

THE MYSTERIOUS BILLIONAIRE AND HIS SUBSTITUTE BRIDE

Chapter 171



The two packed Hannah's belongings and took her to the city.

However, Hannah didn't like the idea. "I feel uncomfortable about moving into the city. You two are just married. I don't want to bother you. Moreover, you both have to go to work, and I'm sure you'll come home exhausted. I don't want to be a burden to you. Moreover, I'm not used to living in the city either. The high buildings and wide roads frighten me. I won't be able to chat with my friends in our village anymore."

"I'm not asking you to live with us forever. Stay here, in the city, so that we can avoid the debt collectors. I know you prefer living in the village, but it doesn't seem like a good idea now. We'll send you back once the problem is over," Janet comforted her.

Hannah sighed and nodded in agreement.

Once they returned to the apartment, Janet vacated her room and put her personal belongings in Ethan's room.

"Why are you moving your things? Are you two sleeping in separate rooms even after being married for so long?" Hannah grabbed Janet's arm and eyed her with concern. "Is that man not treating you right? Did you two fight?"

Hannah squinted and looked at Ethan, who was busy cooking in the kitchen. Janet couldn't help but smile at her concern. "No, we are fine. I've been working overtime, so I come home late at night. I didn't want to disturb Ethan's

sleep, so I chose to sleep in a separate room. Hannah, the long ride must have exhausted you. Do you want to take a nap in the bedroom?"

"That's good. I thought the handsome boy wasn't treating you well." Hannah smiled, and the wrinkles around her eyes deepened like they always did. "All right. Don't overwork yourself. Keep it simple. I'm old, and I live a simple life."

Janet took all her clothes to Ethan's bedroom so that Hannah could rest in her room.

Just then, Janet felt a tight grip around her. Ethan chuckled, and the two rolled on the bed.

Janet yelled in shock. "Why didn't you make a sound before coming inside? Stop it. Hannah is still in the next room."

"My room is soundproof. Let's give it a try," Ethan mumbled, biting her collarbone. He pressed his body against hers. His loose black shirt slid down, revealing his collarbone. His chiseled jaw and the stubble made Janet weak in her knees.

The intensity of his gaze made Janet's hair stand on end. He tightened his grip, making it impossible for her to move. Janet whimpered under his hold.

"Not now, Ethan! Let go of me." Janet was frightened. Ethan was aroused; it looked like he would pounce on her. It would be embarrassing if Hannah heard it. "Stop it! I need to discuss something important with you. We need to think about how to help Hannah."

Hearing that, Ethan finally let go of her.

He kissed the corner of her lips, leaned back on the head of the bed, and thought for a while. "Well, Hannah's problem is quite complicated. I read the document she has signed. The papers seem legit enough, and we can't prove

that Hannah was tricked or forced to sign the papers. Even if we go to court, I don't think we can win this case."

"What do you mean? We can't pay the money. It's three hundred thousand dollars!" Janet sounded anxious.

She had just started working, so her income wouldn't cover the debt. And she didn't have much savings. Why else would she ask the Lind family to pay for Hannah's medical expenses? Arranging for

three hundred thousand dollars was a nightmare. She didn't know what to do.

Ethan stared at the ceiling. "Well," he took a deep breath and said, "Since it's impossible to win this case, I think the only solution is destroying the fraud gang."

"What? How is that possible? Neither of us has the power or means to do that. If we were that powerful, we wouldn't be worrying about arranging for the money in the first place." Janet felt like they had hit the dead end.

Ethan turned to look at her.

It was impossible for Ethan to solve such a problem, but Brandon could. It was a piece of cake for him.

He wanted to remind Janet but decided against it. If he mentioned Brandon first, it would only arouse her suspicion.

Ethan smiled and pinched her cheek. Seeing that Janet was still upset, he pulled her into his arms. "Don't worry. I'll talk to my friends. Some of them are victims of fraudulent groups like these. I'll ask them for advice. You stop worrying about it."

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THE MYSTERIOUS BILLIONAIRE AND HIS SUBSTITUTE BRIDE

Chapter 172



The man and the woman were forced to share a room that night because Hannah was staying in the other room.

After dinner, while Ethan was taking a shower, Janet paced around his room restlessly. She obviously didn't want to share a bed with Ethan, but there wasn't even a sofa she could sleep on.

