

# Fake Fiancee

By : vanessaxoxo

(Complete) ~ The oh-so-famous actor and model, Henry Parker, needs to find a fake fiancée to help boost his reputation. A girl who is innocent, well-liked and not famous. Enter Lainie Watson. She's just your average girl who is looking forward to going to college. But how can she go to her dream college when she can't afford it? ... What happens when Lainie agrees to become Henry's fake fiancee for college funds? Will they be able to act in love or will they truly fall in love? NOTE: The story is continuously being edited (little bits here and there).



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# Chapter 1: Proposition Engagement

**A/N: Ok, so I'm new to booksie and I've finally published the first chapter of my story! I hope you guys like it! :) I know it's short, sorry! Should I continue the story? Comments and criticism would be great! By the way ... 'Lainie' is pronounced LAY-NEE.**

## Proposition Engagement

*Hollywood, Los Angeles.*

"Have you seen the papers?!"

Shaking my head slowly, I sipped my cup of coffee. Who cared about the papers? Oh well, Steve did. He was all about reputation and looks these days and it was frustrating to be honest. I think it had something to do with his boring lifestyle where he worked all the time. He could really learn to let loose once in a while. Maybe I would have to be the one to teach him that. I brightened at the thought of changing my manager's ways, but it quickly disappeared once he started talking again.

"People are doubting you right now Henry!" He chastised. Ouch. His voice was quite loud and I had only just woken up. It was only ten in the morning for god's sake! Big-time stars like me needed as much dozing off as they could. How the hell did he wake up so early anyway? "You might be a great actor and all, but you have to keep up your reputation!"

"I am keeping up my reputation," I replied easily. I tilted my head to the side (which kind of hurt by the way) and watched, amused, as his face became more livid. "As a *ladies man*."

Steve let out a loud, exasperated sigh and rolled his eyes. Typical. "Not that reputation! I'm good with you being seen as a bit of bad boy but not the male version of Lindsey Lohan!"

I made an innocent face. "What's wrong with that? What's wrong with clubbing?"

Steve growled and shoved the paper in my face. It made me go cross-eyed as I tried to catch a hold of the headlines. "Tequila shots? Five girls hanging from your arms? No wonder you couldn't get out of bed today! *Literally!*"

I shrugged as I remembered being woken up by Steve. He had stormed into my bedroom, pulled open the curtains so the sunshine would blind me and repeatedly yelled at me for getting wasted from last night's party. When it was obvious that I wouldn't get up, he proceeded to slap me a few times on the face. He had ordered me to get out of bed, except the problem had been that I *couldn't*, so Steve had been given the tough job of dragging me out of bed and to the ensuite. I had taken a cold shower after that so I could wake up. It was still a miracle that I could actually get into the shower.

As I chuckled about my absurd morning, Steve's face changed. Uh oh. I knew that look. He had the '*I have an idea*' look and no offence, but he never had the best ideas.

"Ok," he said, the tone of his voice all business-like. "Look here - We're going to get your reputation back. Instead of the status as a ladies man, we're going to change it to *engaged*."

He grinned so wide, which made me want to slap it off his face. I scowled. Was he kidding me?! I don't do relationships. No way. No girl was interesting enough to make me stay faithful. They were all selfish and most

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of all, fake. All the girls I had been with mostly wanted me for my money and of course, my god-ass body. I knew no girl would like me for anything other than that and so, I resorted to one night stands. The girl had the hots for you, you had some fun for the night and you never saw her again so she didn't bother you for money. The never-ending cycle worked out perfectly for me and I had no reason to change it.

Steve cheerfully started explaining. "Calm down, your face dropped a hundred storeys. It's not going to be real, just real to the rest of the world. We'll hire a girl to become your fiancée -"

"Jessica Alba!" I immediately exclaimed. Yes, she was every man's dream. She was gorgeous and tantalizingly exotic and had always been on my top list of hottest women.

"She's taken you idiot! And she has a kid! Anyway, not someone famous. Someone who is not like Lindsey Lohan, someone sweet, who the press will like."

"That sounds incredibly boring," I remarked with a frown. Sweet? Why would you want sweet when you could have sexy? "Why that type of girl?!"

Steve looked at me like I was an idiot. In his mind, I probably was. "Well, everyone will think you're serious about relationships since you've finally settled down and not with someone who's just rich and hot."

"Everyone will think otherwise when it ends," I pointed out. He obviously hadn't thought of everything, so I felt quite proud of myself for pointing out that little flaw in his grand plan. If this was to be a *fake* engagement, it would have to end sometime right? And the press would think I was a player for leaving the girl *again*.

Steve shook his head. Ok ... so maybe he had thought of everything. "The break up will be seen as thus: your fiancée realises she can't marry you after all because dating someone famous won't allow her to have her dream job, which would be something simple, such as a doctor. It will make you look like a good guy, where you did nothing wrong ... and oh guess what? I have just the right person!"

My frown deepened. I didn't think Steve's perspective of the '*right person*' was the same as mine, which sucked. An image of a dull girl with a pair of glasses and heavy metal braces came into mind. I shuddered. "But we haven't even interviewed anyone."

"We don't need to interview anyone! My niece is perfect! I don't know if she'll agree but I think she would, if I offer to cover her college fees. I know it's her biggest wish to go to Harvard. I know she'll get in too; she's so smart."

I was about to scoff, "She can't even afford college?!" but Steve had disappeared - probably to ring up his poor niece.

\* \* \*

### ***Cadillac, Michigan.***

Dusk soon settled over my bedroom, making me sigh with relief. Now I wouldn't have to stay up to finish my college applications. Smiling proudly, I decided to head downstairs to grab myself some orange juice to celebrate. As I passed the lounge room, my eyes strayed to the two people entwined on the sofa: my mother and another one of her younger, gorgeous dates. God, how public could she get? I cleared my throat loudly as I walked past them into the kitchen just for fun. As I poured juice for myself in the kitchen, I heard a deep voice from the lounge.

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"I'll see you later, Hazel?"

I heard my mother giggle girlishly. I could even imagine her twirling a lock of her blonde curls. "Oh yes!"

I rolled my eyes. My mother is a ... slut. Even though I don't like cursing, it's what she is. I felt like strangling her most of the time because she was like that. Usually mothers were kind and protective and baked cookies for you when you came back from school. Not my mother. I was basically stuck with a teenage girl.

"Lainie, make dinner will you? I'm starving."

"Yeah," I muttered. See what I meant? It felt like I was the mother sometimes. I took out leftover lasagne and watched as my mother laid on the couch and put a dainty hand to her forehead. She sees herself as very delicate. She's also undeniably very beautiful - glossy hair, long lashes, porcelain skin and a nice body even at the age of thirty five. People used to think she was my older sister. God no. Meanwhile, I was a brunette with brown eyes and slightly olive skin - traits inherited from my father. Life wasn't fair sometimes, but I guess it's a good thing. If I looked like my mother people might see me like her and I didn't want to be seen like her. *Ever.*

My father on the other hand, had been a generous, loving father. He had worked as a doctor. There was one time when my parents had been in love, but not now. Not ever since he died.

The ring of the phone interrupted my train of thought and I picked it up. "Hello?" I said breezily.

"Lainie! Is that you? Wow, you sound old!"

I laughed as I recognised the familiar voice. My uncle Steve, who I haven't seen for years was calling me while I waited for the lasagne to cook. I rarely saw him as he was always busy with his job. "Hi Steve! Yep, it is me and I'm pretty sure I still sound the same."

I heard him chuckle. "How's my older sister, hey? Is she behaving?"

"You know mother never behaves," I murmured, frowning. I wish she did though, because life would be so much better that way. I could have a friend to talk to, she would cook for once, look out for me ...

"TouchÃ©," Steve replied in a crisp tone. "Well anyway, the reason I've called is because I have a proposition for you."

I tensed automatically. Since when did uncles make propositions for you? "Proposition?"

"Yes, it's a big one but I *really* hope you'll agree to it."

I nodded cautiously and twiddled a lock of my hair with my free hand. "Ok, I'm listening ..."

"Alright I'll get to the point. You know how I'm Henry Parker's manager? Yes well, at the moment his reputation is in shambles, so I've been thinking ... a fake engagement will help boost his reputation up. A girl who isn't famous but sweet, smart and not Hollywood fake if you know what I mean."

"I get it," I said, a grin lighting up my face. "You want me to think of someone?"

Steve sighed. "No, I've already thought of someone. You."

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"*Me?*" I squeaked. Why would he pick *me*?! How in the world did he think I was sweet? I could be pretty sarcastic and mean sometimes, and to top it off, I got annoyed pretty easily.

"Before you say no, I'm prepared to cover your fees for college if you agree to this," Steve quickly added.

I gasped involuntarily. I had a really good chance of getting into college and now Steve was planning to pay for my fees. Could life get any weirder? Or better ...

"How long would I have to do it?" I asked in a whisper.

"About three or four months?"

I thought carefully and bit my lip in the process. Three or four months pretending to be Henry's fake fiancée wouldn't be too bad I guessed. I've heard of him, but I had no idea what he looked like and what his personality was like too. If I wanted to get into my dream college, I would have to make some sort of sacrifice right? But this was a *big* sacrifice. Could I do it? Was I ready to be thrown into the world of the rich and famous?

