

The Mbahsb 141

The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride - Chapter 141

It wasn't working hours yet, and most employees had just arrived at the company. Therefore, the power failure only caused a commotion but didn't affect their work in any way.

"Contact the staff downstairs, and ask them to check the circuit."

"Oh, thank God, I didn't start my work. Otherwise, my designs would have been gone."

A moment later, the employees were asked to take the day off because of the power failure. The entire building had no power supply.

Tiffany walked out of her office and clapped her hands to get the attention of the people who had just come to work, looking around with confusion. "We have just called the maintenance personnel to fix the problem. They said it would take a day to repair, so you all can go home. And considering the unexpected power outage, we are extending the deadline of the project. You can submit your design drafts tomorrow morning. The meeting will also be scheduled tomorrow."

All the employees clapped and cheered.

"Great! Then, I can go on a date with my boyfriend today!"

"Much needed day off! I need to go back home and sleep well. I have been working overtime for the past few days, and I am exhausted."

Everyone happily packed their things, ready to go back home.

Gerda nudged Janet's arm excitedly. "Hey, Lind, you are so lucky! You will have time to redo the design since we're allowed to submit the drafts tomorrow."

"Yeah. I'll go home and start working on it right away." Janet grabbed her bag, grinning happily.

She couldn't believe her luck. It was a great opportunity to prove herself.

Gerda had heard a little about what happened between Janet and Kaya yesterday. Although she was not at the scene, her colleagues were gossiping about it all morning. It seemed like a serious problem, after all.

"One day is enough. Don't exhaust yourself. By the way, Kaya has done the same thing in the past as well. Last year, during the evaluation process of intermediate designers, one of our colleagues encountered a similar situation. Kaya had damaged her work as well. Fortunately, that girl had a backup. So Kaya didn't succeed."

Janet cast a scornful glance at Kaya.

It turned out the woman was a repeat offender.

All employees were happy except for Kaya. She stood there dumbfounded as if struck by a lightning.

Kaya was stunned. She gritted her teeth and ran to Tiffany. "Didn't you say that today was the last day to submit the design? How could you suddenly extend the deadline? It's unfair!"

Kaya grew impatient as she saw all the employees happily leave the company. After all, the power outage had ruined her plans.

Kaya had deliberately damaged Janet's laptop. She thought even buying a new laptop for the company would be worth the effort if she could defeat Janet and get a promotion.

One day was enough for Janet to redo her work, and she couldn't let that happen.

"Our superiors have asked us to take the day off," Tiffany said calmly. "There is a problem with the circuit. We can't do anything about it. The entire company is out of power. How will they submit the drafts, and how will we check them without even one computer that works?"

"Can't you just ask the maintenance personnel to speed things up a little?" Kaya insisted. She couldn't give Janet so much time. Otherwise, she wasn't sure she could get this promotion.

The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride - Chapter 142

Tiffany had a pretty clear understanding of what Kaya was doing. Unfortunately for the girl, she hated it the most when her subordinates were playing tricks to get ahead of their peers.

Tiffany raised an eyebrow and crossed her arms over her chest. "If you're so worried," she said impatiently, "then why don't you repair it yourself? If you can, then I will give you due credit for it."

Kaya blinked, speechless. But Tiffany wasn't done yet. She added, "Since it was you who broke the laptop last night, make sure to compensate the company for loss of property, and do it as soon as possible."

With that, she turned away and headed in Janet's direction.

Computers played a big role in their job as designers, and the Larson Group had spared no expense in equipping them with the latest tools the market had to offer. All in all, the damages would cost at least a month's worth of Kaya's salary.

She glared at Janet, her hands clenching into fists.

It irked her to realize that she would have to lose a large amount of money without even accomplishing anything.

Janet, on the other hand, was about to leave after seeing that the matter had been resolved. To her surprise, Tiffany stopped in front of her.

"Hurry and get back to redoing your drafts. Tomorrow's meeting will be at ten in the morning." Tiffany glanced at her watch. "You still have twenty-four hours left. I look forward to your designs."

