

Mogul 201

[Chapter 201 The Pas](#)

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 closer 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.

[Chapter 202 Alienation](#)

Ethan held her in a vice-like grip, and Janet could barely breathe. She tried wriggling out of his hold, but Ethan slung his leg around Janet, trapping her in place.

"I am having trouble breathing!" Janet kicked her legs, trying to free herself.

"But you're still mad at me," Ethan mumbled, pulling her impossibly closer. Janet could feel his hot breath blowing against her.

Her skin tingled, and she couldn't think properly. "Gosh, you're squeezing me. I can't even speak properly," she said, gasping for breath.

However, Janet suddenly remembered that Ethan was the illegitimate son of the Lester family. The

cause of his mother's death was still a mystery to all.

It must have been embarrassing for him to admit his identity. Janet felt he must have experienced a lot of setbacks ever since he was a child. Therefore, it didn't seem strange for him to hold back many secrets.

Although Janet was still unhappy that Ethan was hiding something from her, she couldn't help but feel sorry for him at the same time.

"Well, it's a bit upsetting to know that you're still in touch with your high school friend but haven't uttered a word to me. It made me feel like you're still attracted to her. She is an excellent woman, after all." Considering Ethan's family background, Janet felt sorry for him. She wanted to clarify everything once and for all.

Seeing that Janet didn't resist anymore, Ethan held her tighter and kissed her cheek. "She is not my type."

Then, he bit her neck and slid his hand under her dress. "I only want you!" he whispered into her ear.

"Don't mess around. I can give you some time. But you have to tell me everything -- soon, and no more secrets." Janet slapped his hand and moved farther away -- keeping a safe distance from him.

Although Janet felt sorry for Ethan, part of her still feared something was going on between him and Charis.

She didn't want to sleep with him unless he told all his secrets to her.

Ethan chuckled and rolled back to his side of the bed.

He knew Janet very well. If she wasn't in the mood, trying to seduce her would only make her hate him even more.

Ethan was determined to speed up his plan. He had to solve the Lester family's problems as soon as possible. Janet was the most important person in his life, and he didn't want to continue deceiving her. Ethan had many misgivings. He feared that exposing his identity to Janet before solving the problems would only put her in danger.

Both of them fell asleep soon after the conversation, their minds filled with problems of their own.

The next morning, Janet wanted to talk to Ethan, but just couldn't find the right words to say. It felt as if an invisible wall had risen between them.

While brushing his teeth, Ethan wondered if he should do something to ease the tension. He didn't want Charis to come in between them and ruin their lives. After all, he wanted to spend the rest of his life

with Janet.

"I'll pick you up tonight?" Ethan thought he could take her out for dinner.

Janet was just about to leave for work. She didn't like staying away from him either. Just as she was about to say yes, Ethan's phone rang.

She quickly glanced at the screen and sneered. "You should pick her up and have dinner with her. After all, you two haven't seen each other for a long time."

Janet slammed the door and left.

Ethan sighed and picked up the phone. It was Charis.

"Brandon, I've arrived at the airport. The driver isn't here. Can you please come and pick me up?"

[Chapter 203 Win His Hear](#)

Ethan rubbed his nose and looked out of the window. "Aren't you supposed to be back next week? Well, I'm kind of busy now. I'll ask someone to pick you up."

Ethan heard the bustling sounds of traffic from the other end of the line. Charis managed to hear his words and answered casually, "Well, surprise! Anyway, it's okay if you can't make it. I'll figure it out myself."

Although Charis tried to sound cheerful, Ethan could hear the disappointment in her voice. "Are you free tonight?" she asked expectantly. "We haven't seen each other for three years. Shall we meet today?"

"I'm not free tonight." Ethan thought about Janet storming out of the house in a fit of pique. "Maybe next time."

"You always say that. You have to tell me what you mean when you say 'next time'. I haven't seen you in three years. Can't I even ask you out for dinner? Is that too much to ask?" Charis grunted.

She had always been honest about her feelings. Ethan's constant rejection annoyed her. Charis only wanted to catch up with him and couldn't understand why Ethan was constantly refusing her. She couldn't keep her composure anymore.

