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Ethan was on the hot seat now. As a result, he had no choice but to use countless lies to cover up the first one.

“Well, after the Larson family went bankrupt, they sold tons of valuable antiques, paintings, and rare calligraphy that had been collected for so many years. My grandmother liked collecting all kinds of precious and beautiful jewelry when she was alive. She loved them so much. My grandfather didn’t want to take them away from her, so he let her keep them. Upon her death years later, my mother inherited her favorite pieces of jewelry. She held them so dear to her heart that she couldn’t bring herself to sell them even in her most difficult time. She later passed them on to me. These two rings were among them.”

Ethan decided not to go into details. Too many details would expose hints of his well-coated lies. Nevertheless, he made sure to give a reasonable explanation.

His words weren’t entirely false. Some of the details were actually true.

The origin of the platinum emerald ring was exactly like he told Janet. It used to be his grandmother’s.

“Oh, I see. I was extremely shocked to hear the shop attendant’s words today. We aren’t financially stable. It is practically impossible for you to afford such an expensive ring. I upped and left without saying anything more to her. Something seemed fishy. At that moment, I felt they were only stalling us because they had secretly called the police. Thank goodness we didn’t get into trouble back there.” Janet held her chest and heaved a sigh of relief after she finished speaking.

She swallowed her husband’s words, hook, line, and sinker. This was because she knew that the Larson family used to be wealthy in the past. It seemed totally normal that Ethan had inherited such priceless jewelry from his mother.

“Well, keep the ring then.” Ethan smiled when he saw that she was calm and no longer uptight. He stared at her intently and buried his face into her neck. After inhaling her scent, he asked affectionately, “Babe, do you want to go back to my room tonight?”

Janet’s mind was still preoccupied with thoughts about her mother-in-law’s family. A lingering fear tugged at her heart as she stared at the blue diamond ring.

“Ethan, why didn’t you tell me that story earlier? I had no idea that I was wearing such a valuable ring. Honestly, I thought it was just a cheap one that you bought from a mere jewelry store. What if I had broken or lost it? I would have been so heartbroken,” Janet complained with a pout after pinching his arm.

“Isn’t it obvious why I didn’t tell you? Janet, you are so modest. Be honest with me. Would you have agreed to wear it if I told you how much it’s worth?”

Ethan’s pupils became darker and darker. He swallowed hard as he stared at her beautiful face. His mind was somewhere else. It had been a long time since he was intimate with her. A pleasurable burning sensation was already making its way to his groin. He badly wanted to make love to her.

“Gosh, that’s not an excuse. Have you forgotten that I told you to buy an ordinary ring? Why did you have to give me such a valuable one without my knowledge?” Janet glared at him with her eyes wide open. However, her expression was still gentle and soft.

She had tried to take off the ring from her finger as she spoke.

But Ethan held her hand. The light in the room reflected on the diamond, and then its blue light cast a shadow on his high nose bridge.

“I didn’t forget what you said at all. It’s just that this is your wedding ring—a symbol indicating that you are my wife. How could I have gotten a cheap one? Remember that you vowed on the altar to stay with me until death do us part. You are my wife, so you can’t take it off and return it to me even though you aren’t comfortable with the price. You are mine, always and forever,” Ethan uttered possessively.

The expression on his face was so serious like Janet had never seen before. His words were so hot that it seemed like they were being engraved in her heart with ease.

Janet found his words deadly charming. She was lost in his ambiance as she stared into his deep eyes. His firm tone was making her fall for him more.

It was obvious that Janet had been upset about what had happened between him and Charis, but she wasn’t thinking about that now. She was thinking about what he just said.

Not knowing what to say, Janet lowered her head to avoid eye contact with him. An inexplicable warmth was in her heart. She felt as if there was a red balloon that was increasing in size in her heart. Ethan’s words echoed in her head and she couldn’t help blushing.

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After a moment’s hesitation, Janet still took the dazzling blue diamond ring off despite Ethan’s objection and placed it on his palm.

Ethan let go of her and stared at the diamond ring. “What are you doing?”

Janet folded his fingers against the diamond ring and smiled at him. “The family heirloom must be of great significance to you. Judging from the expression of the shop attendant today, it looks like the ring is more precious than we think, so I can’t wear it.”