I could feel my thoughts running in circles. It was giving me a headache. I rubbed my temple and thought about my college plans now. I had some money for college and that was only my savings from working as a waitress for two years. I didn't have much. Then there was the small amount of money my father had left me. It was a lot to me but it didn't make that much of a difference. My mother used her pay checks from work on brand new clothing and fancy dinners with her handsome dates so I never got money off her.

With a frown, I realised I was kind of poor. Hah!

I really, *really* needed the money for college funds but agreeing to Steve's proposition seemed a bit drastic. But I could handle it right? Just a fake relationship. Fake. I would have to act like I liked the guy for a few months and then I would be able to go to college, finish my Master's degree in Harvard and finally have a place of my own. I would in no way be tied to my mother. A smile blossomed on my face. I definitely could do it.

"Count me in Steve."

## Chapter 2: Welcome to L.A

**AUTHORS NOTE: Sorry guys, this chapter is a tad boring and a bit rushed, so the next chapter you can all meet Henry Parker!**

### Welcome to L.A

"I'll miss you, honey!"

I rolled my eyes at the annoying sound of my mother's voice claiming she would miss me. She would only miss me because I was the one who did the chores and the cooking.

"Yeah, see you."

With that, I ignored my mother's pout, grabbed my entire luggage and went through the gates, since they were calling my flight to Los Angeles. I know it's rude but whatever. My mother didn't care about anything other than herself. If she cared for me as well, she would have gotten a better job than the hot secretary, Miss Campbell, at my high school.

That was why I had to do this, to help myself achieve my goal - getting into Harvard. Harvard was my dream college because not only was it an Ivy League, but because my father went there. I hardly remember him, but I know he was intelligent and caring - nothing like my mother. But he had died when I was six and since then started my lonely life.

It took nearly two hours before we could clamber onto the plane - to me it felt like forever, though. Steve had booked me a first class seat, but it was a shame I was planning on sleeping the whole plane ride so I couldn't admire all facilities I was able to use. Once I took my seat in the comfortable leather seat, I leaned my head against the palm of my hand, closed my eyes and let myself escape reality.

\*

When I had finally woken up, the plane was landing at LAX. I looked out of the window of the plane to see sunshine and smiled. I couldn't wait to see Los Angeles. I barely ever travelled, since my mother didn't care about what I wanted. Once we landed and I finally was able to hop out from the stupid plane, I searched for Steve. I hadn't seen him in three years, since he had become so busy with being a manager for celebrities.

The crowd was thick so I did the thing I see all the times in movies - I stepped onto a nearby seat and stood up, so I could see over the crowd better. People stared at me and I ignored them.

"Lainie!"

Turning around at the sound of my name being called, I found my uncle. He still looked the same. It's probably the 'Campbell never-aging and always looking beautiful gene.'

"Hey Steve."

"Great to see you, Lainie!"

He opened his arms wide for a bear hug and I laughed. After we let go, Steve smiled and grabbed my luggage, so I was only left holding my duffel bag.

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Ok then.

"You're getting taller, Lainie," he observed.

I frowned. I was one of the shortest people in my grade since I was quite petite. "I know I'm short, you don't need to lie."

Steve laughed. "Well, you are short, but before you were shorter."

We continued to catch up as we walked out of LAX and to his car. His sleek, black, Mercedes Benz C-Class Sedan.

"Nice car," I say, tilting my head and assessing it.

"Thanks." Steve grinned and slid in. I got in too, feeling very uncomfortable. I didn't want to ruin anything. It was just so â€¦ clean.

I was used to the old aqua Corolla my mother and I shared. He turned up the radio and we sang along to 80's music. Yes, that was one thing we had in common - loving 80's music.

The car ride was cheery and fun and he took me along a little tour of Beverly Hills, down Rodeo Drive. We passed celebrities homes including Jennifer Aniston, George Clooney, Janet Jackson and one of my favourite comedians, Eddie Murphy. I admired all the architecture of their mansions and even wrote down some ideas for my designs in my notebook (to which Steve laughed at).

So overall, it was a great drive.

"Lainie," Steve said, pointing up ahead. "There's the house you'll be staying from now on."

I looked up, out of the window and the sun was setting. Streams of light shone onto the large white mansion where I was staying at.

The driveway was huge and it was paved around a large fountain, where water was pouring out of a frog's mouth. The front door had a stained glass panel and two pot plants sat next to the large marble columns on the front porch.

As Steve opened the imposing gates to the mansion, I gawked. I couldn't believe I was staying in a mansion.

After parking the car in front of the porch, we hopped out and dragged my luggage to the door. Steve fished out a set of keys from his pocket and unlocked the front door. He flicked on the lights to reveal the inside - shiny tiled floors, high ceilings with golden chandeliers, and pearl-coloured walls. The windows down the hallway were large and rectangle shaped with white panes. It showed a great view of the backyard, where a weirdly shaped pool sat, sparkling. There were trees and pot plants too, with dark brown resting chairs and white large umbrellas for shade.

The house was so beautiful. If the house was this beautifully decorated, the owner must be a good person. I felt slightly better at the thought.

"Henry!" Steve yelled. "Get your butt down here!"

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I flinched as I realised I was going to meet the guy I would have to pretend to be engaged to for the next few months.

Steve told me to leave my bags by the door and led me to the lounge room to my right. The lounge was spacious and quite modern, with the sleek LCD hanging on the wall and the red leather sofa shaped in a U shape. God, the room was bigger than the kitchen and lounge room put together back at home!

I took a seat with Steve and as he started talking about the fake engagement, I heard a voice behind me say, "So you're my fake fiancÃ©e."

## Chapter 3: Playing With Fire

**AUTHOR'S NOTE: Hey guys, hope you enjoy chapter three! You get to see Lainie's fiesty side! xoxo**

### Playing With Fire

I jumped in my seat and turned around to find possibly one of the sexiest guys I've ever met. I admit, I had searched him in Google Images before I came, so I knew what I would be dealing with, but he was just so much better in person!

His jet black hair curled slightly at the ends and his liquid brown-gold eyes twinkled as he assessed me. A smirk sat on his sharp face and his well-defined muscles showed through his thin white V neck tee.

I cursed myself, horrified I was actually checking him out. But I knew I wasn't going to fall for him - I wanted a real guy, a gentleman. That guy who tells you you're beautiful everyday, kisses you in the pouring rain and remembers your birthday (yes, I'm a bit of a romantic) but by the looks of it, Henry was nothing like that.

I mean, c'mon, a gentleman definitely doesn't smirk. So, I straightened my back and lifted my gaze to his. *Be confident, Lainie!*

"You must be Henry," I answered coolly.

Out of the corner of my eye, I could see Steve's bemused face at our odd exchange.

"Of course, who wouldn't know me?"

With that, he strode carelessly into the kitchen, while I sat there just a little bit flustered. Ok, so the thought about an owner of a beautiful mansion must be beautiful (inside) too, was definitely wrong.

Steve sighed. "Ignore his narcissism. I'll take your bags up to your room and you can go into the kitchen and maybe talk to him."

I grimaced. "Can't I see my room now?"

Steve laughed my reaction. "Later."

I groaned loudly, just so he could hear how much I didn't want to talk to Henry, even though I knew it wouldn't work. I trudged into the kitchen and found Henry leaning against the kitchen counter, sipping a glass of water.

My entire mood had changed since I had met Henry in a bad way, of course.

I plopped myself on the kitchen counter stool and an awkward silence followed. Well, it was awkward to me but to Henry I guess it wasn't, since he was staring out of the kitchen window without a care in the world and into his fabulous backyard.

He turned back to me and studied me, making me uncomfortable. *Too* uncomfortable.

"You know what's a shame?" Henry asked.

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Wow, he actually didn't say something â I mean. Even though he had only said a sentence to me before, it had made me immediately assume he was a cad.

"What?"

"When your fake fiancÃ©e isn't even pretty," he replied, shaking his head sadly at me. I didn't think of myself as pretty but did he really have to say it to my face? So â he was still the same irritating guy, eh?

"You have a flat as a pancake chest," he continued, grimacing.

I clenched my fist. *OK, that was it!*

"Excuse me?!" I exclaimed. "For your information, I am not! Just look at you! I don't know how you won the award for hottest bachelor of the year; you're not even hot."

Alright, so that was just a teeny lie, but I wasn't going to back down from the egoistic jerk.

"Ouch," Henry replied, running a hand over his biceps. "Are you blind? Cant you see my baby?"

"You mean your biceps?"

He nodded. "Want to see my other babies?"

I was confused for a second, but then he started to lift his shirt up and I yelped and covered my eyes. I mean, who knew what was under there?! He probably had some sort of *sixteen*-pack. Even though all I wanted was a gentleman, hot, hard abs unfortunately made it as one of my weaknesses.

"Why not? Too much for you to handle, pancake?"

\* \* \*

It had been an hour since Henry had called me 'pancake.' It was now his permanent nickname for me.

We really didn't get along. How could I live with the douche? He was someone who expected everything to be done for him, just like my mother. I sighed. But then, I had lived with my mother for the past eighteen years, so I guess I could deal with him for a few months. But he was just so â aggravating!

I had spent the last hour unpacking my stuff and checking out my new bedroom. The colour of my walls was periwinkle and the ceiling was white with gold swirly patterns, which actually made me crack a smile. It was of generous space, but not too big, which I liked too. A large oak table sat facing the window with a spinning teal chair. I smiled and realised Steve must've put the table there, since he knew I was serious about my studies in architecture. At least I had a working space!