"Yes, Ms. Fisher. I'm going back to work now." Janet left with a wide smile on her face.

As soon as Janet got home, she made a beeline for her room and dove into her drafts.

The window was open, letting in a soft breeze that played with the white lace curtain. A beam of sunlight poured into the room and landed on the desk, where she was hunched over, drawing.

Janet rolled her long hair into a haphazard bun and used one of her pencils to hold it in place. Now and then, she would stand and walk around to stretch her muscles, and then she would get right back to her sketches.

This was decidedly more taxing than preparing for the final exams back at the university. It felt as though she was racing against time, and both her hands were barely enough to keep up with the ideas that constantly came to mind.

Soon, the light outside dimmed, and rain began to pour. When it finally lightened up, the leaves outside glistened with water, and the fresh scent of damp grass hung in the air.

A knock suddenly came at her door.

“Come in,” Janet called out automatically, her eyes still fixed on her computer screen. She didn’t turn around, even as footfalls came up behind her.

“You’ve been holed up in here for almost a day. Aren’t you hungry?” Ethan was carrying a steaming bowl, which he set down on the wooden table on the other side of the room.

“Thank you. Just leave it there. I’ll eat later. I still have a lot to finish.” Janet gave him one grateful glance before getting back to her computer.

He was wearing a casual gray shirt today, paired with loose, linen trousers. His lustrous black hair was somewhat tousled, making his curls stand out more than usual.

“I want to stay. Don’t worry, I won’t bother you. Just carry on with your work. May I read these books?” Ethan had pocketed one of his hands, while his other hand was now fiddling with the spines of her books. Judging from the slight rasp in his voice, Janet assumed that he had just gotten up.

“Of course, you—” she paused, realizing something. The books had been here when she had moved in, and were in either Russian or Greek. She couldn’t read them at all.

Janet finally turned to look at Ethan. “You can read them? Those are foreign books.”

Ethan leaned against the bookshelf, his curls dangling over his forehead. A faint smile was dancing on his lips. “No, I can’t, but they do have illustrations on some of the pages.”

But of course, he could read these books. He had a talent for languages even as a young child, and he had grown up learning dozens from all over the world.

“Oh, all right,” Janet said lightly. She faced her screen again, and began to color her draft with a digital pen.

Ethan plucked a book and turned its page. “By the way, why are you home all day? Don’t you need to be in your office?”

Janet visibly brightened at the question. “Well, there was a power outage at the company, and I must admit that it worked in my favor. As a result, the deadline was moved to tomorrow, and I got an extra day off. With this, I’ll be able to catch up with the schedule and make some last-minute polishing on my designs, too.”

“That is very lucky, indeed,” Ethan commented with a smile.

“How about you?” Janet asked, still engrossed with her work. “Why aren’t you at work? Is there a power outage in the convenience store, too?”

The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride - Chapter 143

Ethan turned another page with a small smile. “I’m just a part-time worker with no fixed hours. I just happened to be free for the day.”

“I see.” Janet pursed her lips.

“All right, stop talking and finish your work quickly.” Ethan walked up to her and gently knocked the book he was holding against the top of her head.

“But I only said two words!” Janet grumbled, ducking her head and shooting him a glare. Ethan chuckled softly and padded out of the room.

Without the distraction he provided, Janet was able to concentrate on her designs.

Soon, the light drizzle stopped completely. Its pitter-patter was replaced by the occasional sound of a drop falling from the leaves and into the puddles on the ground. The air had become balmy after the rain, and Janet felt her body grow hot and sticky with sweat.

By the time Ethan came around again, it was already dusk.

“What is this supposed to mean, Janet?” he asked, his face stern. “You didn’t even touch the noodles I brought for lunch.” This time, he was carrying a plate of what looked like meat balls. He set it on the table and crossed his arms over his chest. Ethan stared pointedly at the bowl of noodles that had grown cold and soggy, then back to the stubborn woman in front of him.

Only then did Janet remember that he had brought her something for lunch.

