

## Mogul 291

### [Chapter 291 A Narrow Victory](#)

"From the look of things, I'm certain that Janet's colleagues are spreading the rumor because of her success on the job. They are jealous and intimidated by her. She is being too lenient with them. And that makes it more difficult to investigate," Ethan stated, his head teeming with different thoughts.

"Jeez! You never let an opportunity to praise your wife pass you by. Now I know how protective you are." Garrett shook his head. Staring at Ethan, he put down his crossed long legs and took another comfortable position.

'Wow, this guy has changed so much!' he thought. He had noticed some major changes in Ethan's behavior these past few months. The previously cold and uptight Ethan was now warm and caring.

Lost in thought, Ethan leaned his back on the chair and stared blankly at Garrett. He suddenly snapped his fingers and said, "I have an idea. Since we can't find the source of the rumor, we should try our best to provide Janet with all the resources she would need. Her works must be excellent so they will be selected to be displayed at the fashion show."

Garrett was pleasantly surprised to hear this idea. He abruptly stood up and his eyes lit up. With his shoulder lifted, he asked, "Wait, does this mean you are going to strike the Lester family again?"

There was a subsidiary company under the auspices of the Lester Group. It was called the Lester Silk Fabric. Producing high-end clothes was its specialty. As a result, it was one of the biggest rivals of the Larson Group.

The major reason why the Larson Group came into the clothing business was to compete with the Lester Group. For the past few consecutive seasons of the Seacisco Fashion Week, the Lester Silk Fabric had come out first. Ethan thought that it would be a huge blow for the Lesters if the Larson Group clinched the first-place title this year.

Ethan leaned forward, rested his elbows on the table, and clasped his fingers. He stared outside through the French window and said, "The Larson Group has developed rapidly in the past few years. Let's give those folks a run for their money. It's time we win that show."

On the other side.

Janet had buried herself in work day and night. Tiffany's advice had charged her up. She wanted to blind her haters with her success and show them that she wasn't someone who depended on a backer. Her mockers were the very last people she wanted to lose to.

On D-Day, many people gathered at the selection site for the Seacisco Fashion Week's haute couture.

"Ladies and gentlemen, it's time for Larson Group and the Lester Group to compete for first place!" With

this announcement, the judges began to look at the design drafts carefully. They occasionally glanced at each other and joked about some designs.

The Lester Group and the Larson Group always went head-to-head every year. Their designs were often so excellent. But the designs of the Lester Group were always a little better than that of their rival. It wasn't surprising because they had been in the business for longer and had a good reputation in the industry.

"This design is concise and at the same time, innovative. The designer must have put in a lot of work." As the judges looked at the Lester Group's design, they praised confidently, "It seems the Lester Group will be selected for the opening show again."

The judges were about to make their final decision. But they were interrupted by a senior judge at the table. His eyes suddenly lit up as he stared at the design drafts sent by Larson Group. A bright smile also appeared on his face. "Wait, I find this design from the Larson Group very interesting."

'What is he talking about?' the other judges thought and fixed their eyes on Janet's work again.

Their opinion at first glance was that the design was a little tacky and naive. They didn't think it was fashion show material at all. But when they looked at it more carefully, their opinions changed. They saw that the design had many hidden meanings and it evoked thoughts. This surprised all of them. It became a masterpiece in their eyes.

After a heated deliberation between the judges, the chief judge took the microphone and announced, "For the first time in so many years, we had to take a look at the designs carefully. It was a stiff competition between both designs. We have decided that the Lester Silk Fabric's design can only be showcased during the second show. While the Larson Group's design will headline the first show!"

This announcement caused quite a stir in the Larson Group.

Such a thing had never happened in the years of the competition. This victory shut up all of Janet's haters. It proved that she was indeed excellent at her job. Soon, the rumors drastically reduced.

Janet's colleagues no longer looked down on her or gave her the cold shoulder. Some of them even sucked up to her.

"The design department of the Larson Group defeated the archenemy for the first time in many years! We are so proud! Good job, Lind!" Tiffany gave Janet a hug. The victory filled her with so much vigor and vitality. She also became more confident.

Janet chuckled and covered her mouth to control her excitement. Waving her hand, she said humbly, "I just tried my best. Thanks for the praise, anyway."

"All right, all right! Your best has done us good. Woo-hoo! This calls for celebration. Listen up everyone, the entire design department will be going out for a get-together! It's Mr. Larson's treat!"

"Yay!" A cry of jubilation went up in the department when the employees heard that the boss was treating them.

### [Chapter 292 Develop Feelings](#)

The dinner party was held in a fancy French restaurant.

"Lind, would you like to have a drink with me?" Tiffany was swiveling a glass of red wine in her hand, swaying it towards Janet. She glanced around the crowd before darting her eyes back to Janet.