I also had a soft cream rug near my queen sized bed. My room actually felt quite comfortable, but I had added a few homey touches such as my poster of Glee, my favourite TV show. They really commented a lot on society but in an amusing way. It was my guilty pleasure.

I was in the kitchen cooking at the moment, since I had volunteered to make dinner. Both Steve and Henry were all too happy to let me explore the kitchen. I was used to it anyway, but I also planned to give Henry a taste of his own medicine. I had *accidentally* chucked in more chilli than I was supposed to for Henry's slice of enchilada.

## Fake Fiancee

Right at that moment, he staggered into the kitchen. "Phew! What's that smell?! Its definitely not pancakes, that's for sure!"

"Enchiladas," I replied, ignoring his pancake joke.

"Mexican, huh?" Henry asked. "Hmm â I'll need something sweet afterwards. Maybe pancakes â !?"

At first I was about to say, "we're having ice cream after," but I realised Henry's mind was nowhere near food. "Ugh, never, you sick pervert!" So he was conceited *and* he had a dirty mind! Well, I guess I shouldn't be surprised, right? Usually all players have dirty minds.

Henry smirked. "It's all good, you don't need to worry. Why would I want to sleep with a pancake anyway?"

"I'm not like the Barbie dolls you sleep with, got it?" I snapped while plating up for dinner.

Steve came into the kitchen holding papers and frowning. "What about Barbie dolls?"

"Steve, can you please tell Henry to stop calling me pancake?" I asked politely. Steve had to be on my side since he *was* my uncle. Family beats workmate right?

"Why are you calling her pancake?" Steve asked, facing Henry.

I expected Henry to at least have the decency to look scared but nope, he just grinned! "She has a flat as a pancake chest," he replied easily.

Steve looked incredulous, and then roared with laughter. Great, he wasn't on my side after all. So much for family duty! "Sorry," he finally choked out. "But its just â you two look like an old married couple arguing."

"I would never marry him, he's such a perv!" I exclaimed.

"And she's such a pancake!" Henry yelled, looking equally as horrified.

I sighed exasperatedly at him. "That doesn't even make sense!"

This made Steve laugh again so I grabbed the cups in my hand, ready to take them to the table. "Take the plates, Henry," I ordered.

I saw Henry roll his eyes and I walked off first and into the dining room, where Steve was looking through papers and had just finished speaking on his Blackberry. "Henry, hurry up!" I called, since he was carrying the food. I was hungry and so was Steve, but most importantly, I couldn't wait to see Henry jump up and down like a monkey when he swallows all the chilli I had given him.

Henry then came in and set the plates, but he gave me his plate. "No, this is yours," I said. "I put more chilli in mine because I like it that way."

Henry shrugged and switched them. I smiled as he didn't question any further and looked up beneath my lashes to see if Henry had taken a bite, but he hadn't. He was listening intently to what Steve was saying. I bit into my enchilada and chewed.

"Ok you two," Steve addressed. "About the engagement, we're going to announce it next week on Saturday and meanwhile â !"

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But I couldn't hear Steve anymore. I could only concentrate on the burning, hot sensation in the back of my throat. I knew enchiladas were chilli, but it wasn't this chilli! Oh no ...

I looked up, horrified to see Henry trying to contain a smile as he watched me, whilst pretending to listen to Steve. He then took a dramatic large bite out of his and smirked at me. *What.did.he.do!*

I fanned my mouth and grabbed my glass of water, chugging it down as fast as I could, but it wouldn't dull the intense burning! I felt like strangling Henry since he had beaten me at my own game. He had probably swapped the piece of enchilada on the plates, that jerk! I pushed myself out of my seat and rushed into the kitchen to grab more water. I added loads of ice and drank the whole cup. Well, it took about three cups before I could actually talk.

Once I had finished, Henry came into the kitchen, hands in his pockets. "What happened, Lainie?" he asked, faking concern.

"You *know* what happened!" I hissed, narrowing my eyes at him. God, I could still taste the chilliness in my mouth and down my throat, and trust me, it wasn't pleasant.

He laughed, amused. "Ooh, you're quite feisty you know?"

Yeah, I knew I could be feisty when I wanted to be. "Don't do that again, ok?"

He made an innocent look while I glared. "Do *what*? You said you added more chilli to your plate, right? Why are you blaming *me*?!"

I groaned and stomped out of the room, but not before screaming, "I hate you!"

## Chapter 4: Not So Sweet Revenge

**AUTHORS NOTE:** Thank you to everyone who has read my story, I really appreciate it! Also, I want to post up pictures of characters later and I need a guy around 30-40 who looks young and would suit a manager. Also, I have someone for Henry, but I don't think it really suits him ... so any suggestions/pictures would be great! I hope you like this chapter :) xoxo

### Not So Sweet Revenge

Waking up to the sunshine lifted my spirits. Henry and I were supposed to be hitting the beach today to hang out, so people can see how 'in love' we are. Yes, that means we have to act like we're in love, which means things like physical contact. Also, the paparazzi would most likely be there, and we were to continue to ignore them and pretend we're in love. Obviously, it had been Steve's idea.

Ew, just ew.

I grabbed fresh clothes to wear and my bright yellow towel and headed to the bathroom. Even if we were going to the beach, I still liked my morning showers. Heading out of my room, I reached the bathroom two doors down and quickly turned on the shower and got in. I was definitely not using the large, square marble bathtub sitting in the middle of the room. It was just so â fancy.

The shower was nice and warm, just how I liked it, even if it was a hot day. I have no idea what I would do without hot water. As the water trickled down my face, I closed my eyes and sang the chorus of 1234 by Plain White T's.

*"There's only one thing â to do ... three words ... for youuu â !"*

*"I love youuu â !"*

*"There's only one way â to say â those three words â that's what I'll do â !"*

*"I love youu â !"*

That was when I froze. Why were the 'I love you' bits deeper than my own voice â !? Opening my eyes, I turned to find a smirking Henry watching me as he leaned against the bathroom doorway. I screamed like hell and desperately attempted to cover my body while doing so.

"GET OUT! GET OUT NOW! HOW DARE YOU!"

"Not my fault," Henry replied easily. "You left the door unlocked."

"I DON'T CARE! GET OUT! I PROMISE YOU IF YOU DON'T I'LL KICK YOU *DOWN THERE!*"

Henry hesitated, making me scream at him again. Finally, he bounded out of the room, scared I would fulfil my promise. Once he was gone, I groaned and fanned the blush from my cheeks. No one had ever seen me without clothes, except my parents when I was a baby. Great, my enemy had seen me naked. He was going to torture me.

Once I finished my shower, I headed downstairs in my black and white polka dot bikini with a tank top and board shorts over, the ones which reached halfway down your thigh. As I entered the kitchen, Henry's tan

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cheeks turned a faint pink. Noticing this, I raised my eyebrow. Did Henry Parker just blush? He was the most confident guy in the world and he *blushed*?!

"Your cheeks are pink because it's hot, right?" I said, just to tease him. I knew he wasn't pink from the temperature. It had something to do with me, but I had no idea why. Was it because I had said I would kick him where the sun doesn't shine?

"Yeah ..." Henry replied quietly. "Umm, I'm going to take a shower too. Make me breakfast, pancake."

I rolled my eyes and opened the fridge to look for something to eat as Henry sprinted upstairs. Then, I remembered something. Last night, I had thought of ways to get my revenge on Henry and I had come up with two ideas â so far.

I had poured water into half of a bowl and placed it in the freezer to freeze. Now I was supposed to pour milk and cereal over the water and make it look like a normal breakfast. Grinning ecstatically, I grabbed the bowl from the fridge and poured milk and Crunchy Nut. I put one bowl for me as well and started eating mine. When Henry finally came downstairs for breakfast, I laughed inside.

Oh this was going to be good. "There's your breakfast," I said, nodding to his bowl.

Henry nodded and sat down next to me. He stared down at his bowl, and then took it to the sink. "What are you doing?" I asked, panicking. Had he noticed something?

Henry shook his head at me. "I'm allergic to nuts, you pancake."

He was? Since *when*?! "No, no, you should eat it," I tried desperately.

"And make my handsome face swell? Nice try."

I watched, horrified, as Henry poured his milk and Crunchy Nut down the sink. Then, he started laughing hard, until he nearly choked. "Oh god! Was this your way of getting revenge on me?!" Henry motioned to the frozen water in the bowl while I turned away. Dammit, why?!

"You are too funny, Lainie," Henry said, still laughing. "C'mon, I want to get going."

I was about to complain because I wanted to finish my breakfast but then I realised I wanted to see my plan B in action. I giggled and followed him out of the mansion, half skipping. I usually didn't skip around so it meant I was either out of my mind or really happy. It was the second one in my opinion. "Tell me pancake, why do you look so happy?" Henry asked curiously.

"Nothing," I replied innocently. "What's wrong with being happy?"

Henry just shrugged. As we reached the garage, I immediately walked over to silver his McLaren F1. It was a bit of trouble, but last night while Henry was sleeping, I had managed to shove oranges in his exhaust pipe. I couldn't wait to see the look on his face when he finds out oranges are in his baby's exhaust pipe.

"As much as we both love my McLaren, we're using the Ferrari today."

I turned to him, panicking again. No way! No way was I letting *this* prank slip! "But don't you want girls swarming around you and gushing about your awesome car?" I queried. I crossed my fingers and prayed he would just agree and get into the McLaren.

## Fake Fiancee

Henry shook his head. "No way am I parking my McLaren in the car park at the beach. People might destroy my baby!"