“Sorry, I forgot,” she said sheepishly. She glanced at the clock on the wall and found that it was already six in the evening.

Janet hadn’t felt a pang of hunger at all. Besides, she didn’t have much time left to waste on eating.

She pressed her lips together and looked up at Ethan with some caution. “I’d like to eat later. I should finish my drafts first.”

Ethan raised an eyebrow. Before she knew it, he had thrown himself on the chair next to her. “You can’t just skip meals,” he scolded. “Here, I combined grains, vegetables, and fish to make these tiny balls. It’s bite-size and should be convenient enough for you. You can just draw while eating, it won’t hold you up for too long.”

Janet put her pen down and looked at the dubious-looking balls on the plate. They didn’t look all that appetizing. In fact, they didn’t look like balls, at all. Ethan had probably used too much force in shaping them.

Still, he looked rather adorable in his black T-shirt and floral apron.

“Open your mouth.” The sound of spoon scraping against porcelain plate rang in the air as he scooped out a ball and held it against Janet’s mouth.

“I can eat by myself,” she muttered, blushing.

And yet, she still opened her mouth obediently.

Ethan let out a small snort. “You little liar,” he teased.

“It’s your fault! You fed me first!” Janet retorted in between chews. A smile was tugging on the corners of her lips, and her eyes twinkled with amusement.

“Sure, sure.” Ethan wasn’t interested in an argument. He scooped out another ball and held it up for her just as she finished swallowing.

“Why are you being so nice today?” Janet asked after gobbling the second ball.

His thoughtfulness was endearing.

“Wasn’t I always nice?” Ethan countered, leaning forward with narrowed eyes.

Janet giggled before planting a kiss on the corner of his mouth. “You’ve always been the best.”

The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride - Chapter 144

Ethan bent forward, grabbed Janet’s chin, and swept his tongue across her lips, restraining his urge to kiss her passionately. He nibbled at her bottom lip, gently bit it, and stepped back.

He didn’t try deepening the kiss. Janet hadn’t finished her work yet.

“Eat your dinner first. How many drawings do you have to finish?” Ethan wiped her soft, pink lips, letting his finger linger a little longer.

His eyes were dark with lust. He tried his best to stop himself from taking Janet to bed.

In a daze, Janet looked at the screen and counted. “Well, three more designs left. And I have to color a few drawings. It will take several hours.”

“All right, hurry up so that you don’t have to stay up all night.” Ethan ruffled her hair, stood up, and turned on all the lights in her room.

Then, he walked to the wooden table and picked up the bowl of noodles that had turned cold. He looked down at Janet and raised his chin, motioning at the meat balls. “Finish your dinner. I’ll check it later. The bowl should be empty.”

Just as he walked toward the door, he stopped for a moment and cast a sidelong glance at her. “Well, I’m home tonight. If you need any help, just call me.”

“Got it.” Janet nodded, biting her pencil. An involuntary smile emerged on her face. She looked up and saw Ethan’s back. Her heart fluttered at the mere sight of him.

The chalky full moon hung high in the sky, and the moonlight flooded into the house like a stream. The trees swayed with the breeze, and Janet could hear the sounds of cars running in the distance from time to time.

After dinner, Janet seemed brisker and active. She finally finished all her designs before midnight.

After saving the last drawing, she threw the pencil down, sprang to her feet, and ran out of the room excitedly. "I'm back again!"

A football match was playing on the TV. Ethan was leaning back on the sofa, sipping on his beer. He glanced at her and said, "Miss Lind, please look at the dark circles under your eyes. Don't you want to sleep?"

Janet had been stressed all day, and now she finally felt relaxed. She jumped to Ethan and grinned excitedly. "I'm very happy now. How can I fall asleep?"

"Well, do you want me to take you downstairs to set off firecrackers to celebrate a bit?" Resting his hand on her leg, Ethan took a sip of beer, looked at her, and smiled.

Janet jumped up on the sofa and began dancing around. "I'm not going. What if someone protests? I'm just going to celebrate at home." She waved her hands happily.