With sincerity, she said, "I'm sure it must've been difficult for you to showcase the limits of your talent under all that pressure. I know what kind of person you are. Truthfully, I'd rather not say anything else. Different people have different views. Right now, I just want to drink this glass of wine with you first."

Upon hearing Tiffany's remark, all the employees of the company fell silent.

Amidst the quiet atmosphere, someone stood up and joked, "We didn't think that Lind was very capable. She looks pretty meek. We're actually surprised that she's so incredible! Perhaps we should try to get along better after this drink?"

'This could be a way to overturn the previous rumors circulating about me,' Janet thought.

She took a sip of wine and smiled at Tiffany. With a reserved smile, she said, "Thanks, everyone. I appreciate that."

Now that she had cleared things out, Janet was over the moon.

When the dinner party came to an end, she received two messages; one from the bank, and one from Brandon. He said that he had given her a bonus.

It was a large sum of money.

This time, Janet accepted the money without any qualms. She had spent lots of time and energy for the fashion week in Seacisco, and she had indeed made great contributions to the event. Since she was just an ordinary woman who was short of money, Janet accepted the bonus gratefully. She sent Brandon some words of gratitude to express how grateful she was.

The dinner party didn't last very long. Most of the company's employees were married, so they had to go back to their families and take care of them.

Around eight in the evening, Janet's colleagues sent her home.

Unable to restrain her excitement, she started humming a song while she was changing her shoes.

"You seem pretty happy. What's going on?" When Ethan heard the door open, he came out to have a look.

He was holding the clothes that he had just taken out of the dryer. His broad shoulders, narrow waist, and the simple white tank top he wore made him look even more muscular.

Janet's eyes lit up as she walked to the sofa to lay down. She had the look of satisfaction and relief. "There was a project in the company I had been working on. Now that it has been completed, and I get some extra bonus!"

She didn't tell Ethan all the details of the project, because she assumed that he didn't know much about fashion shows. After all, men usually paid no attention to fashion.

Ethan nodded in response. Then, he sat on the sofa with a pile of clothes in his arms. Thereafter, he folded the clothes neatly.

It was then that Janet noticed that her underwear were among the clothes he was folding. Her bras and panties looked a lot smaller in his hands.

"I can fold those myself!" Janet took her underwear away; her face turned red.

Ethan didn't think it was a big deal, for he had done this many times. He chuckled and pinched her blushing face. "We're a couple. Why are you so shy about it?"

The way her eyelids dropped and how her eyelashes fluttered about made Janet looked timid yet lovable.

Trying to suppress his smile, Ethan cleared his throat and decided to change the topic. "In that case, we should celebrate your victory! Let's go out this weekend. You've been busy with work for so long that you haven't had a chance to relax."

He and Janet had been through a lot recently, and they weren't even that close yet. All he wanted was to have an opportunity for them to develop their feelings for each other.

As Janet lay on the sofa, she stared at the ceiling. She realized that so many things had been happening lately.

She had done a good job during the fashion week, so she deserved to relax for once. Aside from that, ever since she and Ethan got together, she seemed to be getting luckier than before. Janet had left the Lind family, and she was able to stand out during the fashion week.

She looked at Ethan and asked, "I have no idea where to go. Do you know where we can go?"

Ethan picked up the neatly folded clothes, stood up, and headed back to his room, saying, "Yup! I'll make the arrangements."

Fearing that he would waste too much money, Janet sprang to her feet and said, "Don't spend too much money!"

Adhering to Janet's request of not spending too much money, Ethan took her to his private island near Seacisco. This island hadn't been developed yet. At a glance, it was just an island with a dense jungle, and the only source of light at night was the lighthouse.

Ethan got off the yacht, grabbed Janet's waist, and lifted her up. The waves dashed against the rocks and hit the reef. The cloudless sky seemed to have lined up with the coast.

"There aren't any tickets or goods to spend money on here. So, what do you think? Is it economical enough?"

### [Chapter 293 Camping Baecation](#)

"It's good that it doesn't cost a lot. We need to save as much money as we can in case of any emergencies. Anyway, how did you find this place? The scenery is so beautiful and the air is fresh. It's nothing like the city." Janet took a deep breath and the cool air soothed her nerves. She continued to inhale and exhale to relax more.

After doing that and stretching herself, she soon felt comfortable. Her day-to-day life was a little tough. She usually faced the computer and saw many tall buildings and people every day. Now that she was away from the hustle and bustle of the city, she was at ease.

"A friend recommended it to me. I'm glad you like it." Ethan carried the big bags and walked ashore. They were quite heavy, but he preferred to carry them himself. He didn't want to burden his wife at all.

Janet just followed him closely, carrying her small handbag. She had thought she was alone with Ethan on this island. But when she looked back, she saw four men coming down from the yacht. They were carrying tents, tables, chairs, cauldrons, and a couple of other camping equipment.

The men went under a shade of coconut trees and began to set up the tent. It was as big as a yurt, almost the size of a house.