“I will never take back what I give others.” Ethan’s brows furrowed as he stared into her eyes.

However, he was relieved that Janet stopped asking him where he got the ring.

Janet bit her lip and looked at him, her eyes glinting with mischief. “I’m not returning it to you. I just want you to safely keep it for me. I’ll wear it on important occasions. It’s ridiculous to wear such an enormous ring every day knowing it’s the real deal.”

Ethan had no choice but to put the ring away. He decided it would be better for him not to give any valuable rings to Janet for the time being.

"All right then. I'll keep it in a safe place. You can wear it whenever you want," Ethan muttered, stroking the ring. "Let's go to the mall now. You pick a diamond ring you'd feel comfortable wearing every day, and I'll pay the bill."

After a moment's thought, Janet nodded. "It's already late now. Why don't we go tomorrow after I get off work?"

Then, she turned around to return to her room.

Ethan grabbed her elbow and dragged her to his side. "Are you playing dumb? What did I tell you?" he asked, raising his chin toward the bedroom.

"I don't know what you are talking about." Janet's cheeks turned red. She had clearly heard what Ethan said earlier.

Ethan was blocking her way to the bedroom. He folded his arms across his chest and looked into her eyes. "You're not mad at me, so you can move back into my room."

Janet looked up at him and snorted with disdain. "Since you lied to me again, I'm going to see how you behave before making a decision. Get out of my way. I have to go to work tomorrow."

Ethan's face drooped with disappointment. He sighed and stepped away, letting Janet return to her room.

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The next afternoon.

After Janet got off work, Ethan picked her up, and the two went to the shopping mall together.

Janet didn't want expensive rings from luxury brands, so Ethan took her to a small jewelry shop in the mall.

After examining the different rings displayed before her, Janet finally picked a simple ring with a small stone.

"That's the one." Janet picked it up and smiled. "I think it's beautiful."

Although the ring looked plain and simple, it was comfortable and gave her a sense of assurance.

She looked up at Ethan and asked, "Would you like to get a matching ring as well?"

The smile on Janet's face melted his heart. He nodded and tried to choose a matching diamond ring for himself.

Finally, Janet picked out a pair of affordable yet elegant diamond rings for themselves.

However, Ethan wasn't used to buying inexpensive jewelry, so he felt a bit uncomfortable.

"Put it on." Janet took out the ring from the brocade box and slid it on Ethan's finger

. An ecstatic smile emerged on her face as she placed her hand beside his and saw the two matching rings sparkling under the light.

Ethan couldn't help but smile at how happy she looked.

Just as they were about to leave after paying the bill, a woman walked into the shop. She was wearing a hat, a pair of sunglasses, and a mask.

The woman clutched the bag in her hand and hurriedly strutted forward.

Janet frowned when the woman walked past her. The dress she was wearing looked somehow familiar. Janet stopped and turned to look at her again.

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As soon as the woman entered the shop, she took out some jewelry from her handbag. It was quite apparent that the woman had come to the shop with the intention of selling something. She was such a nervous wreck that she clumsily let some of the jewelry fall to the ground. The crisp clang of the metal against the floor echoed around the place. The woman rushed to pick the item up and placed it on the counter, together with another pearl bracelet she had just taken out of her bag as well.

"Is that an acquaintance of yours?" Ethan asked when he saw Janet freeze on the spot. He looked in the direction of her gaze and saw the woman.

Janet couldn't be certain. She kept looking at her where she stood by the counter and said, "Her figure is reminiscent of that my foster mother."

The shop assistant examined the jewelry and gave the woman a price. "About one hundred thousand dollars."

Finally, the woman opened her mouth to speak. She picked up one of the items on the counter and bargained in an exasperated tone, "It can't be only worth one hundred thousand. These things are all real treasures."

Janet's expression froze when she recognized that the woman was none other than Fiona.

Fiona felt the gaze of someone behind her, so she took off her sunglasses and looked to see who it was. She then saw that it was Janet.

The two of them locked eyes with each other across the counter without saying a word. Fiona was utterly mortified.

She immediately turned her head. Judging from the astounded expression on Janet's face, she guessed that Janet might have recognized her.

Fiona was overwhelmed by shame. She bitterly regretted coming to this shop to pawn her jewelry.