"I'm really busy tonight. Besides, you will be in the company tomorrow. I'll see you there," Ethan mumbled. "We can catch up then."

Charis knew Ethan well. He had always been indifferent toward everyone and was devoid of emotional attachments. But she had fallen for him despite that.

"Fine. See you in the company tomorrow." The smile on Charis' face disappeared as she hung up the

phone.

It had been three years, but Ethan hadn't changed one bit.

She clutched her phone and stared into the distance.

Unrequited love was painful. Only she knew what it felt to love someone so much and not get anything in return.

She had fallen in love with Ethan when they were in high school. Back then, she chose to start a new business with Ethan instead of taking over her family's business. Ethan had nothing but talent when they started the company together. She had been through a lot of trials and tribulations with him. She had stood by him during his toughest times.

Later, Ethan's business picked up, and he became Brandon Larson -- the CEO of the Larson Group.

Then, she confessed her love for him, but he rejected her. Charis was devastated. She left the country and stayed abroad for three years.

She actually hoped that he would regret his decision and come after her. But not once in those three years had he tried contacting her. Everyone assumed she would have moved on. But her feelings had only grown stronger during the three years. She loved him now more than ever.

Charis was born rich and beautiful. She regarded herself as the perfect match for Ethan. The Lester family was a mess. Charis had assumed Ethan had rejected her because he wanted to get rid of his family and develop his career first.

Now that the Larson Group was flourishing, she assumed he would have time to think about their relationship. Besides, she was more successful now. She had singlehandedly expanded the overseas business of the Larson Group.

She was sure about winning him back this time.

However, Ethan seemed more indifferent now. He didn't even want to talk to her.

Charlie's heart sank with dejection.

But she quickly comforted herself that even best friends would feel estranged if they didn't see each other for a long time.

Charis smiled and cheered herself up.

This time, she was determined to win his heart.

[Chapter 204 Welcome Party](#)

The next morning, Charis's car stopped on the street outside the Larson Group's building. She got out of the car and looked up at the magnificent building.

It had been three years since she had left Seacisco. Many things had changed. Towering buildings dotted the streets everywhere she looked.

The Larson Group was completely different from what it was three years ago. Back then, the three worked day and night in a small studio. Now, the Larson Group had turned into a magnificent enterprise with thousands of employees working tirelessly for them.

"Why are you reminiscing the past instead of going inside and seeing what your future looks like?" Charis turned around and saw Garrett. He pushed the golden-rimmed glasses up the bridge of his nose and smiled gently. "I know you change your plan and get back early. Gosh, you look so gorgeous now!"

"You used to say that I behave like a boy. Anyway, did you get my gift? God, you're a greedy man! Two bottles of La Romanee-Conti, huh?!" Charis joked, rolling her eyes.

The meeting seemed to bring back memories of the past. The two relived their teenage days.

However, Brandon wasn't with them now.

"Where is Brandon? How is he?" Charis asked as she followed Garrett into the company.

"You're a heartless woman, Charis. I know you're eager to meet him. You left without saying goodbye. I'm standing right before you right now, but you're asking about him. That's hurtful." Garrett frowned. He sounded jealous.

If Charis didn't know Garrett well, she would have misunderstood him. "Come on, Garrett. I know those beautiful girlfriends of yours have taken good care of you. Anyway, how is Brandon?"

Brandon's mother had passed away when he was young, and no one took care of him.

"He is a free bird. After all, he is..." Garrett bit his lip, for he almost blurted out the truth.

He was aware of what had happened between Ethan and Charis. Therefore, he felt it would be better if Charis heard about Ethan's marriage from the man himself. Otherwise, it would only complicate things further, and Ethan would scold him again.

Garrett pouted, tilting his head toward the Larson Group's building. "You're going to meet him in a couple of minutes. Why are you still asking me about him? Go inside and see for yourself."

Charis smiled at him and walked into the building.

The conference room on the top floor of the Larson Group was packed with people. The room was

tastefully decorated.