"But I want to go in the McLaren!" I spluttered.

"No, now get in before I make you," Henry ordered.

I stomped my foot. Yes, I actually did. Why wasn't luck on my side today? First, him being allergic to nuts and now him wanting to drive his Ferrari! UGH! I grumbled and hopped into the passenger seat of the stupid red Ferrari.

\* \* \*

"*Oh my god, it's Henry Parker!*"

I could hear squeals and whispers of the girls on the beach everywhere. I could also see the death glares I was getting from his biggest girl fans.

"What is he doing with that trashy girl?"

"She's probably just his cousin, don't worry!"

I really felt like slapping them in the face. They were way too insecure and they had to realistic. Would they really think Henry Parker would date them? I ignored them as I walked barefoot down the sand of Venice Beach, I felt a strong arm wind around my waist. It was Henry. "*Hey!*"

"You idiot, we're supposed to be acting here, remember?" Henry whispered in my ear.

Oh. I had forgotten about that. So I let Henry have his disgusting arm around my waist until we got to the water. As I gazed out at the ocean, from the corner of my eye I saw Henry stripping off his shirt and leaving it on the hot sand. I gawked. He was perfection - a Greek God (although I would never tell him that).

"Am I handsome or what?" My head snapped up to look at him and I found him smirking while he ran a hand down his arms. "I guess little pancake does check me out after all," Henry added when I couldn't say anything.

"I do not! I was just *â* thinking about something .." I lied. I really hoped I wasn't blushing because that would give it away.

"While your eyes were on my six pack?" Henry retorted.

I stuck my tongue at him, not knowing what to do, making him laugh. We raced into the water together and I won, which meant he was supposed to give me a piggyback. Well, I said he owed me ten bucks, but Henry said to do something 'cute' for the witnesses on the beach. Even though I didn't want to, I managed to sit on his shoulders. When he stood up, I squealed.

I felt so tall. I accidentally said that out loud making Henry laugh again. He ran through the water making me shriek and telling him to stop.

I could see people taking pictures of us and the insecure girls looking totally furious. I smirked at them and felt like making them even more jealous. Just for fun. So I hopped off his shoulders and hugged him *â* for a long time.

## Fake Fiancee

"Is this part of the act or did you want to do this?" Henry whispered huskily in my ear.

I rolled my eyes. "I just want to make those girls over there even madder."

Henry frowned and looked out towards the sand where the teenage Barbie dolls were sunbaking, but watching us angrily. "I can think of way to make them kill you."

"Like what?"

"Like this."

And with that, Henry Parker covered my mouth with his.

## Chapter 5: Emotional Wreck

### Emotional Wreck

How dare he.

*How dare he!* I shoved Henry away and he nearly fell back into the cool water. He looked stunned. I was too, but unlike him, I was flaring with anger. He was just a statue, his golden brown eyes wide as almonds. I began furiously, "*I can't believe-*"

Henry silenced me by putting his finger against my lip. "If you want to blow up at me, do it at home. Not here where there are witnesses."

I breathed in and out heavily and tried to calm myself down. It worked a little bit.

"I can't *believe* you had the nerve to kiss me," I hissed. "This is our first appearance publicly and you *kiss* me?! You think you can just have everything-"

"Pancake, just shut up," Henry murmured. "Why are you so mad anyway? It was just a kiss. It's not like it was your first."

He shrugged to show how unimportant a kiss was. My cheeks burned and I bit my lip, looking away. The truth was that kiss just then, had been my very first kiss. Unbelievable right? But sadly, it's true. That was why I felt absolutely furious, humiliated and upset. Henry had stolen my first kiss and I didn't even like him, for goodness sakes! I *hated* him! He was a total jerk! I watched as Henry's face fell when he realised that it had indeed been my first kiss. "Oh."

"That's right, *oh!*" I said dramatically, rolling my eyes. I tried to make my face not too angry-looking though, or else everyone would think we're fighting already. I left Henry there and started wading through the water. But surprisingly Henry was right behind me.

Oh wait, it was no surprise. We were supposed to act like a couple, and Henry couldn't just be left alone in the water without his girlfriend. When we reached the softness of the sand, Henry put an arm around my shoulder which made me feel like swatting him.

"Hi," a high-pitched voice said from my left. "You're *Henry Parker*, right?"

Both Henry and I looked up to see a curly blond haired girl in a skimpy red bikini. She looked about sixteen. Kill me now. What was the next generation turning into?!

Henry nodded at the girl. "Yeah."

The Barbie doll ran up to Henry and bounced on her heels, linking her arm with his. "I'm Gabby! So like, *oh my god*, I can't believe I'm meeting you! What's it like being a celebri-"

"I believe I haven't introduced my *girlfriend*, Lainie," Henry interrupted, smirking.

Even though I was mad with Henry, I couldn't hold back my snicker. The snotty Gabby girl glared at me. "Are you joking? She looks more like your housekeeper or something!" She then laughed. *Haha*, very funny! *Not*.

## Fake Fiancee

Henry rolled his eyes at her. "Yeah anyway we have to go."

His grip on my shoulder tightened and he pulled me along with him, making me stumble. He ignored the shouting of Gabby and when we finally ended up where his Ferrari was parked, we dried off with our towels from the trunk. I ignored Henry the whole time.

Then out of nowhere, Henry cursed. "Paparazzi, four o' clock, get in the car!"

I nodded quickly and slid into the car. Henry locked all the doors. The paparazzi were yelling questions like *'who's the girl?'* and knocking loudly on the window, which made Henry extra angry. But, wow, they were annoying!

I shoved my oversized black sunglasses on so the flashes of the paparazzi's cameras wouldn't make me blind. But it was also to make sure the cameras or Henry wouldn't see that single tear of frustration had escaped.

\* \* \*

When we finally arrived home, I jumped out of the car and sprinted as fast as I could inside Henry's mansion. I didn't want to talk or face Henry. I was just not in the mood. I knew Henry was waiting for me to blow up at him but I just felt dead now. My first kiss had been stolen by a jerk! That was the only thought repeatedly running through my head. Once I reached my room, I locked the door and made my way over to my desk. I pressed play on the 'Stress' playlist on my second-hand iPod Nano and blasted up the volume. Taking out my sketch book, I started continuing my latest design: a cottage. As I got into it, time flew by and before I knew it, I had forgotten everything about Henry.

I was sketching the roof of the cottage, someone knocked on my door very loudly. Guess who?

Henry.

"Lainie, open up!" Henry called.

I ignored him. After many useless attempts to get me out of the room such as, 'we have pizza!' he finally ended up leaving.

I smiled to myself and kept occupying myself. By the time I had finished the exterior of my cottage with all the measurements, I looked up at the clock sitting on the nightstand.

*12:16?! AM?!* Seriously? Wow. I groaned and rolled over onto my back. Taking my iPod into my hands, I stopped the music. The house was so quiet and eerie, but something had to ruin the silence.

Yes, my growling stomach.

I didn't want to leave my room anytime soon, but gosh, was I hungry! I ended up walking slowly over to the door and quietly opening it to reveal the dark hallway outside. That meant Henry was asleep. Smiling to myself, I headed downstairs and into the kitchen and found left over Hawaiian pizza still in its box on the counter.

*Yes!*

I loved pizza. Getting excited, I took two slices of pizza and put them onto a plate and blindly felt my way over to the microwave to heat it up. As I waited for the pizza to heat up, that was when I heard it. A deep

## Fake Fiancee

breathing sound - those scary ones in the horror movies that gives you mega goose bumps.

*Oh god, oh god!*

It was coming from behind me, about eight feet away. It could be a thief or worse a murderer! Especially since this is Henry Parker's mansion. He was rich, famous and anyone could have a reason to kill him. I grabbed a butcher's knife as quietly as I could from the knife rack sitting next to microwave and gripped it tightly. I crept forward and saw a tall figure and not just any figure. It was a *man* figure.

I gulped and irrationally decided to go in for the attack. Not to stab him of course. I could be taken to court for murder. Just a kick down there will do. If he tries to kill me, I'll threaten him with the knife. If he has a gun ... well let's say I would be enjoying a lofty seat in Heaven. But hey, that didn't sound so bad. I ran up to him, hoping to take him by surprise and kneed him as hard as I could down there. The guy then fell to the floor in front of my feet, groaning loudly. Well, that was easy.

"*You idiot!*" That's when I froze. That voice sounded so much like â ;

"*It's me, Henry!*"

What was going on? "What do you think you're doing?!" I hissed angrily. He wasn't funny if he was trying to scare me. What if I had decided to stab him too?! I ran over to the light switch for the kitchen and flicked it on, to find Henry in a fetal position on the marble floor. He took a deep breath and got himself up, groaning painfully.

"God, that hurt," Henry said, wincing slightly.

I rolled my eyes. "Deal with it and I repeat: what the hell were you doing?"

Henry sighed. "Well, I knew you would come downstairs sometime for food, so I waited. Took you long enough. But really, I couldn't help but scare you a bit with the breathing sound." He chuckled after that, making my blood boil a bit.

"Why'd you wait for me?" I asked.

Henry bit his lip and looked up at me. "To â ;!"

"To what? To gloat that you stole my first kiss? To tease me that my first kiss only happened now, when I'm *nineteen*? To *humiliate* me?!"

Henry flinched. "Why are you so sensitive about your first kiss?"

"*Every girl is!*" I nearly yelled. Henry just stood there, his eyes intense, while I gritted my teeth. He was about to say something until I interrupted. "Well, consider your mission accomplished. I feel like crap. We'll forget that the kiss never happened, ok?"