The Lind family had recently found themselves in a precarious set of circumstances. Although Jocelyn had gained some benefits from Luke, it was still far from enough to maintain the business of the Lind Group.

Moreover, Luke was a shrewd man. He knew that the Lind Group was a lost cause. Every time Jocelyn asked him to invest, he would habitually avoid the topic or find an excuse not to do so.

Fiona just couldn't sit back and watch the Lind Group become bankrupt. She had no choice but to sell her personal belongings to fill in the extra cash that was needed to cover the running expenses of the household.

However, her reputation was extremely important to her. She used to just be an ordinary student. When she became the wife to the wealthy Mr. Lind, a barrage of women were green with envy at her fortune.

Because of this, her fear of being discovered to be struggling to make ends meet intensified tenfold because she had an appearance to keep up. That was why she disguised herself every time she came to pawn things. She really hadn't expected that she would run into Janet of all people.

She did her best to lower the brim of her hat to hide herself. She felt so awkward and didn't know where to put herself. At the same time, she couldn't help but glance back at Janet.

That little bitch seemed to be enjoying a good time recently. Even she looked a little confused now, she still looked great and as if she were glowing with happiness.

Fiona thought of her precious daughter, Jocelyn, who had just been discharged from the hospital. She was in the youth of her life but she had been hurt all because of Janet.

Fiona loathed Janet with such deep-seated intensity that her eyes became blood shot and she gritted her teeth. Had it not been for Janet, the Lind family would never have ended up in this situation.

But now, Ethan was with Janet. Fiona knew that it wouldn't do her any good if she made trouble for Janet at this time. She took all her jewelry off the counter and put them back into her handbag. She sneered at the shop assistant, "I won't sell them to you then."

As soon as she finished her snarky words, she left in a hurry, holding her handbag tightly in her grasp. When she passed Janet, she threw a contemptuous look at her.

Fiona returned home, filled with resentment.

As soon as she entered the lounge, Jocelyn ran downstairs. She was crying hysterically and threw herself into Fiona's arms. Tears streamed down her cheeks endlessly. It was quite obvious that she had been crying for quite a long time. She sobbed pathetically, her eyes full of despair, "Mom, I am ruined."

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Fiona was at a complete loss about what to do about this. She held the bawling Jocelyn in her embrace, and asked, "Honey, I am here for you. Tell me, what's going on?"

Because of her incessant sobbing, Jocelyn couldn't even bring herself to speak coherently. After somewhat calming herself down, she took out her phone. Her fingers were trembling. She said, "Have a look for yourself, Mom. I can't bear to look at it again, or I might want to kill myself."

After saying that, Jocelyn bent her knees and sat on the couch, covering her ears with both hands. She was shivering from head to toe.

Fiona's heart shattered when she saw the horrible state her daughter was in. She unlocked the phone and clicked on the first video.

In the video, she saw a group of several men with Jocelyn and the bottom of them all. They were having sex. Even though Jocelyn's hair was sweaty and her face red, it was quite easy to make out that it was her.

The video was so obscene that Fiona couldn't bear looking at it a second longer. The acts the men were performing on Jocelyn was simply unthinkable to Fiona. The video went on for three hours.

"That bitch Janet! This is all because of her! I will kill her!" Fiona was filled with such fiery rage that she couldn't bear to watch the video for a second longer. She turned the phone off and flung it violently onto the table. The screen shattered from the force.

Jocelyn covered her ears with her hands, cried miserably and said in a high-pitched voice, "It was those men who sent the video to me. They blackmailed me with the video. They said that they would post it online if I don't give them the money they've demanded. Those bastards! I am the one who hired them in the first place!"

Fiona tried to reign in her anger. She took a seat next to the wailing Jocelyn and comforted her. "Don't worry about this, honey. I will handle it for you. So far, I am the only person you have showed this to, right?"

"I didn't dare to tell Charis about it. I was afraid she might tell Luke. Luke can't see this, or he will be repulsed by me and leave me!" Jocelyn cried hysterically.

Jocelyn's face could be seen so clearly in the video. If the video was posted online, she didn't know how she could live with it. Every man in Seacisco would be disgusted with her, not to mention Luke.