All senior executives had gathered to welcome Charis back home, Brandon himself included. Brandon sat at the head of the table. His outstanding temperament and extraordinary appearance made him stand out from the rest.

Charis easily spotted him in the crowd. Three years had passed, yet Brandon still managed to make her weak in the knees. Her heart raced at the mere sight of him.

Charis slept late last night and hadn't fully recovered from the jet lag. But the excitement to meet Brandon seemed to energize her in an instant. She spent hours in front of the mirror, dressing up to impress him. Now, she was confident about her looks.

All the senior executives came to talk to Charis. She politely greeted them and walked to Brandon.

"Long time no see, Brandon." Charis smiled and clinked her glass with his.

She wanted to hug him and tell him how much she missed him and how lonely she had been for the past three years.

A smile tugged at the corners of Brandon's lips. He took a sip of the red wine, staring into the distance. It looked like he was thinking about something else. "You must be tired after the long journey. Welcome back."

Charis sat beside Brandon. She wanted to spend her entire day talking to him.

She thought Brandon would inquire about her personal life and what she had been doing for the past three years. But he was sipping on his wine without uttering a word.

Brandon's indifference broke Charis's heart. "We are meeting each other after three years! Don't have anything to say to me?"

Brandon put down his glass and looked at her. "We have made huge profits from the overseas market this time. The company has decided to reward you for that."

Charis arched an eyebrow and looked at him with expectant eyes. "I obviously don't want to work for free. What reward will I get?"

"During the meeting with the senior executives, we decided to give you a promotion along with a raise. In addition to that, you will also get extra shares and a bonus. We will always treat you fairly," Brandon said calmly.

Charis's jaw tightened; she was utterly disappointed.

Brandon only regarded her as an excellent employee

However, Charis wanted to earn his love and care, not monetary rewards.

[Chapter 205 He Is Married](#)

"You haven't changed at all." Charis looked down at her glass of wine, unable to hide the disappointment in her eyes.

Ethan swept a glance over the room, then made a point of glancing at his watch. Without another word, he stood up and buttoned his suit jacket. "It's getting late, and I still have work to do. Enjoy yourself."

He had only attended the party for formality's sake. Charis' return was no small matter, after all, and Brandon Larson certainly had to be present at her welcome party.

Charis' head immediately shot up. "Oh, you're not done for the day yet?" she blurted out. "Do you need my help with anything?" They had only been talking for a few minutes. She was reluctant to see him leave so quickly.

Her offer made Ethan frown, but his tone remained polite. "This party is all about you. There's no point in you disappearing in an event held in your honor."

In the end, Charis could only sit back and watch dejectedly as Ethan walked away. When he was finally gone from sight, she downed her wine glass in one gulp.

"Oh, did you not have a pleasant conversation?" Garrett asked, plopping down on the seat beside her. "Didn't he give you an update on what has been happening to him recently?"

With a bitter smile, Charis picked up the bottle on the table and filled her glass with more wine. "How do you expect us to catch up with anything? He said he was busy with work and took off within a couple of minutes."

Garret cocked his head to the side and rubbed his chin. So Ethan hadn't told her anything. He watched her drink her sorrows away out of the corner of his eye. "I know you came back for Ethan, but there's something you need to know, Charis."

She recognized the seriousness in his tone and paused. She already knew what was coming. "You're going to tell me to give up on him, aren't you?"

Charis' face crumpled into a sneer. "There's no need for that, I'm afraid. I've loved him all these years. I'm not giving up until I have absolutely no choice but to do so."

Garrett chuckled humorlessly and shook his head. "I haven't even finished talking yet. I'm not telling you to give up, I just wanted you to understand something. Now, if you don't want to hear it, then I won't say anything. But know that if you act carelessly in the future, it might affect more than just your

relationship with Ethan." He grabbed the wine bottle and placed it somewhere out of her reach.

Charis sat back and mulled over his warning. After a while, she asked, "Does he have a girlfriend?"

She told herself that it was all right if he did. Ethan was a catch; there was no way someone so brilliant would stay single for years at a time. That was all okay, because she could wait. She had already waited for the better half of her life.