"What are they doing?" Janet has never seen a tent this big before. From the sizes and appearance of

the other equipment, she could tell that they were high-end. She had her eyes fixed on the men in confusion.

"They are helping us set up the tent and everything we will need." Ethan put the foldable outdoor chair on the ground. Patting off the dust, he said to her, "Come and sit here. The arrangement will take them some time."

"How much does all that cost?" Janet covered her mouth in awe of everything she was seeing. It was as if she was seeing those things for the first time.

Three of the men were setting up the tent, while one of them was arranging the barbecue grill. 'How come they are doing all these? Well, I don't think they are doing these for free. Delivering such high-end camping equipment and setting everything up must cost a lot. How was Ethan able to afford their service? Did his friend who recommended this place send them here?'

Noticing that Janet was lost in thought, Ethan pulled her to sit on the chair and explained, "Those pieces of equipment are all rental. They don't cost much at all."

Shortly after, the four men were done setting up the equipment. They bowed to Ethan and Janet and left as quickly as they came.

As Janet took a sip from the orange juice Ethan had given her, she murmured to herself, "Those men were so diligent. Their customer service is just excellent. That's good to know."

The couple went to the arranged area and camped there.

"What would you like for lunch?" After checking the time on his wristwatch, Ethan walked to the grill to start the fire.

The dried leaves and branches on the ground made rustling and snapping sounds as Ethan walked on them. He rolled up the sleeves of his shirt. His slender fingers and strong arms had green veins slightly protruding out of them.

Janet's mouth flew open when she saw his muscular figure. It was until Ethan turned to look at her that she regained her senses. She shook her head and blinked severally as her face flushed. As if nothing had happened, she walked up to him and finally replied, "Since there's a grill here, how about we have a barbecue?"

The faint fragrance of Janet's body wafted into Ethan's nostrils as soon as she walked to his side. He couldn't help but wonder what perfume she wore today.

Her scent was doing something to him. To control himself, he pinched his palm hard and slightly bit the walls of his mouth. The piercing pain kept him from getting turned on.

However, his temporary wall of defense came crashing down when Janet touched his hand.

"Let me help you..." Janet said as she tried to take over the grill from him. But her words were cut short because Ethan suddenly grabbed her chin with his big hand.

"Damn it!" he cursed, gritting his teeth. After staring at her lips for a split second, he lowered his head and bit her lower lip gently. He suddenly held her around the waist and pulled her closer with his other hand.

Janet's body was trembling and her heart was beating fast at this time. Before she could process what was happening, Ethan kissed her slowly and deeply. She found herself responding hungrily to him.

The kiss was so passionate that they didn't know how long it lasted. By the time they released each other's lips, they were both panting heavily and their lips were slightly swollen. Ethan hugged her and stroked her hair lovingly.

Camping was a first-time experience for both Ethan and Janet. Although they were so excited to cook in the open air, it took them the whole afternoon to make a half-cooked barbecue and vegetables. They were happy with the result, nonetheless.

When dusk came, the island became even more breathtaking. The orange setting sun hung above the sea horizon. It made the water glisten brilliantly. A fishing ship was in a distance. At this moment, it seemed like time slowed down.

Sitting in a chair, Janet looked in a distance and enjoyed the beautiful scenery. She propped her chin on her hand and mumbled casually, "The sight is so beautiful. I wish I could make a painting of it. I haven't painted in a long time. It's a pity that I didn't bring any painting tools along. I guess I can only feed my eyes then."

Ethan didn't say anything in response to her at first. He just stared at her quietly as she basked in the sun. The reflection of the sunlight on her beautiful face delighted him. Affection flitted in his eyes. His heart suddenly began to thump against his chest and he could hear it clearly.

"Ahem! You don't have to just feed your eyes. I'll see what I can do about the painting tools," he finally said.

### [Chapter 294 Realistic Painting](#)

Janet quickly turned to look at Ethan as soon as she heard those words. With her eyes widened in surprise and disbelief, she asked, "Did you bring painting tools along?"

Undiluted affection glistened in Ethan's eyes as his lips curled up in a smile. He stood up and leaned

close to her. As he stared at her affectionately, the golden sun rays danced on their faces.

Instinctively, he stroked her hair and replied, "I'll try find you some. Just wait for me here."

Ethan straightened up and began to walk towards the forest. When he was sure that he was out of Janet's sight, he took out his phone and called Sean. His face was cold and his tone was authoritative at this time.

"Send a helicopter here with the best painting equipment immediately!"

On the other end of the line, Sean was flabbergasted to hear his boss's command. He had been busy supervising the servants to clean up Ethan's house. Although the errand was out of the blue, he had no choice but to respond, "Okay, sir. I... I'll do that right away."

In a resigned state, Sean guessed that Ethan wanted a set of painting equipment because of Janet. He immediately set to work.

Thirty minutes later, a helicopter came to the island and delivered a set of painting equipment.