I walked away from a speechless Henry. When I finally reached my room, I slammed the door, just so he could hear. I snuggled in my bed and hoped my night's sleep would go forever. Then it suddenly hit me.

I had left my pizza in the microwave.

Whoops.

## Chapter 6: April

**Author's Note: I'm sorry this chapter is kind of short! But to make it up I've posted the pictures of the characters up!! :) AND OMGG I'M SO STUPID! I'M SO SO SO SORRY TO THE PEOPLE WHOM I COMMENTED SAYING "CHPT 5" IS UP! :( I meant chapter 6! xoxo**

### April

#### HENRY PARKER FINDS LOVE!

*On a perfect sunny day on Venice Beach, a certain young actor was spotted with a new mystery girl. Yes, that's right, it was twenty one year old, Henry Parker! Witnesses say they had both raced through the water and that young Mr Parker had given his girl a piggyback ride. After, the two had embraced each other and shared a cute kiss! But we don't need to think Henry has a 'mystery' girl, because we have possibly found out her name! Sixteen year old Gabrielle Anderson had claimed she had talked to Henry Parker and that he had introduced his mystery girl as 'Lainie' his new girlfriend. This has been a shock for many people, as Henry Parker isn't the type to commit. So is it really true? Has the boy who used to get wasted at clubs every weekend finally found 'the one?'*

â |

Yawning, I sipped my iced chocolate and out from the kitchen and into the lounge, where Henry was kicking back on the sofa reading the tabloids.

"Well done Lainie! I'm really proud of your acting skills!" Steve praised as I shuffled into the room.

Henry frowned, realising that his manager was praising his pretend girlfriend, when he was actually the real actor here. "And what am I, a cactus?"

"Actually you're a jerk," I answered cheerfully, plopping myself on the navy leather armchair by the window. I saw Henry roll his eyes. Steve handed me the papers to read and I flinched at the large black and white picture of Henry and I in the water kissing.

Now was where the glitzy life of a celebrity's girlfriend was going to start. Everyone now knew who I was.

"Anyway guys, I've had requests for interviews but I've held them off until after this Saturday," Steve continued, clasping his hands.

"What's on Saturday?" I asked feeling like an idiot, as Steve and Henry were both giving me weird looks.

"I'm proposing to you this Saturday," Henry said slowly, as if I was dumb.

"Weren't you listening before?" Steve asked. "A few days ago?" I shrugged. I didn't remember anything.

Steve sighed. "I've planned the whole thing out. It was hard, but last week I reserved a table for both of you outside Wilshire Restaurant on the patio. It'll look romantic and real. I also hinted anonymously to the paparazzi that both of you were going to be there around eight, so that's when they'll arrive."

"I thought our reservation was for seven," Henry said, frowning.

## Fake Fiancee

"It is. That gives you time to order, wait for the food and eat," Steve explained. "Oh Lainie, you'll need to find a dress to wear."

I automatically groaned loudly. Dresses never looked good on me. "Can't I wear like a skirt? I hate dresses."

Steve shook his head. "A dress."

I grimaced making him laugh at me. "Don't worry Lainie. It's not that bad."

"That's because you're not the one wearing it!" I burst out.

Steve let out a little sigh, rubbed his temples and turned to Henry for help, but the guy was just smirking at us. Typical.

"Lainie, stop arguing," Steve sternly said. "*You are going to wear a dress.*"

I sighed. I guess there was no use arguing since he was as stubborn as I was. I think.

"I don't even know how to pick a good dress," I grumbled. "All dresses look bad on me."

"That's not true. Every girl can look beautiful in a dress," Steve reassured. "I've called April to help with your shopping tomorrow. You also need to update your closet with designer clothes since they might criticise you for your fashion choice."

I shuddered at the thought of shopping and designer clothes. "I'm sure everyone will love jeans and tees and Converse."

"But you can't keep wearing that all the time," Steve said pursing his lips.

"Alright, I'll go. And wait who's April?"

Henry looked me in the eye and answered, "My sister."

\* \* \*

So today I'm going shopping down Rodeo Drive for a dress to wear to the restaurant where Henry will be 'proposing' to me.

I was sitting on the sofa watching re-runs of Friends in an off-the-shoulder gauzy white top, dark skinny jeans and gold sandals. I had chosen something a bit nicer than I'd usually wear to please Steve. As I sat there worried about shopping (I had never been the shopping type), the doorbell rang. I switched off the TV and quickly got up. When I opened the door, I was surprised.

I had expected a tall dark haired beauty like Henry, since they were siblings. Instead, I faced an ordinary looking girl about my age. She was pretty though, but not as 'bam' as Henry. But that wasn't a bad thing. She had wavy red hair and was about my height with dimples in her rosy cheeks. She was the complete opposite of Henry which actually made me feel better.

"Hi, I'm April! You're Henry's girlfriend, Lainie, right?"

## Fake Fiancee

I smiled weakly and nodded. April was bubbly and optimistic, so different from the smirking indifferent Henry. She wouldn't stop beaming at me. "My whole family are so excited to meet you! Henry's never had a steady relationship."

"Oh, I can tell," I replied, smirking. Who would want to be with a jerk like him anyway? April laughed and told me we better get going. I nodded and followed her out onto the driveway to her silver Porsche.

"Is it me or does everyone here have fast cars?" I asked out of the blue.

April grinned. "Welcome to LA."

Once we arrived at Rodeo Drive, we went into nearly all the shops. April bought me heaps of new clothes, especially ones which were just too pretty for me to wear. I had new dresses, skirts, jackets, cute tops and heels. Oh my goodness. Even four inch ones. How could I even *walk* in that?!

We also found a strapless cream champagne cream dress with a sweetheart neckline for the proposal occasion. April didn't know Henry was proposing to me and she didn't question me when I said I needed to find a dress. Actually, she ended up buying me heaps of dresses. The dress also had beautiful gold detailing and actually looked ok on me. April had got frustrated because she spent twenty minutes trying to convince me I looked better than 'ok.' It was quite funny actually. She kept stomping her feet.

After all that shopping, it was around four and I was starving. We headed to a nearby café and I felt like a kid, ordering cheesecake and chocolate milkshake, while April ordered a 'Caramel Latte Macchiato' and a muffin. We talked while we waited for our food and I liked that she was pretty easy to talk to.

"Can I ask you something?" April suddenly asked.

I nodded.

"What do you want to do in life?"

I smiled, as April looked earnestly at me. "I want to be an architect."

April's brown eyes widened slightly. "An architect? Wow!"

I nodded. "I've always loved looking at historical buildings and stuff, and I love designing, so yeah."

"Hi five, sister! I love designing too!"

I was glad we at least had one thing in common. After all the shopping, I didn't think so. "What do you want to do then?" I asked, curious as to what she would say.

April bit her lip and looked down, but her eyes sparkled still. "I want to be a fashion designer," she whispered.

"That's cool, April!" I reassured. I had no idea why she looked so down. Did she think she was no good at it? "You have a great sense of fashion, seriously."

"Thanks." April blushed. "I want to open my own boutiques called *Rozette*. I've made designs of heaps of different types of clothing and I'm studying fashion designing and business at UCLA."

## Fake Fiancee

I nodded. It was good that April had everything planned out already. "Can I ask you something though?" I asked.

"Sure!" April chirped.

I took a deep breath and looked her in the eye, as I sensed my question was an invasion of privacy. "Why do you look so ... unsure about it?"

April jutted her lips out as she thought about something. "My father â he doesn't think I'll be successful. We had a *huge* argument when I told him my dream. I hardly visit my parents. If I do, it's my mother or on occasions like Thanksgiving and Christmas."

Wow.

I felt really bad for April. I mean, my mother just didn't care about what I wanted to do, but April's father didn't believe in his daughter. I found myself asking a question I couldn't help asking. "What about Henry?"

April sighed. "Father and Henry don't get along. Henry's reputation as a bad boy ruined our family reputation. And it was my father's dearest wish for Henry to take over the company he owns. They used to fight a lot but now they just ignore each other. But Henry and I visit our parents for our mother. She loves us so much and I feel sad leaving her with our father, when he doesn't really give a damn about anything."

Knowing this I felt bad for Mrs Parker, April and Henry, which is weird.

Well, I mean the pitying Henry part was weird.

## Chapter 7: Petty Proposal

**Author's Note: Since the character pictures can't be seen, I'm going to find a way for it to be seen. I'm sorry it didn't work! Anyway, here's the awaited chapter seven! Hope you enjoy it!**

### Petty Proposal

I took a deep breath and opened my eyes. The golden framed mirror reflected a different me. A different Lainie.

Maybe it had to do with the fact I was wearing a dress. I hadn't worn a dress in years. For prom, I hadn't even attended due to the utter horror of wearing a dress and dancing. But I knew if I was to be able to have enough money for college, I would have to become Henry's fake girlfriend/fiancee and I would have to deal with everything which came along with that. I fixed my dress and carefully took the crystal white pendant April had lent me. I put it on, tousled my curled hair and slipped on my new strappy heels. God, I was going to die in these. They were nearly three inches!

I stood up too quickly which resulted in nearly falling flat on my face.

"Ow," I whimpered. Seriously, it hurt! I pushed myself from the ground and fixed my hair again. And hey, at least my nose wasn't squashed!

"Lainie, hurry up!" Steve called from downstairs.