"He is married," Garrett stated bluntly.

His words struck her like lightning, and Charis' eyes instantly welled up.

How was this possible?

How could Ethan have gotten married without her noticing?

"Why haven't I heard of this?" Charis demanded. "I've been paying attention to his every move, even when I was abroad."

Garrett raised an eyebrow and sighed. "You might have been paying attention to Brandon, but he isn't the one who got married. Ethan is."

True enough, Charis hadn't cared much for Brandon's other identity as an illegitimate son. She always saw him as the CEO of the Larson Group, nothing more, nothing less.

"What exactly happened?"

Garrett proceeded to recount the circumstances that had led to Ethan and Janet's marriage. "Ethan cares about his wife," he emphasized. "Very much so. I'm telling you this because I don't want you to overstep his boundaries. If you do, you would only be ruining whatever relationship you have with him, and you may never have the chance to mend it again."

Charis struggled to hide her shock and her pain. She covered her face with her hands and took several deep breaths, but she still couldn't calm down.

For a moment, Garrett just watched her, helpless and unsure of what to say next. In the end, he reached over and gave her a light pat on the shoulder. "Take your time to process this. You're not a child anymore, you should know what to do." He got to his feet. "I'm leaving now."

It was all Charis could do to contain her sobs. She managed to compose herself enough to stop Garrett with a question—"Does his wife know that Ethan and Brandon are the same person?"

[Chapter 206 They Finally Mee](#)

"She doesn't." Garrett frowned.

He was smart enough to guess what was going on in Charis' mind. "You better keep the secret to yourself -- don't tell it to Janet. Ethan doesn't want her to know that he is associated with the Larson Group. I think you know the consequences if you revealed his secret."

"Of course, I know. But he doesn't even want to reveal his true identity to that woman. Do you think he really loves her?" Charis sneered.

"Stay out of it. He has his reasons. You better stop meddling in this."

Just as Garrett turned to leave, he heard Charis' sad voice. "I met him first! I have known him for many years!"

Looking at the pained look on her face, Garrett sighed helplessly.

"It doesn't matter who came first. Stop overanalyzing everything. You still have a lot of work today. Forget everything and move on. People can change a lot in three years. Stop staying in the past, Charis."

Garrett buttoned up his suit jacket, turned around, and left.

Charis stared into the distance for a long time and finally calmed down. Her mind was elsewhere.

She couldn't accept the fact that Brandon was married. Therefore, she tried her best to convince herself that she still had a chance with him.

Charis knew Brandon better than anyone else. She had known him since high school.

Considering he married Janet as Ethan Lester and didn't want her to know his real identity as Brandon Larson, Charis felt he hadn't really accepted Janet as his wife.

After all, Janet was just an ordinary employee of the company without any family background. She didn't deserve Brandon at all. As the CEO of the Larson Group, Brandon needed a wife who could match his status. Charis felt she was the ideal match for Brandon. Not only could she aid in the development of the Larson Group, but her family could also support Brandon.

She believed Brandon had married Janet only because he needed to fulfill his mother's final wish.

Charis' heart became light, and she saw a ray of hope.

Brandon was the most important man in her life. She had loved him for so many years, and it had turned into an obsession. She couldn't just let go of him and move on.

After the welcome party, several senior executives showed Charis around the Larson Group.

"Miss Turner, this is our executive department, and that's the HR department. The design department is upstairs. Let me take you there," one of the senior executives offered.

'Design department?'

Charis' eyes lit up. Garrett had told her that Janet Lind worked in the design department.

"Let's go to the design department. Mr. Harding told me that all our designers are talented. I want to meet them." Charis smiled gracefully.

She couldn't wait to meet Brandon's wife.

The senior executives led her to the design department. The employees of the design department knew Charis well. They all stood up and greeted her. The originally quiet office turned lively.

Charis smiled and shook hands with every employee who greeted her as she walked through the crowd.

She stopped and looked at a beautiful woman standing behind a chair. Their gaze locked, and Charis could sense the hostility and vigilance in her eyes.