"What're you doing? Do you need my help?" Ethan strolled out of the bathroom and leaned against the door frame. He was wearing gray linen pajamas with a towel hanging on his shoulder.

As he looked at Janet leisurely, he ran his fingers through his damp hair.

Janet was taken aback by his handsome figure and instantly went stiff.

"Nothing," she answered awkwardly.

"Why can't you just tell me?" Ethan smiled, his eyes twinkling. Without pressing her further, he sat on the bed and dried his hair with the towel.

"I can sleep on the floor..." Janet averted her gaze, her face flushed with embarrassment.

"What're you talking about? We're a married couple. We can share a bed." As he spoke, Ethan put the towel away and lay on the bed, resting the back of his head on his arms. He sat up slightly to look at her with his black eyes and asked mischievously, "Didn't you say that we would do it tonight?"

“Do what?” Janet’s heart leapt to her throat. How could he say such a thing?

She took a deep breath to compose herself. Finally, she whispered shyly, “Didn’t I tell you? Hannah’s sleeping right next door and this room is far from sound proof. Sometimes, I can even hear you talking on the phone from my room.”

Of course, moans would be heard even more clearly.

“Forget it then. I’m going to bed now.” Ethan tore his gaze away from her and lay back down on the bed.

After all, he was just kidding. He knew that Janet was a timid girl.

But Janet misread his reaction. She thought he was angry with her, so she crept to the bed and sat down. Gritting her teeth, she hesitated for a while, then finally sighed in defeat. “If you really want to do it, how about we go to a hotel?”

There was no way she would have sex in the same apartment as Hannah.

Raising his head to look at her, Ethan stretched out his hand to ruffle her hair playfully. As though he had read her mind, he laughed and said, “Do you think Hannah’s a three-year-old child? We’re a couple. How can we leave our own home and stay in a hotel? What will Hannah think?”

Leaning against the headboard, he jutted his chin at the pillow next to him.

“Come on and get some sleep already. You don’t have to worry. Your husband can control himself.”

“Oh, okay. I’ll take a shower first though.” Janet sighed with relief.

Tonight’s sky was clear and cloudless. Countless stars were scattered all over the night sky.

After taking a shower and drying her hair, Janet lifted a corner of the quilt and slipped into bed next to Ethan. The bed sheet smelled faintly of mint.

Ethan lay on his side, facing the bare white wall.

A hush fell over the room.

Janet faced the window, but she was so nervous that her body was as stiff as a plank.

The two lay in silence for what seemed like an eternity. Finally, Janet figured that Ethan must've fallen asleep, so she slowly turned over. Just then, Ethan also happened to move. He was carefully lifting the quilt up, as if he was about to get out of bed.

Unbeknownst to Janet, this whole time, Ethan had been burning with desire. Things were different now that the woman he pined for was lying right next to him.

The two's eyes met.

Both of them were wide awake and they instantly knew why the other couldn't sleep. With tacit understanding, they smiled at each other.

"Where are you going?" Janet asked.

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THE MYSTERIOUS BILLIONAIRE AND HIS SUBSTITUTE BRIDE

Chapter 173



Ethan slipped on a black windbreaker over his pajamas and said softly, "Hannah's probably asleep by now. I'm going to the balcony to get some air. You can sleep first."

"Okay." Janet didn't think about it too much.

After all, with Ethan gone, she had the bed to herself and she could finally rest easy.

Sure enough, Ethan brought a can of ice-cold beer to the balcony with some company documents he wanted to go over. After finishing his drink, he headed back to the bedroom.

Janet, who had fallen asleep on his side of the bed, was clutching the quilt tightly. Her smooth, slender leg was poking out from under the edge of the quilt.

"You're sleeping in a rude way." Ethan snorted as he pulled the quilt over her legs. After tucking her in properly, he sat on the edge of the bed and looked at her sleeping figure for a long time before lying next to her.

...

On Monday morning.

Janet had been quite nervous ever since she moved into Ethan's bedroom. As a result, she overslept and was running late for work. After quickly washing up, she ran out the door with a piece of bread in tow.

"Wait for me!" Ethan was wearing a black baseball cap and a gray hooded sweatshirt over a white T-shirt. He caught up to her and offered to carry her bag.

