many coincidences happening around me in such a short span of time. Brandon has also helped me numerous times in the company. I only told him a few words regarding that incident with Hannah, and he took care of it right away. Is that still a coincidence?" Janet was turning frantic. The more she said the words out loud, the more convinced she was of her presumptions.

"Besides, you said so yourself that Brandon isn't into women, so there's no way he's doing these things because he likes me. So why would he go to such lengths for my

sake?"

When she put it this way, Ethan had to admit that she made a lot of sense. He floundered for a moment, unable to come up with anything to refute her claims with. Sean glanced at them through the rearview mirror and snickered under his breath. He silently praised Janet for her wild imagination. "You've misunderstood everything. It's not what you think." Ethan closed his eyes and rubbed his nose. He racked his brains for a reasonable explanation, all to no avail. Worse, Janet thought he was being nonchalant about the matter. "Well, why don't you make it clear to me, then?" she demanded. "Not to mention that you and Brandon were holed up in the men's bathroom earlier. You were right there when he went inside, weren't you? You stayed there for minutes on end!"

What the hell had they been doing?

Thoughts of the two men locked in an embrace had already been swirling in Janet's head, and she couldn't bear to

think any further into the possibilities. Ethan blinked at her, both impressed and appalled at her creativity. "I didn't see Brandon," he said, following it up with a silent curse at Garrett. He shouldn't have gone along with the bastard's plan in the first place. Ethan had practically just shot his own foot with it.

Janet heaved a deep sigh. She didn't believe a single word he said. She fell back wearily against her seat and looked

out the window again.

They had arrived at their neighborhood at this point, and the car slowly came to a halt in front of their apartment building

Wasting no time, Janet threw her door open and rushed outside, leaving Ethan staring at her back. She burst into their home and angrily tossed her mask into the trash bin, feeling upset for some reason.

Despite

their intimacy and relative closeness, she felt as though she knew nothing about Ethan at all.

He came through the door just a few moments later. He had taken off his suit jacket and draped it over his arm. Ethan discarded it to the side, then strode over to Janet and pulled her into his arms. His face was serious, and his

tone was firm when he said, "I promise you, it's not what you think. I can't give you a proper explanation right now,

but I need you to trust me when I say that you are mistaken."

Janet made a feeble attempt to struggle against his grasp, but she could only look up at him in the end. He didn't seem to be lying, but she couldn't dispel her doubts just yet.

"How can I trust you?" she challenged.

Ethan's eyes immediately darkened at that, and he leaned close until their breaths mingled. "I can prove it to you,"

he whispered.

The burning lust in his eyes made Janet swallow. Without warning, Ethan picked her up and carried her into the bedroom.

The next thing Janet knew, her back was on the mattress, and his hot, hard body was pressing on top of her.

Ethan grabbed her thighs and wrapped her legs around his waist before trapping her wrists above her head. He held them in place with one hand, while the other traveled down to her chest, squeezing her soft flesh as he sucked on her lower lip "I can prove to you right here, right now, that I'm only interested in women," he said, his voice dangerously low. "I can prove it to you any time you want. I'm just not sure that you can handle it."

## Chapter 196 Pretend To Be Asleep

Janet flinched back in fear. She involuntarily pressed her knees tight as she felt something hard and hot between her

thighs. It was getting bigger and hotter.

“No, you don’t have to prove anything. I trust you.” Janet hurriedly turned her head to avoid Ethan’s kiss. Her face turned red as the temperature in her body seemed to rise with every passing second. Women were always attracted to domineering men who took control. Ethan loosened his grip on her wrist and kissed her cheek. He then leaned closer and rubbed her earlobes. “Were you unsure because we haven’t had sex yet?” “I didn’t mean that. Wait a minute. I... I need to go to the bathroom.” Janet was so nervous that her toes curled up. She tried getting up, but Ethan pinned her against the bed. “Do you really think you can escape from me? Don’t try to change the subject. You suspected that I might be into men, right? I will prove my sexuality to you, right here, right now.” Ethan grinned and bent forward. Janet’s heart was racing in her chest. She was not ready for this yet. Janet crossed her arms over her chest as if bracing herself from him. Her eyes had turned red; she looked miserable. “Give me a moment. I haven’t changed yet. This dress is very expensive. I can’t afford to pay for it.

“Fine.” Ethan touched her chin and grinned. He withdrew his hand and stepped back. “Okay, I’ll wait for you.”

Janet hurried to the wardrobe, picked the first outfit she could find, and ran into the bathroom.

om.

Her racing heart finally slowed down when she closed the door behind her.