I bit my lip. Checking my reflection one last time and making sure nothing was out of place, I decided I would finally leave the security of my room. See what dresses did to me? They made me plain nervous! I grabbed my Chanel clutch and slowly walked down the stairs, my heels clicking on the marble.

"Oh Lainie, you look beautiful," Steve complimented. He hugged me and I laughed nervously.

"Thanks."

I turned to Henry, who was leaning against the wall and staring at me. Oh god, he was in a classic black tuxedo. Wow, did he look yummy! His shoulders were extra broad and I could imagine folding myself in his arms and âNO! Lainie, stop it! I blinked and snapped out of my stupid thoughts. I mean, Henry was a jerk. A complete jerk! He couldn't even remember birthdays. I was no way in hell attracted to him!

"You two better get going!" Steve said, interrupting my thoughts. I laughed nervously and followed Henry out the door. Steve was behind me and locking up the mansion with his own set of keys. I watched as he headed towards his Mercedes parked right in front of the porch to go home. And work most likely.

"Bye!" I called to him.

"Good luck!"

I waved until he was out of the iron gates and waited impatiently for Henry to bring the car around from the garage. Why was he taking so long? I sighed and tapped my foot. When he finally arrived in his Ferrari, I hopped in and irritably questioned, "What took you so long?"

## Fake Fiancee

Henry glared ahead as he drove. "Well, someone thought it would be funny to put fruit in my McLaren's exhaust pipe."

I instantly gulped. I had forgotten about that prank. "Wonder who it was." Henry turned to stare at me and I knew my innocent look wasn't working.

"Pretend all you want, I know it was you."

I sighed and looked out the window. From then on, it was a silent ride. Too silent. I reached out my hand to turn on the radio but for some reason, Henry's hand had outstretched to turn on the radio too.

"Sorry," I mumbled, drawing my hand away.

Henry grunted and flicked through different stations, finally landing on a station playing *Stuck on You* by Lionel Richie. I grinned to myself and I sang along in my head. When I felt as if someone was staring at me, I turned towards Henry. He was staring at me, incredulously. I flushed under his stare. "What?" I asked, slightly defensive.

"You know this song?"

I nodded. "Yeah â"

He smiled to himself. "I love this song too."

"Wait, how did you know I love this song?" I asked, confused.

"Well, you *were* singing, pancake," Henry answered, rolling his eyes. "That's a big give away."

"I was?!" Horrified, I covered my face. I never realised I had been singing aloud! Oh god, how embarrassing!

"Calm down, it's not like I haven't heard your singing before," Henry said. He smirked and then started snorting with laughter. "Oh god, that was hilarious!"

Huh? I frowned and tried to remember when he had heard me sing. I had a flashback of myself singing 1234 by Plain White T's in the shower and Henry watching me. "*Hey!* Stop thinking about that!" I screamed.

Henry laughed harder. "But you just looked *so* yummy, pancake â"

I screamed and covered my ears. "NO! NO! STOP IT!"

I had no idea how Henry managed to drive properly while laughing so hard. I hung my head and fanned my red cheeks. I shouldn't have sung in the first place! Stupid, stupid, stupid!

"So I never knew you were into music like Lionel Richie," I said, trying to change the course of our conversation.

Henry smiled. "I like all sorts of oldies. The first time I picked up a guitar, I learned to play a Lionel Richie song."

"You play guitar?" I asked, surprised. He didn't look like a musician. He looked like those guys who just care about looks, money, and hot girls (which he probably was anyway).

## Fake Fiancee

Henry nodded. "Haven't played it in a while though. I'll play you a song sometime." He glanced at me out of the corner of his eye to see if it was ok with me. I nodded and grinned. I couldn't wait for that one. It was silent then and I decided I wanted to ask him another question.

"Hey Henry," I said. "Do you get along with your sister?" Ok, I know it was random but I just wanted to know.

"Nope. We fight heaps," he answered, laughing. "She's such a baby."

"She's not a baby," I added, rolling my eyes. I studied him as he talked about his fights with his sister. I watched as his brown eyes were soft when he talked about April. Then I figured â he was fond of her.

"You care for her," I observed. Then I giggled. My face, I knew, was incredulous. Henry Parker, the jerk king of all jerks *cared for someone*. This was crazy!

"I do not," Henry scoffed.

I stared at him in disbelief and started laughing uncontrollably, making Henry squirm.

"What?" Henry asked irritably.

Once I finally stopped laughing and clapping like a retarded seal, I said, "I know you care for her."

Henry rolled his eyes and I rolled mine too.

\* \* \*

Lights twinkled inside and outside the restaurant of the Wilshire restaurant. It was a cozy place - people were chatting, having a good time and the staff looked friendly.

I stood at the entrance, awed. The place seriously looked like a fairytale. I wouldn't mind coming back here just to admire the place!

"Hello, I reserved a table for two under the name -"

"Henry Parker, I know."

I turned towards the voices where the receptionist was trying to contain her excitement that she was talking to Henry Parker.

"Right this way Mr Parker."

Henry looked back and spotting me, he grabbed my hand and pulled me along. I was surprised but I didn't say anything. We followed the lady all the way out to the sheltered patio outside. All the while, heads had turned to stare at us. I could hear whispers and feel the excitement in the air. The restaurant was becoming buzzed but some were confused and had no idea who this Henry Parker was, making me giggle. Not so famous now, hey?

"Here you go," the lady said, waving her hand to a table which was a bit further from others. "A waitress will come out and serve you in just a minute."

## Fake Fiancee

"Lovely," Henry said, staring directly into my eyes, making me practically shake. Talk about weird.

He took out my chair and motioned for me to sit so I did. Great, now he was acting like a gentleman. I stared at our table which had a red-orange coloured candle burning. There were two cute mini vases with red roses inside. Steve must've requested it since other tables had no roses. Silverware and plates were already laid out and suddenly, I couldn't wait to eat.

There was an awkward silence until a young dark haired waitress came forward to us eagerly. *Too* eagerly.

She descended upon us and smiling, gave us our menus. Facing Henry she said, "Hello, I'm Julia! Shall I wait here for you to order or would you like -"

"Just wait here thanks." Henry flashed her a grin making her swoon.

As Henry passed me the second menu, I looked up at Julia and smiled. "You don't really need to tell us your name when you have a nametag Julia."

Julia flushed while I tried to contain my laughter. I could see Henry smirking. The thing was I had no idea why I did that. Was it because she was annoying? Yes, it must be. It had nothing to do with jealousy right? No! It couldn't be! While I sat there panicking, I realised Henry had already ordered and that young Julia was irritably waiting for me.

"I'd like the Chimay marinated skirt steak with salad."

It sounded nice and I loved steak so why not? Finally when Julia left, Henry turned to me, looking sceptical. "You like steak?"

Offended, I replied, "Of course I do!"

"Don't girls hate meat?"

What?! Where'd he get that idea from? I had been living with him long enough for him to know I eat meat! Then it hit me. Henry was talking about his own experiences with girls and most of them probably were those Barbie dolls who didn't want to get fat. I snorted which made Henry raise his eyebrow. "You haven't met a real girl."

Henry rolled his eyes at me. "And you classify yourself as a real girl?"

I nodded and fluttered my lashes making Henry laugh. Throughout dinner, we talked about our families and childhood. Yes, we actually had a *decent conversation*! He talked about his mother a lot and it really showed he loved her, which in return made me have a soft spot for him â which just resulted in feeling completely stupid. Once we finished eating, it was seven-forty.

"I think we should do it now," Henry murmured.

I looked around. There were no paparazzi. "Aren't we supposed to do it when the paparazzi get here?"

Henry smirked. "I bet they'll be here in a few."

I watched as he slowly got out of his chair and walked towards me. Right at that moment, I could hear chaos from the front of the restaurant where the paparazzi were trying to get inside.

## Fake Fiancee

Henry got down on one knee and I gasped. So did everyone else, except my gasp was fake. The paparazzi had spotted us and were trying to get as close as they could to snap better pictures.

"Lainie Audrey Sofia Watson -"

What?! "How do you know my full name?!" I hissed, horrified. I hated my full name! It sounded so weird.

Henry smirked. "I have my ways. Anyway, from the very first day I met you I knew you were different from anyone I've ever known. The way you walked, talked, dressed, how you're really passionate about architecture, the way you wrinkle your nose and your face scrunches up when you're mad at me â€"!"

For a jerk he was actually making a decent speech. Not entirely romantic but still, it made me smile.

"I knew from the very first day I'd hate you," Henry added, his voice very low.

Ok, he was the king jerk of all jerks now!

"Will you do me the honour of being my fake pancake wife?"

I gave him a fake, big smile and whispered in his ear, "Of course not! Who would want to marry you anyway?"

I leaned back and Henry smirked. "Everyone, my darling."

Henry took my hand and slipped on the engagement ring from the Tiffany box. Oh my god, a Tiffany ring! I was wearing a Tiffany ring! It was a dream for me to own something from the store. The ring was simple and elegant - silver with diamonds. Just how I liked it. Henry pulled me up from my chair and swept me into a hug. Everyone inside and outside the restaurant cheered. Some people were even crying! Henry let go and called out to everyone, "We're getting married!"

The cheers and claps became louder, nearly deafening and I could feel myself feeling as if I was actually getting married. I felt flustered and I could feel my cheeks heating up. After being congratulated by many people, Henry and I headed out. The paparazzi followed us to the car and shouted out questions, which I blocked. Henry had told me not to talk to paparazzi.