"What? Why? Aren't you going to work today?" Janet walked quickly to catch up to Ethan and looked at him questioningly, although she secretly felt happy that he was accompanying her.

Ethan stood at the stair landing, waiting for her. He lowered his head, the brim of his hat covering his cold eyes. His high nose looked even more prominent, and his thin lips curved upward into a charming smile.

“Those debt collectors might come looking for you again. I just want to make sure you get to work safely.”

“That might be too troublesome on your end. What if you’re late for work? I’m sure those people won’t find out where I work. I haven’t revealed any personal information to them.” Not wanting to inconvenience others, Janet reached out to get her bag back from Ethan.

But Ethan raised his hand and lifted the strap of her shoulder bag over his head. Then he slipped his hand around her waist and escorted her outside the apartment building. “What’re you talking about? I’ve already asked my boss for a leave today.”

Janet looked at him helplessly, left with no choice but to give up.

As soon as they made it to the pedestrian lane across the road from her office, she saw that a group had gathered right outside the building, causing quite the ruckus.

The group of thugs who had come to demand money from her had hung banners at the entrance of the building. There were several bright red words scrawled on the banners.

“Janet Defaults On Her Debt.”

“Pay Off Your Debt!”

Perhaps the strong men had gone to Hannah’s house to stir up trouble again, but found no one there, so they went here instead.

“How did they find me here?” Janet stood frozen to the spot, too shocked to move.

Although she did not reveal any personal information, it turned out that these people were smart. They probably went out of their way to find out where she worked.

What happened between her and Fiona took place only a few days ago, so this matter was bound to cause big trouble and further ruined her reputation.

“Who’s this Janet and why does she always cause us so much trouble?” A female employee passing by read all the banners and frowned deeply.

“I’m not sure, but I heard she’s from the design department. Her foster parents came here and made a scene a few days ago. I wonder what’s going on now.” A short, stout woman nearby crossed her arms over her chest and sneered arrogantly. “She kept nagging others to pay her back, yet now she’s the one who’s in debt. What a hypocrite!”

Janet’s expression darkened. She was about to go over there and teach those gossiping women a lesson, but then Ethan stopped her.

He grabbed her wrist and pulled her to his side. His voice was calm and unhurried. “Don’t. If they find out you’re here, they won’t let you inside the building, and things will get even trickier.”

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THE MYSTERIOUS BILLIONAIRE AND HIS SUBSTITUTE BRIDE

Chapter 174



“Let go of me. I have to explain myself, or else it’ll affect my work!” Janet struggled to shrug off Ethan’s grip, looking up at him helplessly.

Ethan sighed and pulled her to a corner. In a gentle voice, he said soothingly, “Now’s not the right time.”

Janet shook her head stubbornly. “This is different from what happened with Fiona. This is usury. If I don’t explain myself, it will prove that I’m guilty! Everyone who passes by will spread rumors about me all over the company!”

Janet sighed. Exhausted and defeated, her shoulders slumped. “The company’s board must’ve found out about it already. These people might even attract the media and mar the company’s reputation. The board will probably ask me to resign...”

“No, they won’t. The Larson Group is huge. The board has bigger fish to fry. Plus, you didn’t borrow the money. These scammers are just trying to stir up trouble for you. Come on. What are you afraid of?” Ethan squeezed her hand reassuringly.

“How do you know that? You’re not the CEO of the Larson Group.” Janet knew that Ethan was just trying to comfort her, and he was successful. The corners of her lips still lifted ever so slightly. She felt much better.

She raised her hand, which was holding Ethan’s. “Let go of me first. I have to go now. I can’t just skip work because of this.”

“Just wait.” Ethan lowered the brim of his cap over his eyes and stole a glance at the gate to the Larson Group.

Janet looked at him, puzzled. What on earth was he waiting for?

Seconds later, a group of armed security guards swarmed out of the building.

“What are you doing here? Do you know where you’re standing? This is the Larson Group’s premise!” the leader of the security guards barked coldly.

Not to be outdone, the men with the banners glared at the security guards and shouted. "Janet is an employee here and she owes us three hundred thousand dollars! We're just waiting for her here! Do you have a problem with that? We're not interrupting your work after all!"

The security guards picked up their electric batons and marched forward in a dignified manner. "I don't give a damn who owes you money. You can't make a fuss here. If you refuse, we'll be forced to remove you from the property."