Ethan wasted no time in grabbing them. He strapped the easel and the drawing board on his back, while he carried the acrylic paint set, a bucket, and paint brushes in his hands. He then walked back to the beach.

"What! Where did you get all these from, Ethan? The drawing board is so big. How come I didn't see it among our belongings just now?" Janet asked in surprise. Opening her arms wide, she added, "This is an uninhabited island and there's no shop here. More so, the closest habited area is hundreds of miles away from here. Where did you get these things from?"

As Janet bombarded him with questions, Ethan set down all the tools and smiled at her. She looked so adorable in her puzzled state.

"Well, there's a ship on the other side of the island. I went to speak to the occupants there. Luckily, there was a painter amongst them. He sold these tools to me at a cheap price."

"Wow! Where is he?" Janet's eyes lit up and she looked in the direction that Ethan had come from. "I want to meet him!" she added excitedly.

Ethan grabbed her wrist and replied sadly, "I'm afraid that can't be possible. They sailed away as soon as I got out of the ship. I think they only stopped to watch the sunset. Not to worry, I already thanked him enough for you. Didn't you say that you wanted to paint? Why don't you get right to it? See, the sun would set soon. You'd better hurry up!"

Janet was a little displeased that she couldn't meet the so-called painter, but she smiled and began to set up the easel. The cool evening breeze blew her white dress when she took a paintbrush and dipped



it in paint.

Now that she was ready to begin painting, Ethan decided to take delight in watching her. He poured himself a cup of refined beer and sat next to her. He quietly watched as she painted.

Only one-quarter of the sun remained in the sky about an hour later.

Ethan thought it was about time she finished painting. He stood up from the wooden chair, put his arm around her shoulder, and kissed her on the forehead. He then brushed her nose with his. Smiling dotingly at her, he asked, "My little painter, how's your painting coming along?"

Without responding, Janet brushed the paintbrush on the canvas a few more times before she put it away. A proud smile suddenly appeared on her face. Massaging her hand, she stared at the canvas intently.

On the canvas, there was a man and woman sitting side by side. The rays of the orange sunset were on them. A sea which was dyed golden by the sunset was in front of them. Thin coconut trees were on each side of the canvas. The mood of the painting was serene. The white clothes the couple had on also contributed to its warmness.

Janet had intentionally painted her and Ethan. The current atmosphere was beautiful, calm, and romantic. She wanted to make this moment last forever.

#### [Chapter 295 A Sudden Storm](#)

"What do you think?" Janet asked timidly.

If she had to be honest, she wasn't really confident about the painting. The last time she had painted with nature as the subject was when she was still a student. She had been drawing fashion designs so much that she had started to feel the rest of her drawing repertoire slipping. As for what she had just made, she'd just pulled it mostly out of her imagination. Janet wasn't sure if Ethan would like it; it certainly looked flat to her.

Ethan's face was unreadable as he reached out to run his fingers across the drawing board. For one long moment, he said nothing and just stared at it.

Janet grew flustered soon enough. She tugged at his sleeve, her lips pursed. "Ethan, is everything okay?"

Instead of answering her, he just bent down and kissed her again.

Janet was so nervous that her palms were sticky with sweat, but she still grabbed his shirt and pulled him close. She closed her eyes and allowed herself to fall into his passionate assault, even as her heart thundered inside her chest.

Their kiss deepened, their tongues dancing wildly against each other. The sound of the crashing waves faded into the background, and all they could hear was their labored breathing and the occasional moan of pleasure.

"Wait, Ethan," Janet panted as she pulled back and turned her head sideways to avoid another kiss. "You haven't said anything about my painting yet." Her face was flushed, and her lips were swollen.

Undeterred, Ethan pressed a soft kiss on her cheek and pressed her slender waist against his body. He gave the drawing board a short, tender glance before trailing more kisses down her throat.

His lips wandered to the back of her ear. "It's good, babe," he whispered, his voice tight. "It looks really good. There, can I do it now?" Ethan was burning with desire.

Janet finally looked up at him, only to lower her eyes again. Her mind was slowly turning into mush. She didn't even know what to say. The truth was that she wanted him just as much as he wanted her, if not more.

Ethan's eyes darkened. Before she could utter a word, he swooped down and mischievously licked her lips, nipping and sucking the soft flesh between her teeth.

Soon enough, neither could contain their raging lust any longer.

Ethan picked Janet up and carried her into the tent.

The next thing she knew, he had already set her down on the thick bedding, trapping her with his large frame.

He rubbed his body against hers, eliciting a slow moan that sent currents running down his veins.

Ethan kissed her gently on the neck, prompting Janet to grab his collar in a death grip. For some reason, that single, innocent kiss was more profound than the more torrid ones they had just shared. Her long legs instinctively wrapped around his waist. The air inside the tent grew hot and heavy.