'This must be Janet.'

[Chapter 207 Comparison](#)

Janet had been thinking about Charis ever since Ethan told her about this woman.

Charis worked for the Larson Group and was about to return from abroad, which meant they would be seeing each other often.

"You don't look well today. Didn't you sleep well last night? Today is a big day. Cheer up!" Gerda patted Janet's shoulder.

The two had become close again after the news about the fraud group got televised.

Janet felt it was normal for Gerda to misunderstand her after hearing the rumors because the two had become friends only after Janet joined the company. After all, Gerda didn't Janet well enough.

"Big day?" Janet looked listless.

"Miss Turner is finally returning to the company today after three years abroad. She is a legend. I heard she and Mr. Larson had started the company together -- she was one of the core founding members. Later, she left the country to explore the overseas market. She is only about four or five years older than us. I admire her a lot!" Gerda adored Charis and spoke at length about her, oblivious to the look on Janet's face.

Janet's lungs constricted. It felt as if a giant rock was sitting on her chest. "She sounds like an amazing woman," she said, forcing a smile.

When Janet returned to her desk, she heard everyone talking about Charis.

Just then, the glass door of the department flew open, and everyone unanimously turned around.

A graceful woman walked in, surrounded by all the senior executives of the company. A beautiful smile graced her lips, revealing her pearly teeth. She was wearing a simple black suit paired with exquisite makeup. She looked calm and confident with an air of authority.

Janet's colleagues gasped in awe as she walked in.

But somehow, Janet didn't like Charis. It was probably because she felt insecure about her relationship with Ethan.

As everyone admired her, Janet couldn't help but look at herself. She was dressed in plain clothes and wasn't wearing any makeup. She didn't bother to even put on lipstick before coming to work.

All of a sudden, she felt dwarfed.

After greeting the other employees, Charis walked toward Janet, sizing her up. Suddenly, she was on her guard.

It was not because of how beautiful Janet was. However, there was something in her eyes. She looked innocent yet enchanting. Her eyes seemed to have the power to lure anyone.

Charis' heart leaped to her throat.

She was the princess in her family who always got everything she wished for. She had always been proud, yet she somehow felt inferior around Janet.

Today, she had worn an expensive outfit and styled herself to perfection to impress Brandon. However, Janet looked breathtaking even without any makeup. Charis knew she wouldn't be able to compete with Janet if she brought her style game on.

Charis' heart sank. No wonder Garrett kept telling her how important Janet was to Brandon. After all, no man could resist a beautiful woman like her.

[Chapter 208 The New Plan](#)

Out of caution, Charis decided not to meet Janet. Instead, she walked to Tiffany's office and smiled at the employees along the way.

"Miss Turner, I didn't expect to meet you again after three years." Tiffany smiled and stood up to shake hands with Charis. "I was busy with work, so I couldn't come out to welcome you. Please forgive me."

Charis let go of her hand and sat cross-legged on the leather chair opposite Tiffany. "Well, I don't like occasions like these, anyway. I'm glad you didn't come out. Otherwise, the place would get too crowded."

Tiffany smiled. "Are you here to talk about work with me?"

Tiffany knew that Charis was in charge of the marketing department before.

"I heard the design department has witnessed rapid development in the past few years after I left. Our designs are a huge hit all over the country. I came to see what everyone's been talking about."

Tiffany nodded in understanding and briefly reported their current situation to her.

"When did she start working here?" Charis asked, flipping through Janet's designs. Her face bore no expression.

"This is our new designer, Janet Lind. She has incredible talent, and all her designs are unique. She has contributed a lot to our company. Mr. Larson appreciates her work, and I also think she is an asset to our company."

Charis remained silent. Tiffany was a picky woman. If she praised Janet, it meant the woman was indeed talented.

Charis dejectedly put down the drafts. Janet seemed like a bigger threat now.

Not only was she beautiful but seemed like a bundle of talent as well. It wasn't surprising that Brandon wanted to hone her talent. Charis couldn't help but wonder if Brandon was really serious about being with this woman.