No man could accept the idea of their girlfriend being gang-raped. Even though Luke had known that she had been with a lot of men before, the video was too obscene to even watch. She was completely disgusted with it when she looked at it.

Initially, she had been the one who hired those men to rape Janet and make a video of it so that she could blackmail her with it later. She had never thought that she would fall prey to her own plan.

Fiona got a throbbing migraine. She asked, "How much are they asking for?"

Jocelyn sobbed and wiped her tears away. "One hundred thousand dollars."

"Okay, we can figure it out. It's not that much." Fiona then continued with a more serious look on her face, "But they aren't upstanding people. They will keep asking us for money, and larger sums of money each time. We can't let that happen."

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"Aargh! What do we do then? We can't let them post that video! My whole life will come crashing down if that video gets out!" Jocelyn pulled her hair as she spoke. She had never been this desperate before. She was sweating, yelling, and crying hysterically all at the same time.

Her current countenance worried Fiona to death. She was scared that her precious daughter would suffer a mental breakdown because of this issue. To avoid this, she sighed deeply and said comfortingly, "I won't let that happen to you, honey. I'll think of a way to solve this issue before it escalates. Just trust me."

“You better hurry up, Mom! You better hurry up. Those guys gave me only five days to make up my mind. Time is not on our side, so think of something fast!” Jocelyn ordered disrespectfully.

Fiona became even more anxious after hearing her daughter’s order. She tapped her right foot on the floor nervously and thought for a while. All of a sudden, she said, “If we want to solve this matter once and for all, we have to get rid of those men. But how do we go about it? We don’t have any power or money to hire skillful assassins to do the dirty work. Worse still, we can’t ask Luke for help.”

The next second, she snapped her fingers as if she had realized something. She then held Jocelyn’s hand and added seriously, “We have to ask Charis for help.”

“That’s a very bad idea, Mom. What if she tells her father? I don’t trust her concerning something this big. She might not be on our side this time!” Jocelyn shook her head vigorously.

“I know we shouldn’t trust Charis completely, but we aren’t spoiled for choice now. She’s our only option.” Fiona had serious trust issues. But now that she was in a tight corner, she could only hope that Charis was as nice and kind-hearted as she seemed to be and that she would agree to help them.

She put a call through to her immediately.

Charis thought the matter through after hearing Fiona out. ‘Hmmm. Should I help these folks? I guess I should. If these blackmailers continue to disturb Jocelyn and Fiona, they wouldn’t have the time and energy to deal with Janet for me. My plan would flop again. No, I can’t let that happen. I have to help them.’

“Mrs. Lind, don’t worry. I’m sure there’s a way out. I can help you, but I can only help you investigate those men. Would that be enough for you?”

As much as Charis wanted to help them, she didn’t want to get her hands dirty. If anyone found out she was involved in such a thing, she would be in big trouble. Charis wanted to crush her enemies. However, she always made her moves discreetly because she had to protect her family’s name. She came from a decent family, so it would be unwise to pull their name into the mud because of such a frivolity.

Fiona was surprised by how Charis readily agreed to help. She was so relieved that she thanked her severally. It was indeed a big favor that Charis decided to provide them with valuable information.

Charis immediately contacted her private investigators. Within two hours, she found out the men’s personal information, plate numbers, and the places that they often went to.

Fiona and Jocelyn followed the men for three whole days.

From their activities, both women were able to gather that the men were jobless and that they slept in their rental apartment until noon. They were fond of clubbing all night in different nightclubs. All of them also reeked of alcohol and weed.

It was not until the fourth day that Fiona found that they often drove home drunk.

This silly behavior of theirs was a weak point. Fiona soon came up with a plan.

“Mom, have you figured out a way to deal with those men? If you haven’t, let’s just pay them off now. We have only one day left. We shouldn’t let the ultimatum elapse without doing anything!” Jocelyn was on tenterhooks.

She hadn’t been able to sleep well since she got that video clip. Her sleep was plagued with nightmares of her world being destroyed. Even during the day, she couldn’t concentrate on anything.

Fiona grabbed her hand and they went home. A devilish glint blazed in her eyes at this moment. She said to Jocelyn confidently, “Don’t worry, dearie. They won’t live to see the end of tomorrow.”