"Ethan..." Janet trembled, all at once excited and scared. She could feel every inch of his hands as they roamed her body, and wherever they touched, her skin ignited.

"I'm here," Ethan rasped. With one swift movement, he sat back on his hunches and took his shirt off, revealing his broad chest. He looked like a beast raring to devour its prey.

A drop of sweat fell from his hair and slid down his toned abs before disappearing under his trousers.

Janet closed her eyes in anticipation. She heard the sound of a zipper ripping open, and then finally, she felt it—hot, hard, and pulsating, pressing against her pelvis.

Just when they were about to get to the best part, there was a bright flash of light, followed by the cracking sound of thunder. Heavy rain began pouring in the next second, beating down on the tent and causing its roof to cave in slightly.

Ethan propped himself up on his elbow and swept the tent's curtain aside. When he saw the storm raging outside, his eyes narrowed dangerously.

He had made sure to check the weather forecast before they had even come here. Apparently, the sea was so capricious that the weather in nearby areas could never be predicted for certain.

The thought had barely crossed his mind when the winds suddenly picked up. They blew violently against the tent, while the heavy rain kept pelting its thin fabric. It might be a high-end product of excellent quality, but it stood no chance against a tempest by the sea. Even now, the damn thing was shaking around them.

#### [Chapter 296 Take Things Slow](#)

Ethan grunted and stopped reluctantly.

When Janet couldn't feel the hardness of his body against hers, she slowly opened her eyes in confusion.

Ethan's heart was filled with mixed feelings as he stared at her. He smoothed his wet hair back and swallowed hard.

"What are we going to do now?" Janet's cheeks were red and her eyes were misty. She still hadn't recovered from the hot kiss she just received.

Ethan hugged her and rubbed her back as he tried to calm himself down. After a long while, he said, "Everything will be fine. Just stay here. I'll go and erect the tent again."

He got up, put on his clothes, and went out.

Janet took a fetal position and wrapped herself up with the thick blanket. As she waited obediently, she looked out of the window. The rain was falling heavily and the wind blew. A violent bolt of lightning suddenly erupted in the sky. She immediately stopped looking outside and pulled the blanket over her head.

The moment Ethan returned, she rushed to him and hugged him tightly.

"I hope the rain won't get heavier. But it's okay, Janet. I'm here with you." He patted her head dotingly.

Ethan didn't want her to get too scared, so he adjusted his mood. He held her in his arms and they lay under the blanket. With his face pressed against her neck, he muttered, "It's my fault. I should have studied the weather report well before bringing you here. It's rather unfortunate that we can't call a ship at this time. I'm sorry."

The rainstorm outside was so heavy that it hit the tent violently.

"Hey, are you feeling sleepy? Why aren't you saying anything?" Ethan smoothed the wisps of hair on her forehead and stared at her face which had an absentminded expression. He thought, 'She is so cute!'

After yawning, Janet looked up at him and replied flirtatiously, "Just a little. But I can't sleep peacefully with all the noise. I'm scared."

"Don't be scared, dearie. You should sleep since you are sleepy. I'll watch over you and wake you up if something happens," Ethan said and kissed her nose. He then wrapped his arms around her more tightly. The two of them snuggled up together and waited for the rainstorm to stop.

It wasn't until midnight that the storm finally subsided. Janet peacefully fell asleep in Ethan's arms.

The next morning, Janet woke up, still in her husband's warm embrace. She gently broke free, opened the tent, and walked out. Everything outside was a complete mess, except the tent.

"My God! We have to compensate the service agency for the damages. It will cost a lot!" she uttered unhappily as she picked up the broken chairs on the ground.

"All these don't matter. I'm just relieved that we made it through the night in one piece." Ethan shrugged when he saw the damaged properties. Afterward, he took his coat and put it over Janet's shoulders.

"Huh? Why are you downplaying what happened? We made it through the night, but the experience was horrible. We could have been drenched by the rain. Or worse still, struck by lightning. We shouldn't have come here in the first place. Wouldn't it have been better to stay at home?" Janet nagged, nudging him with her elbow.

They cleared up the place and went back home in the afternoon.

As soon as they got into their apartment, Ethan began to take Janet's belongings to his room.

"Hey, why are you in such a hurry? Let's take things slow." Janet held his arm as her face flushed.

Still holding one of her bags, Ethan stared at her with squinted eyes. It was as if he didn't want to take things slow as she suggested.

Since he refused to listen to her, Janet acquiesced in the end.

Night came and the two of them slept on the same bed.

Under the dim light, Ethan slowly moved to her and hugged her tightly. He then kissed her neck aggressively and began to explore her body with his hand.

Just when he was about to get under her nightgown, Janet gasped and pushed him away. She blushed and said, "I only agreed to move into your room. My agreement wasn't a go-ahead for you to take things too far!"

"Tsk!" Ethan sucked his teeth and bit her ear slightly. He then lay back on the bed, smiling bitterly.