After their leader said that, several security guards came forward and violently ripped the hanging banners off the gate. Then they forcibly dragged away the three people who were holding some placards. Seeing this, the onlookers quickly dispersed.

When the coast was clear, Ethan withdrew his gaze and finally let go of Janet's hand. He gave her back her bag and patted her shoulder. "You can go in now. I'll pick you up after work."

"Be careful, Ethan. If those thugs know where I work, they probably know where I live. Maybe they'll ambush you at home." Janet grabbed his arm and looked at him worriedly.

"Don't worry. They won't have the guts to do that." As he spoke, Ethan looked into the distance with a cold expression. Then he patted her on the head gently and turned around to leave, disappearing in the crowd.

Swallowing her nervousness, Janet walked briskly into the Larson Group's building.

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The woman behind Janet snickered at her and whispered to her friend while they all waited for the elevator.

“That’s really her. Where was she hiding all this while? Now that those people left, she has come out as if nothing had happened.”

“She was probably waiting for the security guards to drive those people away. I think she must have availed a loan and doesn’t want us to know about it,” the man beside her echoed.

Janet was in no mood to argue with them. She turned around and decided to take the stairs. She didn’t want to think about it and decided to concentrate on work.

When Janet finally reached her desk, no one bothered to talk to her. Gerda was usually a chatterbox who spoke nonstop. However, she seemed strangely silent today. Janet’s colleagues glanced at her and carried on with their work. They all seemed eerily calm, as if a storm were brewing to destroy her life.

Janet had been sensitive ever since she was a little girl. Sensing everyone’s strange attitude, she took a deep breath and sat down to draw.

Time passed in a blur, and it was noon.

Just then, Janet’s phone chimed with Brandon’s message that seemed like an alarm bell, reminding Janet of what she had been trying to forget all day.

“I heard today’s incident has something to do with you.” Janet’s heart leaped to her throat.

What could she possibly tell him? After all, she had become the talk of the office yet again.

Janet bit her lip and hesitated for a long time.

A few minutes later, her phone chimed again.

“Answer me!” Janet could sense Brandon’s anger in the message.

“Yes, Mr. Larson. I apologize for all the trouble. A group of fraudsters has deceived an elder from my family into signing up for a loan. I’ve been dealing with the issue. I’ll try not to cause any trouble to the company,” Janet replied, hoping that Brandon would understand her situation.

All capitalists focused on their interests first. She only prayed for Brandon to show mercy and forgive her.

However, this time, Brandon didn’t reply quickly like he usually did.

Janet nervously checked her phone for new messages. Every minute seemed like an hour — it was sheer torture.

After five minutes, her head began to spin.

Fortunately, she didn’t rush to ask Brandon for help.

She had thought of explaining her situation to Brandon to find out if he might help her. After all, he could effortlessly solve the problem.

However, Janet felt ashamed to ask him for help.

After all, she didn’t know Brandon well. He was neither a relative nor a friend. She didn’t even know what he looked like.

He was her boss and wasn’t obligated to help her.

Janet’s torture finally ended when she got another message from Brandon.

“Don’t overthink about it. Focus on your work. Our company will handle this issue.”

‘What does he mean? Is he going to help me solve the problem?’

Janet couldn’t believe her eyes. She read and re-read the messages over and over again.

She couldn’t understand why Brandon wanted to help her again.

No boss would ever be this kind to an employee. Brandon was a businessman. Janet thought he would put the interest of the company first over anyone. But he strangely seemed different from the others.

‘Am I somehow related to Brandon? Is there a secret I’m yet to unravel?’

The idea seemed ridiculous.

‘But isn’t Brandon gay? Why is he doing all this for me?’

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THE MYSTERIOUS BILLIONAIRE AND HIS SUBSTITUTE BRIDE

Chapter 176



There were no further specifics after Brandon informed Janet the company would deal with the problem.

Janet had no idea how Brandon was going to deal with the issue. She didn’t dare ask him.

That evening, Janet packed her things only after everyone left.

Just as she left the company, she received a brief message from Brandon that read, "Problem solved, and the debt is written off."

Janet's eyes widened in shock when she read the message.

Then, she calmed down and wiped the sweat off her forehead.