Ethan was amused to watch her jump up and down on the sofa.

Suddenly, Janet wrapped her arms around his neck from behind and pressed herself against his chiseled back.

"Thank you, Ethan," she whispered, resting her chin on his shoulder. The tenderness and passion were evident in her voice.

Ethan's body stiffened under her touch. He wrapped his arms around her waist and carried her in his arms.

He gritted his teeth and kissed her temple. "Are you seducing me?"

Ethan could feel his raging hormones. Janet's one innocent touch seemed to turn him on.

"I'm not..." Embarrassed, Janet blushed and squirmed around. Just as she moved, she felt his erection rub against her bum.

Ethan continued to kiss her face. He peppered little kisses on her cheeks, trailing toward her mouth. As soon as his lips pressed against hers, he finally pried her mouth open and sucked her tongue.

Janet moaned in pleasure. Her face turned beet red as she couldn't take it anymore.

Ethan pinned Janet onto the sofa and gently nibbled on her earlobe. Then, he gently squeezed her buttocks in reprimand. "You've been a very bad girl!"

Janet glared at him. "No, you're bad!"

"Okay, okay. I was just kidding." Ethan chuckled and got up. "If you can't sleep, let's watch the game together," he offered, picking up the remote from the table.

The night breeze gently blew through the window, and the moon hid behind the clouds.

Janet rested against Ethan's arms and watched TV. Minutes later, her eyes grew heavy; she yawned and drifted off to a peaceful sleep.

Noticing Janet's steady breathing, Ethan turned off the TV, kissed her forehead, and carried her to her bedroom.

The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride - Chapter 145

The alarm clock blared on the bedside table. Janet rolled on the bed and stretched before opening her eyes.

A wide grin stretched across her lips. She was in a good mood today.

Ethan was eating a sandwich as he looked at his phone nonchalantly. When she opened the door, he looked up and smiled. "You finally woke up."

"Hmm." Janet rubbed her eyes and yawned. After freshening up in the bathroom, she picked up a piece of bread and turned to leave. "I'm going to the company now."

Ethan put on his jacket and followed her. He patted her shoulder and ushered her out. "I'll walk you out."

Janet looked up at him. Seeing his handsome face, she lowered her head and smiled.

As soon as she arrived at the company, Janet saw Gerda finishing her sandwich in a hurry.

"The meeting is about to begin. Gosh, I'm going to be late."

"Don't we have ten more minutes left?" Janet smiled and walked to Tiffany's office. Then, she submitted all the designs she had finished last night.

"I didn't expect you to be so fast," Tiffany teased.

The meeting commenced at ten in the morning, as per schedule.

All the designs submitted were piled up on Tiffany's table.

"Well, I checked all the designs you guys have submitted. Everyone has made great progress." Tiffany was wearing a red slip dress. Her gaze became sharp as she looked at the designers in the conference room. "Well, during the process, something unpleasant has happened. I've said this before, and I'm saying it again: our Larson Group only encourages healthy competition. If you want to defeat your fellow designers, resort to your strength and skills. We don't entertain people who play dirty tricks."

Many designers who had worked overtime that evening had seen that Janet's laptop was splashed with coffee.

And those who weren't present during the scene had heard it from their colleagues.

All in all, everyone present knew who Tiffany was talking about. They all unanimously turned in the same direction

Kaya clenched her fingers and lowered her head. Her face flushed with embarrassment and rage.

After the meeting, everyone began to gossip about the incident in private.

“Kaya is doomed this time. She has left such a bad impression on Tiffany. Her future here seems bleak.”

“That’s right. Now that Janet has submitted her designs on time, there is absolutely no hope for Kaya to win the competition. I’m curious to find out what she’s going to do next.”

Kaya was exasperated. She deliberately bumped against Janet as she stormed out of the room.

Janet didn’t want to waste her time arguing with the woman, so she returned to her desk and continued with her work.

“Has the company given you a new laptop?” Gerda craned her head and eyed Janet with curiosity.

“Wow, it looks like an expensive one. I envy you.”