'Gosh, I want her! Why is she refusing me? The mood is just right. It would be hard to be in such a good atmosphere again. I wish she could just allow me to touch her tonight!' Ethan thought as the throbbing in his groin reduced.

It was bad enough that the rainstorm on the island had stopped him from having sex with her last night. He had been horny since then. But as a gentleman, he didn't want to force himself on her. He just rolled over to the side and slept off.

#### [Chapter 297 The Plan B](#)

Contrary to what Charis had expected, she received a lot of praise because Janet's design had made it to the first show of the Seacisco Fashion Week.

During the senior executives' meeting, some of the board members praised her for being insightful. "Ms. Turner, you have good taste. If you hadn't praised Janet's design at the assessment meeting, there's no way we would have chosen hers and then defeated the Lester Silk Fabric this year. Thumbs up!"

"Yeah, I agree. The Lester Silk Fabric has won that selection competition for many years in a row. Their constant wins gave us a bad name. Now that we have won, our dignity has been restored. And it's all thanks to your wise decision, Ms. Turner!" The other senior executives concurred.

Charis was so embarrassed in the face of those unwanted praises. But she had to respond with a faint smile. In her usual calm tone, she said, "I'm flattered by your praises. But I can't take credit for our win. I was just lucky. Janet is an excellent designer. It was due to her hard work and creativity that we won."

Charis was a slick person. As a dubious perfectionist, she wanted her disguise to be excellent. She only praised Janet because she wanted the others to see her as a good person. And it worked!

However, Garrett was confused, rather than convinced. He was also present at the meeting. Seeing that Charis spoke well of Janet again, he thought it was rather odd. He knew that Charis wasn't someone who showered praises on people. As the spoiled heiress of the Turner family, she was always difficult to please.

"This is the first time I'm hearing you praise someone. What's so special about this particular designer? I have seen Janet's designs. They are indeed creative and extraordinary, but she's still inexperienced and hasn't shown profoundness yet. What makes you think so highly of her, Ms. Turner?" Garrett peered at her through the top of his glasses. His instincts told him that Charis was up to something, but he couldn't pinpoint what it was.

"Indeed, she needs to garner more experience. But we shall see about that. Anyway, I have to join a video conference from France soon. I need to take my leave now." Charis checked her wristwatch and skillfully dodged Garrett's questions.

'Garrett is nothing like these clueless old men. He's very smart. If I indulge him in this conversation, I'm afraid he will see right through me. I need to be careful with what I say around him. It's best I do something before he blows my cover.' Charis grabbed her documents and left the boardroom.

The moment she got into her office, the friendly spark in her eyes turned cold. She threw the documents on the desk and looked at the tall buildings through the French window.

"Janet is really something,"

Charis was both angry and surprised that Janet had managed to defeat the Lester Silk Fabric. "Aargh! I must have underestimated that bitch. How was she able to come out victorious despite all that I did?"

Charis was actually the source of the latest rumor about Janet.

To wreak havoc on Janet and prevent her from having the zeal to work, she intentionally started rumors about her. Part of Charis's plan was to make the senior executives turn against Janet at the same time. But Janet's success in entering the first show thwarted the plan. Her failure would have proved that the rumor about her getting special treatment by hooking up with a member of the board was true. Charis had thought it would bring a lot of embarrassment to Janet.

"Anyway, I still have everything under my control. Janet's win isn't necessarily a loss for me. It is just a minor setback. I need to start making preparations for the next step now."

Charis took a deep breath to regain her composure. She then picked up her phone and put a call through. As soon as it connected, she asked, "Hey, how is the task I assigned to you coming along?"

"It's going well, Ms. Turner. Ritchie is back from France. He has been in a bad mood since he heard the news. When he found out that the designer who defeated his family's company is actually Ethan's wife, he went ballistic in the company. Shortly after, he stormed out."

"Well, that's good enough for now!" There was a hint of happiness in Charis's tone. As she hung up the phone, a complacent glint shone in her eyes.

Ritchie Lester was the CEO of the Lester Silk Fabric. Charis had ordered her allies to spread the news of Janet being Ethan's wife until he got wind of it. Not only was Ritchie a competitive man, but he also harbored inexplicable hatred for Ethan. The fact that he had lost to his half-brother's wife was a slap in the face for him. He definitely wouldn't let Janet go.

### [Chapter 298 Ritchie's Plan](#)

At Seacisco International Airport, the sky was grey and cloudy due to the winter.

There was a large crowd close to the exit gate. However, a man in a dark brown fur coat, black sunglasses, and a black hat stood out in the crowd. His aura was so intimidating and majestic that people cleared the way for him and stared at him in awe.

As soon as he got outside, his secretary opened the door of a black Bentley and bowed.

"Mr. Lester, this is the company's financial statement for this past quarter. Please have a look." The secretary handed him a document politely.