"Are you really getting married Henry?!"

No, this is all fake.

"Is this a prank?"

Well technically it *is* ... but you'll never know.

"Lainie, how does it feel to be engaged to Henry Parker?!"

Oh it felt *fantastic*.

It was hard to ignore them since they were literally pressed up against us and shouting in our ears. Henry told them to go away and once we got into the car, he sighed.

## Fake Fiancee

"I always hate them," he muttered. The car roared to life and Henry backed out of the parking spot, making the paparazzi around our car run. As we drove off, I could still see them in the distance running after us and taking photos.

Geez, were they that desperate?

"Ignore them," Henry told me.

I shrugged and did as he asked. The car ride home was quiet, but it was a comfortable quiet. I closed my eyes and thought about today. Even though Henry was a egoistic jerk, I had actually enjoyed today. I guess he wasn't bad company after all. As I started drifting off, I heard Henry's soft voice say, "I had fun today."

I smiled and wanted to answer that I did too, but I had no idea if what Henry said was just a dream. I was half asleep after all.

**Lainie's dress!**

## Chapter 8: Interview

**AUTHOR'S NOTE: Here's chapter eight guys! Hope you enjoy and MERRY CHRISTMAS!!! xoxo**

### Interview

Hearing the doorbell ring, I groaned and rubbed my eyes. The small red clock sitting on my bedside table told me it was seven in the morning. Seven? Who would wake us up at *seven in the morning*?

"Lainie get the door!" I heard Henry yell from his room. His voice sounded tired so I assumed he must've just woken up as well.

"You get it!" I yelled back, burying my face into my soft pillow. The doorbell rang again and again. Whoever was at the door was seriously annoying!

"No you get it!"

No way. I needed my beauty sleep. "I always get out of bed first, *you* get it!"

As I tried getting back to sleep, my cell sitting on my bedside table started ringing. Sighing, I sat up drowsily and picked it up. It was Steve. "Mmm?"

"Lainie! I forgot my keys at home so open the door! Is the doorbell broken or something? Open the damn door!" Before I could reply, he hung up. Sighing, I dragged myself out of bed and didn't bother to change out of my Hello Kitty pyjamas. Once I reached the door and opened it, not only did I find Steve, but April as well. She was bouncing up and down and once the door was fully open, she squealed and threw her arms around me. Ok â ;

"Congratulations! Congratulations! I can't believe Henry *proposed*! Never saw that day coming! He must have it for you bad."

I grimaced at that. "I don't think so."

April laughed. "No need to be modest, Lainie. Oh my god, I totally forgot! Show me the ring!"

She took my left hand in hers and examined the ring. Once she was finished inspecting it, she asked, "Is it from Cartier? It's beautiful."

I shook my head and grinned. "It's from Tiffany's."

"That's even better! I never knew my brother had such good taste," April said, giggling.

Actually he didn't. Henry had told me once we had gotten home last night that Steve had purchased the ring. While April asked me all about the details of last night, Steve flicked through different channels on the TV as fast as lightning. After telling about last night to April, Henry entered the lounge room in a black shirt and khaki shorts. It matched him really well. But before I could finish my ogling, April attacked Henry with a bear hug, grinning. I had the feeling April's cheeks would be sore from all the smiling.

"Brother, I can't believe you're *engaged*!"

## Fake Fiancee

"Neither can I," Henry replied, laughing. "Never saw that one coming did you?"

April nodded. "By the way, Mom wants to congratulate you! She said she tried calling you this morning but you didn't pick up â!"

Henry frowned and reached for his cell in his pocket. "Oh â! fourteen missed calls and five voicemails. Wonderful."

April then turned to me. "Mom totally wants to meet you, Lainie! She can't wait! You'll visit her, right?"

"Sure," I answered, not knowing what else to say.

April beamed and we all sat down to watch what Steve was watching. It was the news and they were going through today's headlines. I had the feeling that they would talk about Henry's engaged status and they did.

"Twenty one year old actor and model Henry Parker is now engaged! The two were seen last night at the Wilshire Restaurant in Santa Monica. The video coming up shows Henry Parker on one knee asking his new girlfriend, Lainie Watson to marry him. Lainie is the nineteen year old niece of Steve Campbell, Henry's manager. So here is the footage of last night at the Wilshire Restaurant â!"

A shaky video which had been zoomed in from the gates of the restaurant filled the screen. Henry was on one knee and looking up at my face earnestly, holding out the Tiffany box. I was smiling at him and then I whispered in his ear. That was when I had said who would want to marry him. The film stopped after we were surrounded by people congratulating us - we seriously looked like an intimate couple. When the news woman finished speaking after the video, April loudly gushed about it. She couldn't get over the fact Henry and I were engaged.

"Both of you are attending an interview today," Steve announced after April had finished talking.

"What?" Henry yelled. "You could've told us!"

Steve raised an eyebrow. "I did. Two days ago!"

An interview? What was I supposed to say? What if they figured out all this was a sham? I wasn't looking forward to it *at all*. April turned to me while I was in the middle of my mini panic attack. "Do you know what you're wearing yet?"

"Jeans â!?"

"No, wear a skirt or a dress to make a good impression," Steve interrupted.

April nodded. "Good idea, Steve! C'mon, lead me to your closet!"

I sighed and led her upstairs and into my bedroom. Walking over to the closet, I went down on my knees and opened the drawer where neatly folded skirts sat. I turned around to find April still standing by my doorframe, frowning. "What's wrong?" I asked worriedly. Don't tell me she was going to give my room a makeover or something.

"Don't you share a room with Henry?"

There was an awkward silence. What was I supposed to say?

## Fake Fiancee

"You guys *are* engaged. It's not the end of the world if both of you share the same bed. I mean, even couples who aren't engaged are eager to sleep in the same bed. Don't you want to cuddle with your fiancÃ© before you sleep?" April pressed on.

I gulped. "Umm I do sleep with him half the time â€¦ but sometimes I like my own privacy. And plus, he likes to kick me off the bed in the middle of the night." I prayed the lie sounded good.

April snorted. "How rude of him! Does he snore too?"

I nodded. "Oh he does. It's horrible."

April giggled and came over to help me with my outfit. Phew! Luckily I had gotten away with that!

After fifteen minutes, I ended up in a white top with a square neckline tucked into a black bandage skirt with small white polka dots. April was busy rummaging through shoe boxes to find shoes to wear so I decided to wear a piece of jewellery with my outfit. Then I remembered I was engaged so that meant I had to wear the Tiffany ring. Sighing, I walked over to my bedside table where it sat and took it out. It sparkled and I slid it on carefully.

"Found the perfect shoes to go with your outfit!" April sang, skipping into my room from the closet. I looked at what she was holding in her hands. Leather pumps. No way was I wearing heels! I had worn them yesterday, wasn't that enough?

I shook my head at her. "I am *not* wearing heels again."

April pouted and dangled them in front of my face. "Oh c'mon, they're perfect!"

"Isn't there some over fancy shoe I could wear which is flat?"

April groaned. "Well you can either look classy in these leather pumps - I mean they're gorgeous! - or you can wear the uh â€¦ the red ballet flats."

I chose the ballet flats in a heartbeat.

\* \* \*

"So tell me Henry, how do you know Lainie here is the one when you've just only met? I mean, the world only found out both of you were dating just last week."

The annoying friendly voice of Susan Carmichael interrupted my drifting thoughts. I shifted in my seat, uncomfortable on the black velvet armchair. Henry sat next to me in an identical armchair and across from us was Susan. We were in a quiet room and there were two cameramen around us filming. Susan Carmichael was our interviewer. Her hair was a highlighted blonde and was pulled up in a neat ponytail. The woman also wouldn't stop showing off her pearly whites.

"Actually we met in high school," Henry lied. Not even an ounce of nervousness! He must be used to this.

"Oh really?"

Susan turned towards me to confirm if what Henry stated was true. Great, my turn to talk. "Oh yeah, we went to the same school. I fell in love with him at first sight but you know, I was the popular freshman and he was

## Fake Fiancee

the â junior whom no one paid attention to."

I flashed a grin and tried to stifle a laugh. Henry was gritting his teeth. Then his face lit up and he grinned at me. "Oh honey, but remember when I became a senior and I was the hottest guy in school? Meanwhile your reputation had gone down the drain? You got those awful braces and everyone stayed away from you. Remember darling?"

Henry gave me a wink and I glared at him.

"Oh don't worry darling; I secretly thought those braces were adorable."

"How adorable!" Susan exclaimed.

Yeah right. It sounded like those typical teenage love stories - the guy's popular and the girl's not, or the other way around. Anyway, as if Henry would like a girl with braces. He'd need a girl who he could have a tonsil war with.

Henry grinned. "I know."

"So tell me, how did you both meet each other recently? Did it seem like fate?"

"It was totally fate - I found him at a party drunk. He had stumbled face first into a pole and I helped him," I said, snickering a little.

Henry frowned while Susan nodded understandingly. "Oh yes, he's known for being quite the party animal. Do you approve Lainie?"

Steve had told me to make sure we left the interviewer with the impression that Henry has changed so that they would put that in the papers. "Actually, he hasn't been getting drunk since we met. I'm not sure why."

That wasn't a lie though. Steve had made sure Henry hadn't been out clubbing.

Susan looked mildly surprised. "And why's this, Henry? Or have you been partying behind Lainie's back?"