She stared at herself in the mirror and found that her cheeks had turned deliciously red. She covered her face and

looked away. Janet hid in the bathroom for a long time as she rubbed the body lotion all over her body. About ten minutes after her shower, she slowly opened the latch and peeked out. The room was dead silent. She finally pushed the door open and walked outside. Ethan wasn’t in the bedroom. She glanced at the living room and saw him standing on the balcony, talking over the phone to someone. Janet breathed a sigh of relief, sneaked into her room, and covered herself with the blanket.

Ethan returned minutes later. He didn’t look happy. It seemed like the phone call had ruined his mood.

He closed the door and saw Janet fully covered in the blanket. Ethan also went to take a shower. When he walked out of the bathroom, he saw that Janet was lying on the bed, with her eyes closed. She didn’t move, but Ethan could see that her eyelashes were trembling as if she was trying

hard to keep her eyes closed.

He knew that Janet was pretending to be asleep, and that was why she looked nervous.

“Janet?” Ethan intentionally called her, gently patting her shoulder.

However, Janet didn’t respond, trying to make it seem like she was fast asleep and didn’t hear him.



Ethan glanced at the clock on the bedside table. It was eleven at night. They had enough time, so he closed the

automatic blinds with the remote control and smiled at her.

### **Chapter 197 Charis Turner**

Janet stared as the blinds slowly closed, her eyes wide. She lay on the bed, stiff as a board.

There was a rustling sound as Ethan lifted the covers and joined her. He braced himself on one elbow and straddled

her thighs with his long, muscular leg. His fingers stroked her hair and splayed them across the pillow. "Are you asleep?" Ethan's hand slowly crept around her waist, then down the front of her leg. He clicked his tongue playfully. "How are you clamping your legs so tightly when you're already fast asleep?" His words only made Janet press her thighs even more tightly together, preventing him from doing what he wanted. "If you keep this up, I'm going to slide my fingers in. You know you can't stop me." Ethan's voice was low and dangerous. He blew lightly on her ear before pressing his lips against the sensitive skin. "No—" Janet blurted out before she could stop herself. "Ethan..." She bit her lower lip to keep it from trembling. He was frightening her. She hadn't missed the massive bulge of his crotch back when they had taken a shower together before. "Aren't you going to say something else, hmm?" Ethan whispered to her now, his hot breath drifting over to her nape. The scent of their body wash lingered in the air. When Janet didn't answer right away, he pressed closer against her until his broad chest covered the width of her back.

Ethan gave her thigh a squeeze before diverting his attention to her shoulders. There, he caressed her skin with feather-light touches before tugging the strap of her night gown off. He could feel her shiver as it raced down her spine. He leaned over and licked the curve of her neck. When she still didn't turn around, Ethan finally rolled her over to face him. "Are you crying? Are you so afraid of me that you would cry? Weren't you the one who asked me to take you to bed before?" Janet sniffed. It was true that she was a little frightened because she heard that the first time would always hurt, but she knew she also wanted him.

"Why are you wasting your time talking nonsense? It's not like I'm resisting..." She averted her gaze as she spoke, embarrassed at how ridiculous she was acting. Ethan chuckled softly. He perfectly understood what she meant.

He pinched her cheek and kissed her—gently and with affection. It was a kiss of reassurance. When he pulled back, he asked, "Are you still scared?" Janet shook her head, her cheeks burning as Ethan grinned. "In that case, let's kiss for a while, shall we?"

He took her face in both hands and swooped in for another, longer kiss.

Janet loved his kisses. Her arms instinctively snaked around his neck to bring him closer. In the next second, however, she flinched and pushed against his shoulders. "Ethan! Leave my belly alone, I'm ticklish!"

Ethan laughed and gave her another peck. He was done playing now. He loomed over her, trapping her between his powerful legs.

She had stoked the fire of his desire, and he could no longer contain it.

He made quick work of discarding his pajama bottoms. "I can put it in, right?"

Even as he asked, he was already grinding his groin against hers. Janet bit her lower lip, hesitating.

He took advantage of the pause and took off his pajama top. "We have nothing better to do for the rest of the night, We might as well... Right?"

Janet had no reason to refuse, of course. They had finally cleared up their misunderstandings, so there was no point in holding back. "Hmm," she nodded.

Her voice was quiet and timid, but Ethan heard it. He needed no further encouragement. With one swift motion, he pushed her night gown up to reveal her plump breasts, Janet felt a hotness rush toward her thighs, and her pulse quickened in anticipation. Ethan could tell with that she was ready for him. He reached for the night stand and fumbled around the first drawer.

He had bought a box of condoms shortly after confessing his affections for Janet. Little had he known then that he

wouldn't have any use for them until now.

Just as he was finally able to find the prized box, his phone began to buzz on the night stand.

Ethan growled. He had already been thwarted by a phone call once; he wasn't keen on letting it happen again. He grabbed the device, fully intending to hang up and turn it off altogether.