“It’s because my previous laptop was splashed with coffee. There’s nothing to be envious of. I lost all the information I had on my old laptop. It may take forever to restore the data today.” Janet sighed as she propped her chin in the palm of her hand.

Janet didn’t leave until midnight. All her colleagues had left by then.

The bright streetlights dotted the beautiful city at night. From the Larson Group building, Janet had a clear view of the entire city.

She walked into the elevator, staring at her phone and checking new messages. As the door closed, Janet realized a man was also inside with his back to her.

Her eyes widened when she looked at him.

The man had an eerie resemblance to Ethan.

Janet rubbed her eyes. She felt she was confused after working hard all day.

The man was wearing an expensive suit. ‘Why would Ethan come here in an expensive suit?’ she thought.

‘It’s probably Brandon. He looks a lot like Ethan.’

Janet squinted her eyes. But unfortunately, she couldn’t see his face from behind.

The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride - Chapter 146

In the elevator, Ethan nervously bounced on his feet.

Five minutes ago, when he walked out of his office and was about to take the exclusive elevator, he saw the workers were still repairing it.

Yesterday, Ethan had asked Garrett to cut off the electricity supply in the Larson Group building for an entire day.

Unexpectedly, something went wrong with his exclusive elevator. It stopped working even after the power was restored. The maintenance team came to repair it in the morning and hadn't finished working yet.

Ethan had no choice but to take the common elevator. It was already midnight, so he didn't think he would bump into any workers.

However, just as he arrived at the floor of the design department, the elevator stopped.

Ethan was taken aback when the door opened, and Janet entered. He shivered and immediately turned his back to her.

Fortunately, Janet was staring at the phone when she entered the elevator, so she didn't notice him.

Janet guessed it was Brandon. The first thought that came to her mind was to get out of the elevator. However, the door closed, trapping her there.

Subconsciously, Janet wanted to press the open button. But she was already in the elevator and felt it would be impolite to leave now.

She had no choice but to take the elevator with Brandon. Fortunately, the two would only have to spend a minute or two together.

The elevator was quiet, and the sound of her breathing amplified with every passing second.

Considering it would be rude to ignore his presence, Janet decided to greet him. She glanced at his back and said, "Good evening, Mr. Larson." Her voice was barely above a whisper.

"Hmm." Ethan gave her a cursory nod. He deliberately lowered his voice to make sure Janet didn't recognize him.

Janet frowned. She felt his voice wasn't as pleasant as Ethan's. It looked like he was speaking in an artificial voice to make him superior to others.

Ethan would sometimes hold Janet in his arms and whisper sweet words into her ear that would make her heart tremble. However, Brandon's voice was flat and rude.

Thinking about Ethan made Janet miss him even more.

The man remained silent and didn't bother to even look at her. Janet found that Brandon was totally different from what she thought he should be. He often took the initiative to talk to her online. But now, he didn't even bat an eyelid at her.

But on second thought, his aloofness seemed justifiable. After all, he owned the Larson Group while Janet was a mere designer there. This was probably how a president would talk to his workers.

The elevator fell silent again.

Janet took out her phone to check the time. It was already midnight, but she hadn't gone home yet. She wondered why Ethan hadn't texted or called her.

'Is he still busy working in the convenience store?'

As Janet thought about him, she glanced at Brandon.

The man was tall. His broad shoulders, straight posture, and firm back were similar to Ethan's. He was dressed in an expensive suit that clung to his perfect, muscular frame. Perhaps Brandon also liked running and working out. Janet shook her head and checked her phone again.

'Should I talk to him about something? Gosh, this silence is embarrassing. Anyway, we often chat online,' thought Janet.

She glanced at the LED screen and abandoned the idea. 'We have reached the fifth floor. I can soon run away from this embarrassing scene. After all, we won't meet again.'

Just as Janet was lost in thought, the elevator jerked and stopped.

The lights in the elevator went out, and darkness consumed them.

The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride - Chapter 147

"What happened? Why did the elevator stop?" Janet anxiously shouted.