Without explaining further, she took out her phone and dialed a number. She then commanded, “Send someone to Ocean Wave Club tonight.”

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Fiona hired someone to tamper with the men’s car.

It was the dead of night and so silent you could hear a pin drop.

The men draped their arms over each other’s shoulders for support and sauntered out of the bar drunkenly. One of them made a suggestion, “I’ll drive. We can take a leisurely drive before we head home.”

A little while later, the car picked up the men from the curb side. The rest of the men were so drunk that they paid no attention to the driver.

The next day, the sky was bright blue and there was a bustling about the streets.

Fiona had enjoyed a restful sleep. She turned on the TV in a relaxed mood and smiled at what she saw.

A morning news was being broadcast. The report advised that a group of drunk vagrants had drove while intoxicated and caused a tragic accident. From the footage played on the news, smoke filled the sky when the fire was eventually extinguished. The car was battered and in several pieces. Fiona could vaguely make out several dead bodies littering the scene around the burnt car. All the men had met their demise in this accident.

The place of the accident was located in the suburbs, miles away from the city. The car had crashed and burned to ashes. When the policemen arrived at the scene, they were met by the sight of the flaming car and numerous dead bodies. There was no brake failure discovered. In the end, the police wrote it off as a simple accident caused by drunk driving.

“Mom, are they really dead?” Jocelyn asked from the staircases, dark circles around her eyes. In the course of just a few days, her face had become haggard because of the stress of the blackmail.

Fiona heaved a long sigh of relief, motioned the servant to bring the breakfast, and then walked up the stairs to grab hold of Jocelyn’s hand. She pulled her to sit down at the table and said, “Yes, they are dead. Eat a good breakfast first and then put on your makeup. It has been quite a few days since you last saw Luke, isn’t it? Just tell him that you have been feeling under the weather for the past few days. Don’t mention anything else to him.”



Jocelyn picked up a sandwich and ate it. The sandwich looked tantalizing to the taste buds but she was in no mood to enjoy it.

As a matter of fact, it had been almost a week since she last met with Luke. Men like Luke changed women even more often than they changed clothes. Jocelyn feared that some tramp had already stolen Luke away from her during this time.

“What about Janet? Mom, I can’t let her go for what she had done to me!” Jocelyn’s voice was full of unhidden contempt. She had already marked Janet as her mortal enemy.

“You just need to make sure you keep Luke. I will handle Janet,” Fiona said with a wicked smile while she also ate breakfast.

It had been such a piece of cake for her to get rid of the men who had been blackmailing her daughter. She already had a plan devised in her mind to deal with Janet.

Fiona thought that she could also use a similar trick to deal with Janet. A simple trick that could be falsified as an accident. However, since Janet seldom drove herself, it would be much more difficult to execute this kind of plan. Fiona would have to wait for the opportunity to arise.

Fiona decided to call Charis first.

“Charis, I have come up with the perfect plan.”

Fiona was well aware of the fact that she no longer had many connections so she needed to get help from Charis.

Charis didn’t expect that Fiona would come up with a plan so quickly, but she was happily surprised.

“That’s great news, Mrs. Lind. Janet should have been taught a good lesson a long time ago.” Charis didn’t press her for too many details.

To be cautious, she wouldn’t get herself involved in the details. However, she would help Fiona and Jocelyn create the opportunities that they required to carry out their revenge.

## [Chapter 257](#)

It was autumn in Seacisco. Golden, auburn and red leaves fell gently from the trees and scattered the streets below.

The sky was overcast and gloomy. Every person on the street had windbreakers on and walked briskly through the inclement weather.

Janet peered out of the window, wondering whether there would be heavy rains to follow this foreboding weather.

Tiffany’s usual serious voice suddenly came to her ears. “See me in my office, Lind.”

Everyone cast Janet a sympathetic look. Recently, Tiffany had been picking on every designer in the store. People were starting to wonder if she was perhaps going through menopause.

“Ms. Fisher, what can I do for you?” Janet recalled the work she had done over the past few days. She had completed every project as scheduled. She couldn’t think of a reason for Tiffany to criticize her.