If they did this the legal way and the fraudsters were sent to jail, Hannah still would have to pay the debt from a legal point of view since she signed the contract which was totally legit. Brandon now told her that the company had dealt with it and the debt was written off.

Although Janet had no idea what exactly had happened to the fraudsters, she knew Brandon must have taken care of the problem in a not-that-legal way.

The debt had been bothering Janet for a long time. Considering how Brandon had effortlessly solved the issue, Janet once again realized how powerful he could be.

Getting rid of fraudsters in a single day wasn't an easy task.

It reminded Janet of what had happened before.

However, she couldn't understand why a powerful man like Brandon was helping her time and again.

Janet was a mere employee in his company. They were worlds apart, and he didn't have to help her.

The thought seemed to gnaw Janet's brain.

She was indebted to Brandon. Besides, the man lived a wealthy life. What could she possibly give him to express her gratitude? Janet didn't know what to do.

She had been standing in the doorway of her house, thinking about what Brandon had done. As soon as she opened the door, the delicious smell of food greeted her.

Ethan had become a better cook. He was a quick learner and had started cooking all kinds of dishes after reading the recipes from cookbooks.

Janet rolled up her sleeves and walked over to him. Ethan's back — his broad frame and height looked similar to that of Brandon's.

"Do you need my help? Where is Hannah?" Janet asked, glancing around the kitchen.

"She has gone dancing with the other elderly women downstairs. She asked us to eat first. Dinner is almost ready. Can you set the table?" Ethan said as he ladled out the soup in the casserole. It was just a simple gesture, but Ethan looked stylish and exuded a majestic aura while doing it.

As they sat down to eat, Janet stole glances at Ethan every now and then. He not only looked handsome, but Janet was impressed by the way he carried himself. She couldn't help but wonder if Brandon was also like him.

Janet immediately shook her head and took another bite of the food, shaking off the thoughts bothering her. She was losing her mind. How could she compare Ethan with Brandon?

"What are you thinking? You seem absentminded." Ethan propped his chin on the palm of his hand and looked at her.

After taking a spoonful of soup, Janet shook her head. After a moment's hesitation, she said, "The issue with the fraudsters is solved now. Well, Brandon solved it."

"That's why you look bothered?" Ethan asked, examining her face.

"I just don't understand this. Why would a stranger offer help for no reason? I can't stop thinking about it." Janet had made up her mind to ask Brandon why he was helping her.

An unease had settled in her heart.

"It might be a big deal for you. But Brandon is a powerful man. He deals with problems like this every day. It's a piece of cake for him. Stop overanalyzing this." Seeing that Janet had finished eating, he stood up and began cleaning up the table.

"No, I don't think so. Maybe it's just a casual order to Brandon. But he still had to ask his subordinates to deal with them. I'm just a common designer. Why would he go out of his way to help me? Brandon is a businessman. If he doesn't have any other motive and is helping me only out of kindness, why would he make a decision that would probably cause him huge losses?" All of a sudden, Janet stood up and stared at the man who was cleaning up the table. "Ethan, are you hiding something from me?"

About The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride -

The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride is the best current series of the author Roana Javier.

THE MYSTERIOUS BILLIONAIRE AND HIS SUBSTITUTE BRIDE

Chapter 177



“What could I possibly hide from you?” Ethan shrugged and continued to put the dishes into the sink. Although he seemed calm, his heart was racing in his chest.

Janet was a smart woman, and hiding the truth from her wasn’t easy.

Ethan hoped for her to stop overanalyzing everything and just let him help her.

“I mean, did you go to see Brandon again? Otherwise, why would he help me again?” Janet frowned and studied his face. Something seemed fishy.

Why would Brandon find the fraud group that had deceived Hannah and eradicate it without Janet informing him about the details?

Janet didn’t doubt Brandon’s capability but was still confused about his intentions.

Ethan took out a can of beer from the fridge, opened it, and gulped it down. Leaning against the fridge, he cast a sidelong glance at Janet. “Brandon is different from us. People like him always have everything planned. We can hardly find out what he is thinking. Perhaps he thinks you’re an asset to the company. That’s probably why he is being friendly with you. Helping you might be an investment that could reap a lot of benefits in the future.”

Janet took what he said with a pinch of salt. Ethan’s expression was unreadable. She couldn’t tell if he was telling the truth or hiding something from her.