The elevator had come to a jerky halt just as she thought she could escape soon.

Janet was not in the mood to care about Brandon anymore. She reached out to touch the buttons of the elevator. Just then, she accidentally touched a slender hand.

"Sorry." She heard Brandon's resonant voice.

It looked like their hands had collided as the two had reached out to press the buttons.

"It doesn't matter. I... I just wanted to press the emergency button." Frightened, Janet withdrew her hand.

She could feel Brandon's breath blowing against her. She guessed Brandon was standing right behind her.

After a moment's pause, Brandon said, "I guess something has been wrong with the circuit ever since the power went off yesterday."

Then, he pressed all the buttons, including the emergency button. But there was no response.

"What should we do now? Should we call someone?"

Janet looked at her phone and was about to call for help but stopped on second thought. She thought maybe Brandon could be the one to make the call. After all, he was the CEO of the Larson Group. Since he was trapped in the elevator, the staff would take it more seriously and come to their rescue immediately.

"Hmm." Ethan turned around, took out his phone, and called someone for help. He briefed the situation and hung up the phone.

"Don't worry. The maintenance personnel said they would arrive soon."

Janet shrank in a corner and hugged her bag. "Okay."

Sensing the dread in her voice, Ethan comforted her, "Don't worry. The elevator has a vent up there, so there is no risk of running out of fresh air. Just wait patiently for a while."

Janet nodded. Her fear had subsided after she heard him talk over the phone.

After all, the CEO of the Larson Group was trapped with her. The company would act immediately and make sure nothing happened to him. Therefore, she would also be rescued along with him.

But the sudden darkness suffocated her. When Janet was a child, Fiona despised her. Every time Jocelyn bullied her to tears, Fiona would lock her in a dark cabinet. Janet wasn't claustrophobic, but the darkness seemed to bring back bitter memories of the past.

The two remained in the dark elevator; none of them spoke. The silence made Janet uncomfortable.

"How about I turn on the flashlight of my phone? It's too dark here." Just as Janet was about to turn the light on, she felt a strong grip on her wrist.

"Don't waste your phone's power."

Ethan couldn't let her turn on the flashlight. Otherwise, she would see his face and find out his secret. He didn't know how to explain himself if Janet found out now that Brandon Larson was actually Ethan Lester.

Ethan knew Janet was a sensitive person. He wasn't sure if she would be mad at him for concealing his true identity.

Besides, his two brothers had already taken action. If they followed the clues and found that he was Brandon, it would cause an earth-shattering storm.

Ethan felt it would be better if Janet didn't know his true identity for now.

Sensing something was wrong, Janet said, "Well, since people are coming to rescue us, I think we will be out soon. Besides, you're the CEO of this company, Mr. Larson. I'm sure they'll come and rescue you soon."

'Well, the battery in both our phones put together would last for a few hours. Won't we be out by then?' she thought.

The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride - Chapter 148

"Just in case," he said indifferently.

Ethan had to say something to dispel her doubts.

He stood in the darkness, staring at Janet's silhouette.

Ethan wished he didn't have to conceal his identity. He wanted to walk to Janet and hug her.

Kissing her in a dark elevator would be thrilling. All his senses would be amplified, making it all the more pleasurable.

"Okay." Janet sighed.

Her doubts and worries vanished in an instant. She reasoned the CEO was a cautious man. Since her boss had asked her not to waste the battery, she decided to humor him instead of arguing.

The two continued to stand silently in the darkness.

Janet wanted to take out her phone and call Ethan.

However, Brandon was standing right beside her, and he wasn't using his phone. As an employee, it would be inappropriate to ignore her boss's order and fidget with her phone.

Janet decided not to use her phone now and explain the situation to Ethan once she got home.

Silence pervaded the elevator except for the rhythmic breathing of the two people.

The awkwardness made Janet uncomfortable.

Unable to hold it any longer, she quietly looked at the tall figure and asked, "Mr. Larson, do you usually work this late?"

"It depends."

"I haven't had the chance to meet you before. You have been taking good care of me ever since I started working for your company. Thank you for everything."