"Okay. I should leave you to your work." The moment Charis left the office, the smile on her face disappeared.

She had to somehow separate the two before Janet knew the truth.

He and Janet were worlds apart. The woman was born into an ordinary family, which meant money and power could easily lure her. Charis felt Janet would never let go of Ethan if she knew he was the CEO of the Larson Group.

After work, Charis planned to have dinner with a friend.

He was the son of the Perkins family -- a handsome, wealthy man. However, he was also a notorious

playboy in the city. He had dated countless women. The man was a charmer and could get any woman in bed. But despite that, he had never been with a woman for more than three months.

Kent Perkins was talking over the phone as he walked into the box. "Get a goddamn abortion! Don't call me again," he grunted impatiently.

One of the women he had dated had been pestering him for the past few days. She was a married woman. Kent, as usual, had abandoned her after getting what he wanted. However, the woman claimed to be pregnant with his child and insisted on keeping the baby. She had also said she wanted to divorce her husband and be with him, which forced Kent to flee the UK and return to Seacisco.

"Gosh, you haven't changed one bit. One day, you'll pay the price for all this!" Charis's nose scrunched up with disgust.

If her family wasn't friends with the Perkins, she wouldn't want to be associated with Kent in any way. He had tricked a lot of women into bed with his charm.

Kent was used to her attitude. He took off his coat and hung it on the back of his chair before filling her glass with wine. "What's up?" he asked, smiling.

Charis seldom asked him out.

"Nothing. I just haven't seen you for three years, so I wanted to catch up." Charis shrugged noncommittally.

Kent was indeed happy to have dinner with a beautiful woman.

The two chatted as they ate. Gradually, Charis shifted the topic to women, which she knew would undoubtedly captivate Kent's interest. She casually mentioned Janet in the conversation, praising her beauty.

"How beautiful is she?" Kent sounded curious. "Do you have any photos of her?"

Charis took out a photo of Janet at work and showed it to him. Kent's eyes widened as he looked at the picture. He took the phone and zoomed in, examining every inch of her beautiful face. "Wow! Pretty is an understatement. She seems innocent though."

"Well, she looks more beautiful in person. But, unfortunately, she is married. I don't think you can get her." Charis took back her phone just to rub his ego.

"Oh, really?" Kent's brows shot up as if he was already interested in the challenge. "What if I got her?"

Charis knew that Kent was determined to get Janet to prove himself. She was his next conquest.

However, she smiled and played along. "Well, that means you've won. I will introduce you to all the beautiful women I know. Can't wait to see how you're going to get her."

[Chapter 209 Jealousy](#)

After listening to people praise Charis all day long, Janet returned home with a heavy heart.

Ethan was busy cooking in the kitchen when he heard Janet come in. He walked to the living room whilst stirring the egg in the custard bowl.

He looked up at her and asked, "What would you like to have tonight? Shall I make some pasta?"

Janet put down her bag and glanced at him.

He was wearing a gray shirt and a pair of slippers. An old apron clung to his torso. He looked like a family man. Janet didn't know where he learned to cook and be the best partner who looked after his wife. Instead of feeling lucky, a pang of unease settled in her heart. She couldn't help but wonder if he had cooked for anyone else before and looked at another woman the same way he looked at her, which always made her weak in the knees. Perhaps he had treated Charis the same way in the past.

The multitude of thoughts wrecked Janet's peace at once.

She glared at Ethan and opened the bedroom door. "Cook whatever you want because you're going to eat by yourself."

With that, she slammed the door. Ethan stood there, staring at the closed door.

He knew that Charis' arrival might have ignited her jealousy.

Ethan hoped that Janet would get jealous because it meant she cared about him. At first, he liked it; she looked adorable. However, the jealousy had turned into something vicious, separating them. Ethan couldn't take it anymore. He felt depressed.

He walked to the door, hoping to explain to Janet that he and Charis weren't close. However, Ethan had already made it clear before. Mentioning it over and over again would only make it seem like he was trying to hide something from her.