“You have done a stellar job in the Perkins Bank project. A clothing brand of theirs wants to work with us. Have a look at their proposal yourself.” Tiffany sat cross-legged in the chair and handed Janet a document to peruse. Then she lowered her head and continued to look over the design drafts.

“So who will I work with this time?” Janet said, holding a large stack of documents in her hands. It was industry norm for there to usually be a chief designer and at least one lower level co-designer collaborating on one project together.

Tiffany raised her eyes, rested her elbow on the table, and said thoughtfully, “Since you have worked with the Perkins before, I am going to let you be the chief designer for this project.”

“But I’m just a mid-tier designer...”

She had never been a chief designer on any project, nor did she qualify for one; which meant that Tiffany was making an exception for her.

This could definitely attract jealousy from her colleagues.

“The Perkins Group made that request from us, so this is final. Well, you may leave now,” Tiffany said in a businesslike tone.

Janet had mixed feelings about Tiffany. Sometimes she felt that her supervisor was friendly and nice, other times she felt like she was cold and distant.

Janet thought about it for some time but still felt uneasy. She called Kent during her lunch break.

“Mr. Perkins, will you please stop doing this?”

When Kent heard her voice on the other end of the line, he was initially quite happy. But when he heard the frigid tone in which she questioned him, his heart sank.

“What exactly did I do? Would you do me the courtesy of not accusing me of something before you have ascertained whether I have actually done it?” Kent responded irately.

“Didn’t you tell Tiffany that you wanted me to be the chief designer on the new project?” Janet was confused and her tone softened.

“That has nothing to do with me. The clothing brand saw our advertisement on TV and admired the costume design. That’s why they came to you,” Kent snorted and said. “To put it bluntly, they really appreciate your design.”

Janet felt an inner sense of achievement and looked like she was over the moon. She finally managed to accept the job with ease.

Elsewhere, Charis got wind of the news quickly.

She had been keeping an eye on Janet and thought that it was imperative that she didn’t allow Janet to take on the project. Janet hadn’t been working in the Larson Group for too long yet she was already

about to become the chief designer of a project. If she went through with it, she would make a great leap forward in her career. Charis didn't want that to happen.

But she couldn't get involved directly. Thinking of this, she grabbed her phone and called one of the executives in the Larson Group, namely Adolf Pierce.

"Pierce, there is a project in the design department. I am privy to the fact that a mid-tier designer is going to be in charge of it. If news of this spread among the other employees of the company, they will be incensed. You are Fisher's boss. You ought to nip this in the bud," she said.

Adolf was Tiffany's superior. If he had something to say about it to her, she would definitely change her mind.

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After a moment's hesitation, Adolf said, "To be honest, this has happened before, Miss Turner. Some employees just have outstanding performance, and our company offers them the right opportunity and rewards to help them grow."

His statement irked Charis. "Pierce, I'm not asking for your opinion."

Adolf had been working in the Larson Group for many years, so he could tell Charis was up to something. It was most likely the employee had offended her.

Noticing his hesitation, Charis reminded him, "I helped you once when I was abroad. You owe me a favor."

Adolf was rendered speechless. He was indebted to Charis. Besides, she had made a great contribution to the Larson Group. Although she wasn't as powerful as Brandon and Garrett, she, too, held a significant position in the company. Therefore, Adolf didn't dare to offend her.

"Yes, Miss Turner. I'll take care of this." Adolf sensed something was wrong, but he had no choice but to listen to Charis.

He sighed and went to meet Tiffany.

Tiffany was reviewing the latest design drafts in her office. Her eyes widened when she saw Adolf. "Mr. Pierce, you can give me a call if you need anything. Why take the trouble of coming all the way here to see me?"

She had already reported to Adolf, and he could summon her to his office if he wanted to say anything. Tiffany couldn't understand why he was here.

"I just had lunch, so I thought of dropping by your office on my way back. Well, I heard something this morning and wanted to know more about it." Adolf pulled out a chair and sat opposite Tiffany.

It would be too formal and conspicuous to call Tiffany to his office, so he decided to come and meet her in person.

Tiffany studied his face for a moment and nodded earnestly. "Sure. What do you want to talk about?"

Adolf scratched his chin and went straight to the point. "I heard you've appointed Janet Lind as the head of the Perkins Group project. Well... the project is very important to us, and Janet is not qualified to handle it. She has been with us only for a few months. Other experienced designers are still working on the draft. Don't you think it's a bit hasty to make her in charge of this project?"