"Who is it?" Janet asked. Curious, she sat up and peeked over his shoulder. She glanced at his phone and saw the caller ID displayed on the screen. "Charis Turner". A woman's name.

### **Chapter 198 Coming Back**

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dont on the bed Her face still looked funhed she pulled

the black rubber hand on her wrist with her teeth and the Mey hair into a messy bun

Her intuition told her that something w r ong Charit VN woman' name fanet had lived with Ethan for so long, but he had never mentioned atv wothun, thic luate the Charia She didn't think he had a close relationship

with any woman

Besides, considering the woman had called him at this how

it seemed apparent she had a special relationship with

Ethan

Ethan knew that Charis was returning from

brand We just didn't expect to receive a call from her at this hour

“She’s an acquaintance. I think she has called to tell me something.” Ethan explained briefly. He couldn’t think about anything else when Janet was lying beside him. Her body was soft and tender, as if she had no bones. Although she looked petite, ripples of pleasure had exploded in Ethan’s body as he cupped her warm flesh whilst caressing her smooth skin.

Ethan couldn’t contain his excitement anymore. He leaned closer to kiss her again, but Janet pushed him away.

“Why haven’t you mentioned her before? Why is she calling you late at night?” Janet asked, cocking her head to the side.

“She lives abroad now. It’s morning there. She is probably too busy to remember the time difference,” he said, wrapping his arm around Janet’s shoulder. Charis was a workaholic. She would drown in work and forget that she had a personal life. Ethan liked collaborating with such people who put work above everything else. That was one of the reasons why he started a business with Charis.

Janet felt there was something more to it. Things weren’t as honest as Ethan made it seem. “Shouldn’t you call her back? She probably has something important to say.” Ethan was in no mood to talk to Charis. He wanted to continue making out with his wife. But Janet wanted him to call her back. If he didn’t, it would only garner her suspicion.

“Okay. I’ll call her now.” Ethan took his phone and called Charis. It was noisy on the other end of the line. Charis was in California. She was on her annual vacation and had just finished a short trip.

“What happened? Were you so absorbed in work that you didn’t have the time to even answer my call?” Charis sounded enthusiastic.

“It’s eleven in the evening in Seacisco.” Ethan pulled Janet in his arms. Her pouted lips and sullen face increased his desire to kiss her; she looked adorable. He leaned forward and bit her lip again. “What’s up?” he asked over the

phone, hoping to end the conversation soon.

“I’m returning next week, right? I want to bring you a gift. Do you want anything specific? But nothing too expensive, okay? I’ve indeed made some money from the previous project. But Garrett has ripped me off.” “No, thanks. If there’s nothing else, I’ll hang up,” Ethan replied tersely as his mind was filled with other thoughts. “Okay. Let’s catch up after I return. I haven’t seen you guys for a long time.” Charis hung up the phone. She knew

- Ethan very well. Judging from his tone, it seemed obvious that he didn’t want to talk to her right now.

Ethan put down his phone. However, Janet still looked unhappy. She could hear the muffled voice of the woman from

the other end. She could only make out the last sentence where Charis said she wanted to catch up with Ethan.

“She called to tell me that she was coming back.” Ethan pulled the blanket away and buried his head in Janet’s bosom, peppering little kisses. “Shall we carry on? I’m so hard; it’s very uncomfortable, you

know." Janet was no longer in the mood to have sex with him. She subconsciously pushed him away and asked, "Are you

two close?" Charis seemed like an excellent woman who had studied and worked abroad. Moreover, she wanted to meet him first thing she came back. Her intention seemed obvious.

Ethan sensed something was bothering Janet. He understood he wouldn't be able to have sex with her tonight

He pushed himself off Janet and rested on the bed, pulling her in his arms. "We haven't been in touch for a while." he said, staring at the ceiling. After a moment's thought, he added, "She also works in the Larson Group; she is a senior executive. She has been exploring the overseas market. You'll probably meet her after she comes back."

### **Chapter 199 Like An Outcast**

Janet sprang up from the bed and looked at Ethan in shock. "How come you know the senior executive of the Larson Group?" "She was my classmate from high school," Ethan said nonchalantly, resting his head on Janet's arm. "High school classmates? So, you guys have known each other for a long time. Which school did you go to?" Janet asked, examining his face. The small table lamp was the only source of light in the room. The warm yellow light seemed to soften Ethan's features.

"Seacisco High." Ethan shrugged noncommittally. Considering his current identity, he couldn't say anything more. "My teachers have once mentioned that it is one of the best schools in the city," Janet lowered her head. Only children from wealthy and influential families studied there. They all had extraordinary IQs and excelled in their studies. Ordinary people couldn't compete with them.

Janet fell silent. A strange feeling settled in her heart.