Ritchie slowly took off his sunglasses and hat. After placing them beside him, he collected the document. His eyes were filled with rage at this time. Although he had good-looking eyes, they were scary to look at because of the menacing glint in them.

After flipping through a few pages of the document, Ritchie angrily closed it. He looked at his secretary with his eyes as sharp as daggers. "I heard that our company was knocked out of the first show by the Larson Group this season."

A deafening silence filled the car.

Beads of cold sweat suddenly appeared on the secretary's forehead. It was as if an unknown force was squeezing at his lungs. But he mustered up the courage and cleared his throat. "It's true, Mr. Lester. It's our fault. We failed to choose the right designer to handle the project this season."

"Of course, I know it's your fault. I have had a video meeting with the director of the design department. Now tell me, why were you all hired? Was it to make silly mistakes? Or to bring good results? Are you and your counterparts dumb? We have headlined the Seacisco Fashion Week for many years in a row. We have also been in business before the Larson Group. How could you let them defeat us? This is ridiculous!" Ritchie angrily threw the document at the secretary's face. His eyes were bloodshot and the veins on his temple were protruding.

Ever since he heard about the humiliating loss, his blood had been boiling. He was so mad that he gave the members of the design team an earful when he had a video conference with them.

The secretary quivered in fear and his face turned red. He wasn't directly involved in the matter, but he could only suffer his boss's scolding in silence.

"Do you know the female designer who helped the Larson Group to win? I heard that the judges spoke highly of her work." Ritchie snorted aggressively, rolled down the window, and rested his arm on it.

With a shaky voice, the secretary replied, "Yes, I know her. I heard that her name is Janet Lind. It's said that she's a young designer who just joined the Larson Group this year. She also happens to be Ethan's wife." Ritchie raised his head and shot his secretary a cold glance that could have frozen lava.

Since the secretary worked closely with Ritchie, he knew that Ethan was the illegitimate son of the Lester family. He fiddled with his fingers and looked at his boss carefully.

"Oh, interesting!" Looking straight ahead, Ritchie rubbed his lips with his fingers and commented. Sparks of anger, contempt, and vengeance filled his eyes at this time.

His mind had been void of thoughts about his half-brother lately. In fact, he wouldn't have remembered Ethan if not for what happened at the selection competition.

Right from childhood, his mother had groomed him to resent Ethan. Ritchie was disgusted by the mere thought of his half-brother. He had made it a point of duty to bully Ethan for years.

Just as he had wished, Ethan suffered and lived a miserable life. He soon got tired of bullying him. As the conceited second son of the Lester family, he felt that he couldn't continue to attack a sore loser. It was at this time he traveled abroad to study.

Thoughts of Ethan barely crossed Ritchie's mind while he was abroad. He felt that Ethan was a lowlife who was surviving on leftovers at the bottom of the food chain.

When he heard that Ethan had gotten married to the daughter of the poor Lind family, he didn't take it seriously. It was a case of 'good riddance to bad rubbish' as far as he was concerned.

Judging by the dubious expression on Ritchie's face, his secretary instantly knew that he was planning something. He asked carefully, "Mr. Lester, is there something you would like me to do for you?"

"No, you are useless to me in this aspect. The way I see it, Ethan's wife is smart and powerful. I can't afford to allow you to spoil my plans before I get started. I'll deal with her myself."

Ritchie's eyes darkened as he concocted a plan. He decided to meet Janet. Aggressiveness was in his DNA. His parents had passed it on to him. One of his greatest hobbies was destroying Ethan's happiness. Now that he knew that Ethan had a good marriage life and that his wife was an enemy of Lester Silk Fabric, he wanted to crush them.

### [Chapter 299 Catch Up As Family](#)

After finishing her designs for the fashion week, Janet didn't need to work overtime anymore. On Monday, she got off work on time and walked home with Laney.



Janet eyed the white T-shirt and jeans Laney was wearing and pursed her lips. "How about we go shopping? I heard from a colleague that there's a clothing shop in the mall that's on sale right now."

"Why? I have enough clothes already." Laney was a casual girl. She thought that her outfit was fine. If she ran into some thugs, it'd be easy for her to deal with them in comfy clothes.

After hesitating slightly, Janet linked her arm in Laney's arm and smiled. "Let's buy some dresses. My treat. Although you look great, your clothes are too neutral. You should try dressing up some more. You have such a beautiful face. Don't waste it."

Janet's bright eyes observed Laney's facial features. Laney was pretty. She had innocent yet sharp eyes, which made her look beautiful.

Laney opened her mouth to say something but couldn't find the words to protest. In the past, when she trained in the organization, she had always been boyish. Now that she thought about it, Laney realized that she had never really experienced what normal girls went through—things like shopping and dressing up.

"Fine. Let's check the store out," Laney relented with a helpless smile.

But before the two of them could step inside the shopping mall, they were stopped by a man.