She opened and closed her mouth, not knowing what to say. Ethan could tell that she still doubted him. He sighed and sat beside her. “I think you’re overthinking this. Your boss thinks highly of you; I don’t think he has any hidden motive. You have to be proud of yourself.”

“I just want to know the truth. Ethan, tell me. I won’t be mad at you even if you meet Brandon without telling me.” Janet held Ethan’s arm and sized him up.

Ethan had always been a determined man. Garrett always considered him to be a sophisticated man. No one in the business world could read his mind, but his judgment was always right.

Ethan could tell what Janet was thinking.

“You are imagining things. It wasn’t easy for me to meet him the last time. After all, he is the president of the Larson Group. I can’t meet him as and when I like.” Ethan rubbed her back. Then, he gently slid his hand down and massaged her waist. “Don’t overthink this.” He leaned closer and whispered in her ear, “This issue is solved. You should be happy. There is no point in worrying about it now. Do you want to rest for a while? I’ll go and wash the dishes, babe.”

Janet pursed her lips and fell silent.

Ethan sounded so gentle and sweet at the moment. Janet liked the way he treated her now. After all, she was attracted to Ethan.

“All right. You can go now.”

Ethan breathed a sigh of relief, pecked on the corner of her lips, and went into the kitchen.

Janet was a little tired. She hadn’t managed to sleep well ever since she moved to Ethan’s room. She stretched her sore back and glanced at Ethan, who was busy watching the dishes. An involuntary smile stretched across her lips.

Ethan was charming and didn’t shy away from doing household chores. Anyone would fall in love with him.

The smile on Janet’s face froze as she thought about something.

Ethan sensed her burning gaze. He smiled to himself without looking up. “Are you supervising if I’m properly washing the dishes or not?”

However, there was no response from Janet. He frowned and looked back.

Janet was standing at the kitchen door, staring at him intently.

“Ethan!? What’s your relationship with Brandon?”

Update of The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride by Roana Javier

THE MYSTERIOUS BILLIONAIRE AND HIS SUBSTITUTE BRIDE

Chapter 178



Ethan let out a startled gasp and almost broke the bowl in his hand. He took deep breaths and immediately calmed down.

“I’m just an illegitimate child of the Lester family. How could I have any kind of relationship with the CEO of the Larson Group?”

Ethan cleaned the last bowl, wiped it dry, and placed it on the cabinet above his head. Then he took the kitchen towel and carefully wiped his slender fingers.

Janet felt uncomfortable as she stared at his handsome face. The doubt in her heart seemed to grow with every passing moment.

The more she thought about it, the more she believed that Brandon and Ethan were related in some way.

Brandon was a good-looking man, and Ethan wouldn’t lose anything by being in a relationship with him.

Janet's face reddened. She rested her hands on her hips and glared at him. "Are you two hiding something from me?"

Brandon was gay, and that was why he didn't seem interested in her. 'Then why is he helping me time and again? Is he actually interested in Ethan? Is he helping me because I'm married to Ethan?'

"What could possibly happen between us?" Ethan's eyes darkened as he strode toward her.

Janet involuntarily stepped backward and raised her hand to stop him. "Don't come over. I need to sort my thoughts."

She was still racking her brains to figure out what was going on.

Ethan had told Janet that he had talked to Brandon. That was how all her doubts started. It seemed suspicious because he should have had no chance to talk to Brandon. Ethan had not only contacted him, but also learned his sexual orientation. Janet couldn't help but wonder if Ethan and Brandon shared a special relationship.

Besides, Ethan didn't seem like an idler who wasted his time. There was an air of mystique around him. It was understandable for Brandon to have feelings for him.

Janet felt her guess was likely to be right.

Ethan's heart was racing in his chest. Janet eyed him with suspicion. She looked doubtful, confident, disgusted, and sympathetic. The mixed reaction confused him more.

Ethan lifted Janet and threw her on his shoulder, ignoring her protests. "What the hell are you thinking about?" he asked, patting her butt.

Janet was stunned when he put her down. Ethan cupped her face and kissed her. "Drop that look on your face. It turns me on."

Janet snapped out of her trance and glared at him.

Ethan was domineering and always exuded a majestic aura. Janet couldn't picture him having an affair with Brandon, yet that seemed like the only possibility.