"You're welcome."

"By the way, why did you take the common elevator?" Janet's face flamed with embarrassment. She felt like a chatterbox.

"My private elevator isn't working."

The man's terse response made Janet wonder if he didn't want to talk to her.

Janet wracked her brains to think of a topic to keep the conversation going. Since Brandon sounded like he didn't want to talk to her, Janet reckoned she had to hold her tongue.

She had learned to cope with his erratic moods and behaviors. Brandon didn't seem aloof when they chatted online. He spoke to her normally, and the two seemed to get along well with each other.

Janet couldn't help but wonder if all the CEOs were unpredictable like him.

Ethan didn't know what Janet was thinking. His throat hurt as he altered his voice every time he spoke to her. Besides, he didn't want to talk and garner Janet's suspicion. It would only lead to unnecessary problems. Therefore, he tried to remain silent.

Just then, there was a commotion outside the elevator.

Ethan's phone vibrated as someone called him.

"Mr. Larson, our rescue team has arrived and is trying to open the elevator. But the elevator is stuck between two floors, so it's taking longer than expected. Please give us some time. We'll get you out, Mr. Larson. Sorry for the inconvenience."

"Okay, hurry up."

Janet stole a glance at Brandon. The elevator was pin-drop silent, so she could hear the muffled voice of the man from the other end of the line.

She felt that Brandon was not a friendly boss. Everyone who spoke to him seemed to tremble with fear and respect.

The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride - Chapter 149

A few minutes later, a loud noise sounded from outside the elevator.

Faint voices in a heated discussion could be heard.

“Mr. Larson? We’re going to force the elevator door open. Please take a few steps back and make sure no one’s near the door.”

Someone’s voice came from outside the elevator. Brandon replied to acknowledge him and obediently retreated to a corner. More chaos ensued outside, as though the maintenance personnel were prying the elevator door open with some tools.

Some time passed, but there seemed to be no progress.

Just then, the elevator shook violently.

“Ah!” Janet shrieked, her heart dropping to her stomach. The elevator’s sudden movement made her lose her balance.

Just as she felt as though she was going to hit the ground, a powerful pair of arms caught her in the darkness.

With a low grunt, Brandon pulled her up and held her close. Janet’s back was pressed against the wall, while Brandon’s body was pressed against hers.

He lowered his head until his lips brushed against her ear. Janet could feel his breath sweeping across her bare skin.

Despite him saving her, Brandon’s act made Janet even more anxious than the shaking of the elevator. She immediately tried to shake him off. “Mr. Larson, please let go of me. I can stand on my own feet.”

She was so panic-stricken that she tried to push Brandon away, but then the elevator shook even more violently all of a sudden.

“Don’t move!” Brandon barked, grabbing her shoulder forcefully.

His low voice was strong yet steady, and it had the power to snap people back to their senses.

Janet managed to calm down somewhat, at least enough to gather her bearings. She was still very nervous, and her heart pounded against her chest uncontrollably.

She just hated being touched by men.

Ethan was an exception. He always had a mature and reliable temperament, which made Janet feel an inexplicable sense of security. He also had a strong aura and anyone in front of him would seem weaker.

But now that she thought about it, Brandon also made her feel this way. Even though she couldn't see his face, she could feel that the man before her was decent and reliable.

For some reason, he made Janet feel that she could put her trust in him.

In fact, Janet thought that it all felt a little familiar, as though it was Ethan standing in front of her.

She lowered herself and wrapped her arms around herself protectively, trying to keep some distance from Brandon.

The elevator shook for another ten seconds before it finally stopped.

Brandon held Janet so tight that she broke into a cold sweat. The fabric of her dress got wet, which made her very uncomfortable.

Finally, a ray of light pierced through the crack in the elevator door. The rescue workers finally pried the door open a centimeter. Raising her head, Janet asked in a low voice, "Can you let go of me now?"

"Oh, right. I'm sorry." Brandon's tone was a little stiff. He immediately let go of Janet and took two steps back to put a safe distance between them.