A frown lined Tiffany's forehead. "I think Janet is competent."

"It doesn't seem like a good idea to me. I feel it's a bit unfair to the other designers." Adolf shook his head worriedly.

Tiffany could tell that Adolf was firm with his decision. Besides, he was her superior, so she didn't bother arguing with him anymore. "Okay, I'll appoint an experienced designer to handle this project."

Hearing that, Adolf nodded and left.

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Janet was excited about the new project. She was happily sorting the documents she might need.

Just then, Tiffany called Janet to her office.

"Well, our superior still thinks you're a bit inexperienced to handle this project, so we have decided to appoint a more proficient designer to take over the project." Tiffany sighed and patted Janet's shoulder. "I'm sorry. You are capable and talented. I'm sure you'll get a chance to prove yourself in the future."

Janet's smile vanished, and the excitement in her heart died in an instant. She lowered her eyes to hide her disappointment. "I understand. I promise to work harder in the future."

Tiffany squeezed her shoulder reassuringly. "I'm sure you'll achieve something in this industry. It's all my fault. I shouldn't have told you about it until we finalized the decision."

Janet gave a wry smile and left Tiffany's office.

After taking deep breaths, she returned to the desk and slumped on the chair dejectedly.

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Once Janet had left, Tiffany instantly called the manager of the Perkins Group.

"What did you say?" The man blurted out after hearing the news, his voice raised. "You're changing the chief designer for our project?"

"I do apologize," Tiffany said calmly and tried to explain. "This decision was made by our senior executives. They feel that Janet's skills are too mediocre and inadequate, and they don't really think she'd be able to direct the whole venture properly."

In truth, Tiffany was pretty annoyed herself. She knew just how talented Janet was. Despite being a newcomer, Janet's designs were always imaginative and unique. Tiffany doubted that the newly-appointed chief designer could even come close to filling her shoes.

“Miss Fisher, we greatly appreciate Janet Lind, which was why we decided to cooperate with you in the first place. I kindly ask you to tell your executives that if she is replaced, then our company will terminate this project altogether.” The manager’s tone was firm and full of resolve.

Tiffany found herself smiling at that. “I understand. I will convey your sentiments right away.”

She was shaking her head as she hung up, marveling at Janet’s incredible luck.

She wasted no time and headed straight to Adolf’s office.

He looked pretty confused when she walked into the room. Why was Tiffany here again, and so soon? Hadn’t he made himself clear just now?

“Is there anything else?”

Tiffany raised her chin and spoke with confidence. “Yes, Mr. Pierce. I just got off the phone with the manager of the Perkins Group, and he wants me to inform you that they will be terminating the contract if we replace Miss Lind for the project.”

Adolf was visibly dumbfounded. He hadn’t expected Perkins Group to hold Janet in such high regard. He sighed and rubbed his temples, unsure of how to proceed. “I see,” he muttered under his breath. He hadn’t meant for things to go this far; he was simply doing Charis a favor. “Let me speak with the other executives and see how we’re going to handle this. Don’t contact the Perkins Group just yet.”

Adolf was walking out of his office the next second, down the corridor, and into an empty stairwell. He called Charis and repeated Tiffany’s words.

“What should we do now, Miss Turner?”

He didn’t want to offend anyone, especially someone from the higher-ups.

Charis was naturally pissed by this development. She silently cursed at the manager of the Perkins Group. Why the hell would they insist on having Janet lead the project?

Nevertheless, she couldn’t just let it all go up in smoke. At the end of the day, the interest of the entire company still came before her own.

“Forget it for now. Give them what they want and get Janet back as chief designer.”

Adolf strode back to his office, where Tiffany was waiting. He forced a tight smile and said, “We should honor our client’s request. Janet will still be the chief designer for the project.”

Tiffany nodded and smiled, then left without a word.

Janet was about to leave for the day when Tiffany called her to her office yet again.

She had already been there several times in the past few hours, and she had no idea what to expect this time.

Tiffany beamed at her when she entered. “You will be in charge of the project with Perkins Group,” she announced, sounding like she had just conquered a battle.