She ignored Ethan's words and asked, "What do you think of Brandon?"

"Hmm... not bad. He is an excellent businessman." Ethan scratched his nose and felt that Janet was acting strange today.

"Don't think you can fool me by pretending to be innocent. I know what you two are up to," Janet said, arching an eyebrow.

His evasiveness irked her.

Ethan had been deliberately avoiding the question.

He had already conspired with others and fooled her once. Besides, Ethan was an effortless actor. She couldn't tell whether he was lying or not. The man always had a straight face and effortlessly masked his emotions.

"What?" Ethan couldn't understand what she was insinuating.

Janet forced a smile at him. She had to be patient. She would wait until Ethan exposed himself.

"Nothing. I was just joking. I'm going to take a shower." She pursed her lips and pushed Ethan away from her.

It didn't matter if he didn't admit the truth. Janet planned to pay close attention to Ethan and Brandon in the future. She was determined to find the truth.

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THE MYSTERIOUS BILLIONAIRE AND HIS SUBSTITUTE BRIDE

Chapter 179



After taking a shower, Janet came out of the bathroom with a towel wrapped around her wet hair.

She pulled the towel off her head and started drying her wet hair. Her cheeks were slightly ruddy from the steamy bathroom, which made her look like a plump pink peach. Her eyelashes were wet and slightly plastered together, giving her eyes a doe-like effect.

As he looked at her, Ethan couldn't help but be reminded of a wild cat he had once seen on the roadside on a rainy day. That little wild cat had the exact same wide, doe-like eyes.

Just then, he noticed that Janet was observing him as well. Ethan frowned slightly. Under her piercing gaze, he felt as though she was trying to see right through his soul.

'I wonder what's on her mind?' he thought to himself.

Ethan leaned back into the sofa and looked back at her calmly. Finally, he said in a low voice, “Don’t beat around the bush and go straight to the point.”

He was always this casual and blunt, but his sudden seriousness still made Janet’s hair stand on end.

“It’s nothing. Just focus on your game.” Janet guiltily averted her gaze and retreated to her bedroom, all the while still drying her hair. But before she went inside, she turned around to glance back at Ethan. It seemed that she couldn’t take her eyes off of his hip.

‘Oh, my God. His buttocks are so round!’ Janet thought inwardly.

Just as she was about to enter the room, Ethan’s deep voice interrupted her. “I forgot to ask—did you want to go somewhere for our honeymoon?”

Life tended to become dry and monotonous at times. Ethan reasoned that they needed to spice things up from time to time. Moreover, he wanted to make things up to Janet and give her all the best things in the world.

Janet hesitated slightly. She thought that it was a good idea, but she had just gotten back on track at work, so she couldn’t take a leave anytime soon. “No, thanks. I’m so busy with work these days, so I don’t think I have the time to go on a trip.”

As she spoke, Ethan was gazing at the dark night from the window. Then, he closed his eyes and pressed his fingers against his temple.

It was the first time that he couldn’t figure out what was on Janet’s mind. He had already taken care of everything. Had he done anything wrong?

At ten o’clock that evening, the subordinate Ethan tasked with investigating the fraud group texted. It turned out that they had found the mastermind behind it all. To Ethan’s surprise, it was an “acquaintance”.

“We’ve garnered nearly all the information from the fraud group themselves. It turned out that Fiona sought out their boss around a month ago. She gave him a large sum of money and asked him to look for Hannah. He’s a swindler, so it wasn’t a big deal for him to deceive one more person. Moreover, he could’ve gotten more money from the deal, so he agreed to Fiona’s request. Fiona also suggested that he harass Hannah for the money, but when they saw how old and weak she was, they showed her mercy.”

After reading the message, Ethan tossed his phone aside and tinkered with an empty can of beer in silence. He walked over to the balcony and rested his arms on the railing. Wearing loose pajamas, he looked slimmer and less muscular than he actually was.

So, it turned out that the Lind family had struck Hannah because they couldn’t seem to touch Janet. By targeting Hannah, they could destroy Janet.

They were playing with fire.

Ethan sneered coldly into the night. He was not a forgiving man. Plus, Janet had severed all ties with the Lind family. There was no need to be polite to strangers.

The next second, he grabbed his phone and made a call.

“The Lind family has been living way too comfortably lately.” Ethan fiddled with the pull tab on the can. His cold voice seemed to pierce the darkness of the night.