Ethan and Charis had known each other since high school and had been in touch ever since. She sensed they shared a good relationship. Besides, the woman was now a senior executive in Larson Group, which was a testimony of her talent. She probably had been excellent in all aspects since high school.

Janet couldn't help but wonder if Ethan had a crush on her.

"What are you thinking?" Ethan frowned as Janet seemed distracted. Janet picked up her nightgown from the floor, put it on, and lay back on the bed. "Why didn't you ever mention her before?"

"She's not important to me, so I didn't feel the need to tell you about her." Ethan pinched her cheek and looked into her eyes. "I'm not really close to her." Janet turned her head. She didn't know if they were mere acquaintances or not. However, since Ethan said so, Janet chose to believe him. She rested on the bed and covered her face with the blanket. A range of emotions consumed Janet. She couldn't shake off the unease in her heart. She felt Ethan had too many secrets, and for some reason, he didn't want to share them with her. The man had always been an enigma. She didn't know much about him, and it looked like he didn't want her to know more about him either. He only wanted her to see the side of him that he chose to reveal to her. It looked like Ethan had different personas and led different lives. Janet couldn't see through him and find what lay beneath the exterior he revealed to the world.

Janet's heart sank; she felt like an outcast all over again.

She wasn't in the mood to get intimate with someone who wasn't even willing to reveal his true self to her. "Well, it's getting late. I'm going to sleep," she mumbled, with her back to him. Although Janet said so, she was wide awake. The countless thoughts swarming in her mind disturbed her peace. She pursed her lips and stole a glance at him. She secretly hoped that Ethan would tell her more.

However, he didn't utter a word. She only heard him sigh and lie beside her.

Janet's racing heart calmed down and sank to her stomach as she listened to the ticking of the clock. Just then, Ethan moved behind her. His chest pressed against her back as he hugged her from behind.

## **Chapter 200 The Past**

Ethan rested his chin on Janet's shoulder and looked at her pink earlobe.

A strange silence prevailed in the room. The dim yellow light from the table lamp enveloped them.

"You want to know more about my past?" Janet heard his voice rumbling against her back as he trailed his fingers across her arm, drawing patterns on her silky nightgown. "Don't force yourself if you don't want to talk about it," Janet mumbled.

She wanted him to open up everything to her, but only if he wanted to. It wouldn't make sense if she forced him to

do it.

"I have never been in a relationship with her as you think."

Ethan stared at the closed blinds as he recalled the past. Charis was in the same class as Ethan and Garrett in high school. Back then, only the three of them belonged to influential families. The three shared the same hobbies and naturally became friends. When Ethan was determined to start a business, Charis let go of the opportunity to take over the Turner family's business and established the Larson Group with him. Considering the Turner family and Lester family were associated with one another, Charis knew a bit about Ethan's family. She was also aware of his dual identity as Brandon Larson and Ethan Lester. Their friendship grew stronger as they went through all the hardships and hurdles together. Ethan had always felt Charis was an excellent partner and a reliable friend. But he didn't love her or have any special feelings for her.

However, one day, Garrett told him that Charis had always had a crush on him. The memory was still clear as a day. Garrett was drunk. "You're a heartless man!" he complained, taking another gulp of wine. "Charis abandoned her family business just to help you start this company — to help you fulfill your dreams. But you never respond to her feelings. To tell you the truth, Charis is into you. She's smart and pretty. Why don't you just be with her?" Perhaps because Garrett had already informed Ethan about Charis' feelings, she confessed her love to him a few days later. However, Ethan wasn't interested in Charis, so he turned her down. Charis was a practical woman. She applied for a transfer and went abroad to explore the overseas market to expand the Larson Group. She had been there for three years. Soon, Ethan returned to his senses and nestled his head against the crook of Janet's neck. He had a clear

conscience. After all, he was never involved with Charis romantically. He believed three years would have changed many things. Charis might have already fallen in love with someone else. And for himself, he was married to Janet now. He was just surprised to find out about Charis' sudden return. However, the overseas business was indeed successfully completed, so it was naturally time for Charis to come back. However, Ethan knew that Janet and Charis would inevitably meet at the Larson Group. Therefore, Ethan told Janet everything about Charis to avoid unnecessary trouble. But even so, he couldn't fully disclose his secrets to her. Ethan knew that Janet was unhappy about it. But he couldn't reveal that he was Brandon. "I want to know everything about you and Charis. You know what, Ethan? It feels like I never fully know you, Janet muttered. "I'm sorry that I can't tell you everything now because of my origin. But I promise to tell you everything one day."

Ethan pulled her close into his arms as if he wanted to melt her into his flesh and blood.

He closed his eyes and reminded himself not to utter a word because many unpredictable dangers awaited him and

he couldn't drag Janet into his mess.