“Are you sure about this, Ms. Fisher?” Janet asked cautiously.

She felt as though her emotions had been taken for a roller coaster ride throughout the day.

“Yes, the Perkins Group stipulated that you will be their chief designer. Otherwise, they’re canceling the cooperation. You are good at what you do, Janet. You deserve this.” Tiffany nodded at her in encouragement.

Janet was still at a loss when she walked out of the room. A lot had happened that she didn’t know what to feel anymore.

When she finally processed all that had transpired, the only thing that remained in her heart was joy.

Her first thought was to call Ethan and share the delightful news with him, so she did just that.

“Ethan, let’s have dinner at a restaurant tonight. So much happened to me today, I think I need a sumptuous meal to calm myself down.”

## [Chapter 260](#)

“What would you like to eat?” Ethan had just finished a video conference. He stood in front of the floor-to-ceiling window, gazing at the scenic night view of the city.

In the horizon, he could see the thousands of lights that brought the city to life. The window reflected his tall figure in suit. His hair was combed back neatly. He was looking down, gazing at the city with sharp eyes, as though he was its ruler.

“Honestly, I want to have fish right now, but chicken sounds great too. Oh, and some steak would be amazing! What should we do? I can’t decide...” Janet mumbled over the phone. While she was speaking to him, she sounded like an adorable teenager.

A gentle smile appeared on Ethan’s lips as he stared at his watch and replied, “I’m getting off work in a half hour. Wait for me, okay?”

“Yup! I’ll be waiting for you.”

After the phone call, he returned to his seat, but he was no longer in the mood to work. He couldn’t keep his eyes off his cellphone.

This afternoon, Ethan heard about the news that Janet had gotten replaced. He had planned to do something about it, but he soon learned that the Perkins Group insisted on having her lead the project. He was really happy for her.

When the thought crossed his mind, he smiled again. ‘That’s the woman I love. She’s such a talented designer. She doesn’t even need my help with her career,’ he thought.

But Ethan resolved that he had to investigate why exactly Janet almost got replaced.

He shot a cold glance at his assistant and said, “Tell Adolf Pierce to my office. Now.”

Not long after, Adolf arrived and stood before Ethan. He was trembling and sweat was running down his back.

“Who told you to replace Janet Lind this afternoon?”

‘Normally, a senior executive like Adolf should be focusing on more important work. Why on earth would he notice Janet?’ Ethan wondered.

Adolf wiped the beads of cold sweat breaking out on his forehead, unable to look Ethan in the eye.

He couldn’t dare tell him that Charis was the one who asked him to do so. And because he didn’t want to offend Charis and the Turner family, he had to take the blame himself.

“I’m so sorry, Mr. Larson. I just happened to find out that a mid-level designer was set to lead an important project, and I didn’t think it was a good idea. That’s why I interfered. I was merely looking after the company’s best interests. If news of this broke out, the other employees would feel it’s unfair. Not only will this matter hurt Janet Lind, but it will also damage the company as a whole.”

Ethan stood up, towering over Adolf. When he looked down at the man, the latter was so daunted that a shiver ran down his spine.

“Is that so?” Ethan could tell that this wasn’t as simple as it seemed.

Adolf swallowed the lump in his throat. “Mr. Larson, it really was my idea. I wouldn’t lie to you, would I?”

“Adolf, you’ve been working here for years.” Ethan lifted his chin; his eyes, filled with animosity.

‘It seems that Adolf plans to keep his mouth shut, but I don’t have any evidence to prove that he’s lying. I can’t punish him, because in all fairness, he gave me a perfect excuse,’ he thought.

He decided not to say another word and just let Adolf go for the time being.

Just as Adolf reached the door, it was opened from the outside.

“Brandon, I have a document here that needs your signature,” Charis said with a calm smile.

The moment she learned that Ethan had called Adolf to his office, she was so nervous. She feared that Ethan might find out what she had done. Thus, she came up with an excuse, so that she could see what was going on.

“Mr. Pierce, what brings you here?” Charis nudged Adolf, and the latter winked at her, implying that he didn’t rat her out.

She heaved a sigh of relief inconspicuously before walking into Ethan’s office, only to find that he was on his phone, seemingly chatting with someone. There was a rare smile printed on his face.