Read The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride TODAY

The novel The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride has been updated Chapter 179

[THE MYSTERIOUS BILLIONAIRE AND HIS SUBSTITUTE BRIDE](#)



Fiona had hired a criminal last time to rape Janet. However, her plan was exposed and ruined. Since then, she couldn't find a chance to vent her anger. Later, after a lot of thinking, she devised this scheme. She was determined to take revenge this time.

The Lind family had raised Janet. But now, the dog was going to ride on its master. She couldn't let that happen.

However, the previous experience had taught her a lesson. Fiona restrained her emotions now. She had others to execute the plan now and was sure no one would find out she was the mastermind.

When Fiona heard the news that the fraudsters had caused trouble in Janet's company, she was ecstatic. After all, the men were dangerous people. They were all experienced enforcers who would go to any extent for money.

Even if the crisis couldn't destroy Janet, it would definitely ruin her life and reputation.

Fiona hated how Janet had her way with everything by putting on an innocent face. She felt the woman was a master at faking innocence. She behaved as if she were on a mission to let the entire world know that the Lind family had ill-treated her.

'Now, everyone could see through her pretense. This conniving bitch would lose her foothold in the Larson Group. That's for sure.'

A triumphant smile emerged on Fiona's face as she thought her plan had succeeded this time. She didn't want to contact the fraudsters. The less she got involved in the matter, the better.

One day, she saw the news on TV that the police had launched a crackdown on several fraud groups. Although Fiona was not sure if it included the fraud group she had hired, dread and unease settled in the pit of her stomach. The fear was eating her up.

All of a sudden, Fiona recalled what had happened to the last man she hired. She broke into a cold sweat and began squirming with fear.

Fiona abandoned her previous plan and called the fraud group.

The phone rang, but no one answered. Finally, she sensed something was wrong and slumped on the sofa helplessly.

Bernie flipped the pages of the newspaper and muttered, "The fraud groups are rampant now. They deserve it," he said, looking at Fiona.

Seeing the dread on her pallid face, he arched an eyebrow and asked, "Did you do anything wrong again?"

As soon as Bernie finished speaking, his phone rang.

"Hello. What can I do for you?" Bernie asked respectfully. After all, he was talking to a powerful man.

A shiver ran down Fiona's spine as she looked at Bernie.

"What? No. But everything went on well. Why have you decided to withdraw the investment? We reached an agreement before, didn't we?" Bernie licked his lips and wiped the sweat on his face. Then, he put down the newspaper and leaned back on the sofa.

Bernie had worked so hard to reach the refinancing agreement. With this money, he could reopen the abandoned plastic factory and hopefully gradually get the family business back on track.

He heard a soft sigh from the other end of the line. “Anyway, we haven’t signed the contract yet. You better take care of your business. Please don’t come to us again in the future.”

With that, the man hung up the phone.

Judging from his resolute tone, Bernie understood the man had made up his mind.

Bernie was pacing back and forth in the living room when his phone rang again.

Another company had also called to cancel their partnership.

Bernie could tell that they were all in a hurry to cut ties with his company. His stomach churned with anxiety. The relentless phone calls turned his throat dry, but all his efforts were in vain. He couldn’t convince them.

The phone calls continued; Bernie grew anxious and worried with every passing moment. The partnering companies were willing to even pay a high penalty fee to distance themselves from the Lind family.

Bernie’s face turned ashen pale as he continued to wipe his sweat in despair.

Bernie had been a part of the business circle for several years. His father had laid the foundation for the company in the early years. Now, the technological advancement and change in trends worsened the situation of his company. However, Bernie was sure that wasn’t the reason why his partners had chosen to abandon him.

“We’ve been friends for so many years. Can you at least tell me what happened?” Bernie’s voice trembled.

“I’m sorry, but I can’t. He is a powerful man. But I don’t understand. You two are not supposed to have any interaction. Well, I suggest you reflect on your actions. Have you offended anyone lately?” said the man on the phone.

Bernie couldn’t think of anyone except for a few influential families that would ruin the lives of the people who rubbed them the wrong way. But Bernie didn’t remember offending any one of them.

Update of The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride

Announcement The Mysterious Billionaire and His Substitute Bride has updated Chapter 180