"Janet Lind?" he asked. The man was well-dressed, and there was a bodyguard standing behind him.

When the man's eyes landed on Janet's face, he smiled inexplicably. Janet couldn't help but frown subconsciously. The man looked extremely arrogant in her eyes.

She didn't even know who he was, but at a glance, she knew she didn't like him.

Janet eyed the well-dressed man warily. "And you are...?"

Ritchie Lester walked over and introduced himself. "I'm Ethan's older brother, Ritchie. Would you like to have dinner with me so we can catch up, as family?"

Janet hesitated. Ethan hadn't told her much about the Lester family. She only knew that they didn't get along well with him. Otherwise, she knew nothing about them.

Ritchie was being polite enough, but there was something about the arrogance in his eyes that was off-putting to Janet.

"I'm sorry, but I have prior commitments tonight. I'm going shopping with my friend." Janet forced a smile and refused him politely.

Ritchie's eyebrow twitched slightly. Casually tinkering with the ring on his thumb, he said in a low voice,

"We're family now. Won't you make time for me?"

Janet lowered her head. She didn't want to offend him, which would only bring trouble to Ethan. Finally, she took a deep breath and said, "Fine."

"I'm coming with you," Laney immediately said, staring at Ritchie on high alert.

But Ritchie raised his hand to stop her. In his eyes, Laney was just a stupid woman who didn't know her place. Snorting with disdain, he glanced at Laney indifferently and said, "I'm afraid it's none of your business."

Janet looked at Laney and shook her head subtly. "You should go back. I'll see you tomorrow at work, Lane."

Laney looked at Ritchie again hesitantly before finally nodding.

Nonetheless, she planned to secretly follow Janet in case something bad happened to her.

#### [Chapter 300 I Will Keep You As My Mistress](#)

A bodyguard opened the car door. After waiting for Janet to get into the car, Ritchie got in and sat next to her.

Janet looked out the window uneasily. She could feel Ritchie's intense gaze burning a hole on the back of her head.

Just to be safe, Janet secretly texted Ethan, telling him that Ritchie had come to her.

Minutes had passed and her phone still didn't buzz. Perhaps Ethan was busy. Janet put away her cell phone and sat up straight. She was used to this. After all, Ethan was probably busy unloading goods in the convenience store.

Ritchie's eyes wandered over Janet's body and a faint smile appeared at the corners of his mouth. "Are you texting Ethan? My dear sister-in-law, there's no need to be nervous. It's just a simple meal between family members."

Janet looked up at Ritchie. Only then did she realize that there was some resemblance between him and Ethan.

"No. I was just wondering if my friend has got home safely," Janet said with a gentle yet alienating smile.

As though he didn't believe her, Ritchie snorted and stopped talking.

The car stopped at a restaurant famous for its black truffle dishes in Seacisco.

The waiter at the door greeted Ritchie with a respectful smile. "Mr. Lester."

It wasn't until then that Janet realized that the Lester family might be more powerful than she had thought. Perhaps they were even at the top of the power pyramid in Seacisco. The restaurant manager personally came to introduce the new menu to Ritchie.

And it seemed like Ritchie was used to this kind of treatment. After entering the private room, he simply asked the staff to leave them alone. He didn't pretend to be polite anymore when it was just him and Janet left in the room.

With his long legs crossed, Ritchie looked at Janet with no holds barred.

The car was dimly lit earlier, so only now did Ritchie get a clear look at Janet.

She wasn't as beautiful as a fairy, but her skin was smooth and flawless. Overall, she looked clean and comfortable, but there was a certain tenacity in her eyes, which was likely to arouse a man's desire to conquer her.

Ritchie had seen countless beautiful women in his lifetime, but he usually didn't bother to waste time on them. The Lester family was so rich and powerful that women tended to pounce at any chance to be with him.

Janet wasn't his type, but she was Ethan's wife, which was enough to pique Ritchie's interest in her.

Janet felt very uncomfortable under his gaze.

After pouring a cup of tea for Janet, Ritchie handed the overflowing cup to her then refilled his own cup. "How's life with Ethan? We haven't given him any money since he cut ties with the Lester family."

After taking a sip of the tea, Janet replied curtly, "We both have jobs. Although our salaries aren't that big, it's enough to support us."

Janet wasn't used to opening up to strangers. Her humoring Ritchie now was solely for Ethan's sake.

Ritchie looked at Janet's clothes up and down. Although he was smiling, he sneered with such disdain. "It looks like you're not living a good life. Your clothes and shoes are cheap. In a word, you look very poor."

"This is Ethan's and my life. It has nothing to do with you." Janet's eyes grew cold as anger brewed within her.

With a pitiful sigh, Ritchie's arrogant eyes wandered to Janet's chest. "You're so beautiful and talented. It's unfortunate that you ended up with a poor guy like Ethan. Why don't you divorce him? Then I'll keep you as my mistress and make sure you live a rich life."