Therefore, Ethan chose to remain silent. He couldn't tell Janet that Charis liked him because it would only amplify her insecurity. The situation was a tricky path to tread.

The weather gradually turned cold at night.

Janet took a quick shower, and lay on the bed, wrapped in a blanket, facing the window.

Just then, she heard rustling sounds. Knowing that it was Ethan, she closed her eyes, ignoring him.

Since Ethan wanted Janet to stay in his room, he practically turned her old bedroom into a storage room, making it impossible for her to move back.

Ethan gently lifted the blanket and lay beside Janet, resting his head on his arm. The bed rattled under his weight.

A depressing atmosphere prevailed in the room.

Ethan turned and glanced at the back of Janet's head. Noticing his presence, Janet moved away from him, pulling the blanket closer to keep a safe distance from him.

Ethan closed his eyes and let out a weary sigh. Janet seemed cold and distant, so he didn't dare to touch her. He didn't want to do anything that would increase her anger.

Janet didn't sleep well that night. The next morning, she walked to the company in a daze.

The company was only a couple of blocks away from their new apartment, so she walked to work every day. But today, the road ahead was under construction, so Janet had to take a different route.

Autumns were dry in Seacisco. The leaves of the ginkgo trees had turned yellow.

Janet stopped and admired the beauty of the trees dotting the silent street. Just then, a loud screech caught her attention.

She spun around and saw a car darting toward her. Janet had no time to dodge. She fell to the ground in fear.

Fortunately, the car skidded to a halt a couple of inches in front of her.

Just as she was about to get up, she saw a hand reaching out to her.

"I'm sorry, Ma'am. I was on the phone and didn't notice you in front of me. Are you hurt?"

Janet was still in a state of shock. She looked up and saw a man examining her with concern. He was a handsome man who seemed to be able to effortlessly win women's hearts with his mere looks.

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"I'm fine. Thank you." Janet shook her head, patted the dust off her dress, and picked up her bag to leave, "Miss, your ankle is scraped. I think there must be other wounds as well. Let me take you to the hospital for a check-up," Kent offered.

"No, I'm fine. I have to go to work. I'll buy some band-aids on my way," Janet said, forcing a polite smile.

She had to be in the office in ten minutes.

"Pretty lady, please give me a chance to make amends with you," Kent said, holding her hand.

The sudden praise left Janet astounded. Just as she was about to say something, the man spoke, "I'm Kent Perkins. There is a hospital nearby. I can drive you there. If you're worried about being late for work, I can ask for leave for you. I am a Perkins. I'm sure I'd be able to help you."

Janet frowned. She hated the way Kent introduced himself. He sounded arrogant and cocky, as if he believed the entire world should know him and show him respect.

Janet glanced at Kent's sports car and back at his expensive suit.

She couldn't help but wonder if he belonged to the famous Perkins family she knew.

"No, thanks. I'm leaving now." Janet had no interest in talking to Kent or knowing about his wealthy family. She withdrew her hand and walked away.

Kent's attitude and behavior revealed that he only seemed like a gentleman on the outside. It was a mere facade. Janet believed he was a playboy in nature who flirted with every woman he liked.

"Can you at least give me your phone number? I would at least like to treat you to a meal as a token of my apology." Unwilling to give up, Kent continued to follow her.

He had noticed the displeasure on her face, but he was determined to win her heart. After all, everyone knew the Perkins family, and no one had ever turned him down.

Kent's constant nagging infuriated Janet. She stopped in her tracks and turned to look at him. "I'm fine, sir. You needn't worry about me. I request you to stop following me. Otherwise, I'd be late for work."

Kent stopped and nodded in acknowledgment.

Seeing that he had finally stopped following her, Janet quickly rushed to the Larson Group.

A slow smile emerged on Kent's face as he watched Janet disappear out of his sight. He turned around and got into his car.

'Interesting.'

This trick had always worked in the past. Women from ordinary families instantly fell for him after seeing his expensive sports car. His charm never failed to work on them.

However, Janet didn't seem bothered one bit.

Kent's smile broadened. After a long time, he finally met a woman that was worth the chase.