Simultaneously, on high alert, Janet retreated to the farthest corner of the elevator.

Leaning against the opposite side of the elevator, Brandon sighed silently. He rubbed his eyebrows and squinted Janet in the darkness. "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to offend you. I just... wanted to make sure you were safe."

The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride - Chapter 150

"It's okay. And thanks. I was really scared just now," Janet said in between deep breaths.

While she didn't feel offended by Brandon's behavior, she did feel a bit taken aback.

After all, her boss didn't look like the type of guy who would treat a woman this way. When he held her in his arms just now, his movements were very natural, as if he had done this sort of thing countless times.

"Are you scared of me?" the man in the darkness suddenly asked.

Ethan, whose fingertips were still tingling from touching the woman across the elevator, felt that Janet's body was stiff just now. She seemed scared. Whenever they kissed, she would always go limp in his arms. But now, she went and did the opposite.

"Well, a little. But Mr. Larson, I'm not blaming you or anything. It's all just too sudden." Even though they were kind of friends, Janet didn't dare to tell Brandon to stay away from her. He was her boss after all.

If she wanted to continue to work in the Larson Group, she had no choice but to swallow the pride and show Brandon some respect he deserved.

Still, she was confused with the way Brandon treated her.

Was he interested in her?

No. That couldn't be it. Janet frowned slightly in the dark, wondering if she was overthinking.

Well, whatever the reason Brandon behaved like this, she just couldn't understand what kind of person he was.

As she mulled it over, Brandon didn't say anything more.

A hush fell over the elevator. Suddenly, a grating noise sounded from the elevator door and light came flooding in. The rescuers had finally pried the door open!

Several fully armed rescue workers in orange uniforms reached out their hands to them. "Grab on!"

Janet squinted from the sudden light. Before her eyes could adjust, Brandon walked behind her and said, "You go first."

Then he put his hands under Janet's arms and lifted her up from behind without hesitation. He held her up and handed her to the rescuers.

The rescuers quickly pulled Janet up.

It was noisy outside. A group of people had gathered in front of the elevator. Most of them were the employees of the Larson Group. They probably rushed there when they heard the news that something had happened to their CEO.

"Lind, are you okay? Go home already. It's almost 1 o'clock. Your family's probably worried sick!"

Garrett's smiling face came into Janet's view. He pushed her towards the exit without scruples.

Before Janet could protest, she was pushed out of the gate.

"Well, I guess I'll go home then, Mr. Harding." She deliberately turned around to look at Garrett and smiled.

She reasoned that Brandon should have been pulled out of the elevator by now. She wanted to take this opportunity to peek inside and see what Brandon looked like.

She had always been curious about the CEO of the Larson Group.

However, she couldn't see past Garrett's tall figure. Upon craning her neck slightly, she only saw Brandon's broad back. With his head bowed, Brandon was escorted away by a group of men in black suits.

That whole time, she didn't get even a glimpse of his face.

"What are you looking at, Lind?" With a pair of charming eyes, Garrett followed her gaze and sneered cryptically. "So, you were trying to get a look at Brandon, huh? It's a pity he left too soon."

"No, no. You misunderstand. Mr. Harding, please don't make fun of me." Riddled with guilt, Janet quickly averted her gaze.

She didn't want to talk to him anymore, so she turned around to leave. "I'll get going, Mr. Harding."

With a smile on his face, Garrett took two steps forward and offered kindly, "Let me drive you home. It's so late."

Truth be told, someone had tasked him to send her home safely.

Frowning slightly, Janet didn't think it was appropriate for him to send her home alone at such a late hour. "No, thanks. I don't think it's a good idea, Mr. Harding. Besides, my home isn't that far from the company. It's only a short walk away."

"You look like you think I'm going to bite you. But okay, be safe, Lind!" With an unbothered smile, Garrett turned around and went back into the building leisurely.

Since he had promised Ethan, he wasn't about to go back on his word. He quickly found a bodyguard to secretly follow Janet. He didn't feel relieved until he heard that she arrived home safely.