For some reason, that just made me want to slap her in the face. Henry put an arm around my shoulder. I elbowed him subtly in the rib but he continued to leave his arm there. Ugh. "I haven't been out clubbing. It's all because of Lainie really. She has inspired me not to be the guy I used to be."

He looked at me like I was his savoir making me smirk.

"Well, it's great to meet both of you, but I guess time's up, as it's two-fifty now!" Susan smiled crisply at us and moved forward to shake our hand. Her hand smelled like expensive made hand cream.

"Have a good day Susan," Henry said politely.

Oh finally, our first interview was over!

## Chapter 9: Travel Plans

### Travel Plans

The past few days had been crazy. Everywhere you went; there was mention of Henry Parker and Lainie Watson. We had to repeat the story of how we met to everyone who asked. Steve had found out about it through an interview with Henry on the radio. He had been driving and snorted with laughter at our ridiculous story. Well, everyone had bought it so it was all good. Steve has also been in a very good mood as Henry's reputation has gone from bad to good. I felt really small in all this.

"YES!"

The yell of excitement echoed from the lounge room into the kitchen, startling me. Bewildered, I abandoned chopping up apples for fruit salad and rushed into the lounge, where both Henry and Steve were discussing about the stuff which came with being famous.

"Henry you have to take this deal!" Steve said excitedly. The guy looked like he was a kid in a candy store. I frowned, wondering what was going on. Papers were scattered across the small coffee table.

"You need a new movie to do and the role of Cade Lionel is perfect! It's going to be the biggest film in 2012, I know it! Peter Crosswire actually wanted you specifically for the role but your reputation was bad since you appeared everywhere on magazines drunk. But now you're engaged, the whole board of for the movie have decided to give you a chance! They want you as the main role!"

"Did he get a movie offer?" I asked, sitting down next to Henry on the sofa.

"No, I got a recording deal," Henry said sarcastically.

"Just asking! Geez, don't get your panties in a twist."

Henry smirked at me. "I prefer the term *boxers*, as that is what I wear."

I grimaced. Too much information! Did he really have to tell me what he wore underneath his pants?

Seeing my expression, Henry chuckled. "You asked for it, pancake."

"Guys cut it out!" Steve ordered.

I glared at Henry and he just smiled at me. Jerk!

"Back to what I was saying, you *will* take the deal Henry. Cade Lionel is a crime investigator but at the same time a ladies man, kind of like James Bond-

"That's what I'm best at," Henry interrupted proudly. I raised my eyebrow at him. He was so conceited!

Steve sighed and rubbed his temples. "God, you never stop do you? Well, the storyline is murders are happening on an island and you're sent there to investigate with your partner-"

"My *girl* partner?" Henry asked, raising his eyebrows suggestively at me. "FiancÃ©e of mine, are you jealous?"

## Fake Fiancee

I burst out laughing and snorted. "You wish!"

"No!" Steve said. "Your *crime investigation partner* who is a *guy*! He's going to be played by Hudson Miller. And oh, you do meet a girl though and things do get *â* intense. It says here she is actually the one doing all the killing. So really *â* she's a traitor."

"Ooh, a girl who can kick butt," Henry mused. "I like that."

"You mean a girl who goes on a killing spree," I corrected, scoffing. I felt sorry for the actress who had to put up with Henry.

"Don't get into any monkey business with the traitor girl behind the scenes, got it? You have to remember you're engaged and I bet the media is looking for any way to ruin you. Don't screw everything up ok?" Steve warned, narrowing his eyes at Henry.

"Actually Steve I don't think he'll listen to you. He'll *screw* anyone with a pulse," I commented.

"If that's true you should be scared." Henry got up from the sofa, smirking. "Tell Peter I'll be Cade."

I watched as he stalked out of the room. Ok.

"Excellent! That means we're heading to Curacao on Wednesday in two weeks!"

I frowned. "Where the heck is that?"

"It's an island in the Southern Caribbean Sea. It's just off the Venezuelan Coast. It's very relaxing and beautiful there. I've been there once."

Oh.

"The island Cade is investigating at will be set on Curacao," Steve explained. "Sets have been built there already too."

I nodded and then remembered I still had to finish off the fruit salad. Excusing myself, I walked out of the room and back into the kitchen. Henry was sitting on one of the kitchen stools *â* and taking pieces of fruit from the large bowl which contained all the fruit I had cut up already!

"No eating!" I said half hysterical. I ran over and grabbed the bowl out of Henry's reach. Stupid jerk!

"But I was hungry!" Henry whined, giving me puppy dog eyes. Like that was going to work on me. I put my hand on my hip and smiled sweetly at him. "Well too bad for you." I stuck out my tongue at him just for effect. I turned around and went back to chopping up some more fruit to replace the ones Henry had eaten. As I started peeling off the skin of an orange, a large hand came over my eyes.

"HEY!" I yelled. Dropping the knife on the counter, I used my hands to try and pry away Henry's large hand which was covering my vision. I could feel his chest pressed lightly against my back and I flinched unintentionally. "What are you doing?!"

His hand finally came off my eyes and I spun around to glare murderously at him. I hoped he was scared but knowing him he probably would laugh. Henry had some pieces of fruit in his hand and just to aggravate me some more, he popped a grape into his mouth. "What are you going to do now pancake?"

## Fake Fiancee

I gritted my teeth and spoke the first thought which entered my brain. "I am going to cut you into little pieces with the knife so everyone can enjoy eating you."

"Ooh scary!"

I grabbed the knife and whirled it around in my hand, attempting to look like some professional chef. As I took a step forward, Steve walked into the room with his eyes practically bulging out of his sockets. "Whoa Lainie, drop the knife!"

"He keeps stealing the fruit!" I exclaimed, giving evil eyes to Henry.

Steve sighed. "Lainie be reasonable. You don't go around stabbing people just because they stole fruit."

"Well actually I was going to cut him into pieces," I corrected.

"I'm the only responsible one here," Steve muttered.

"I'm responsible!" I cried. I realised I hadn't been the only one who had said that and whipped my head to face Henry, who was sitting on the stool again. We both stuck our tongues at each other.

"Yeah guys, real responsible you are," said Steve sarcastically. "Henry just stop stealing things off Lainie, ok?"

Henry rolled his eyes. "Who knew you were such a Dibby Dobber."

I was about to retort back when suddenly Henry jumped and nearly fell out of his chair. If he hadn't grabbed the edge of the kitchen counter, he would have been thrown to the floor. Not that I'm complaining.

Both my face and Steve's were the same: incredulous and amused. We then burst out laughing. I couldn't stop and had to wrap my arms around my stomach because I had stitches. My face must've been tomato red but I didn't care at the moment - his face had been priceless!

"Shut up," Henry growled. "I forgot I put my cell on vibrate."

Well that was even funnier! I snickered and tried to keep from laughing aloud again as Henry was talking on his cell.

"Stupid boy," Steve muttered, making me giggle.

After a few minutes, Henry hung up and faced us. "That was my mom. She wants me to come home with Lainie and stay for a few days. She wants to get to know her."

I accidentally dropped the knife I was holding. I had to meet his parents? Good gracious!

Steve shrugged as if it was no big deal. I guess it was only a big deal to me. "Well then go. Both of you can go to Newport Beach and spend until the rest of Wednesday, which is when we're flying out to Curacao for filming."

Henry turned to me and asked, "Do you want to go?"

Wow. He actually took my feelings into consideration. This was a first. "I wouldn't mind meeting your parents," I replied. What a lie. For some reason I didn't really want to meet them. What if they hated me?

## Fake Fiancee

Even though I wasn't his real fiancée, why was I worried?

"Steve you should come too," Henry said. "Mom invited you."

I looked at Steve, who was pursing his lips. "Hmm are you sure? If it's really ok, I'd love to go. I haven't seen your parents in a long time. Oh and I'm bringing my laptop, you can't stop me."

I raised my eyebrow. Gosh, did the guy ever take a break from work?

"Let's leave next Wednesday so we can spend a week there. That gives us four days to pack," Steve decided, clasping his hands together.

"How can I pack in four days?" Henry asked rhetorically, groaning.

Four days? Pft, I could pack in four hours!

## Chapter 10: Destination? Newport.

### Destination? Newport.

I scurried about my room to see if there was something I had missed. You never know if something important like your cell is hiding under your bed! There wasn't anything I could see so, satisfied, I zipped up my two suitcases. I linked my new Marc Jacobs tote bag with my suitcases by the handle and dragged them downstairs. It took me a while with me being small and everything but I managed.

This afternoon we were leaving with Steve to stay with Henry's parents for about a week. April was coming too, but she was taking her own car there and was arriving a little late. Apparently, it was the senior Mr Parker's birthday in a few days and there was going to be a fancy dinner. Truthfully, it was terrifying for me to meet Henry's dad. April had said he didn't care about Henry or April so that meant he wouldn't care about me. I was pretty sure my theory would prove right.

I sighed inwardly and looked down at my luggage. Henry's bags weren't there yet. I frowned and checked the time on my thin watch. Steve would be here in an hour. Taking the stairs two at a time, I barged into Henry's room.

He was laying back on his silk silver pillows on his very large bed. "Hey pancake, care to join?" Henry asked, patting a spot next to him. I rolled my eyes and then realised something.

"You haven't even packed yet!" His luggage bag was open and no clothes were in there at all. The clothes were strewn everywhere on the soft carpet instead. What had he been doing for four days?!

"So?" Henry questioned, scowling a little.

"So, Steve will be here in less than an hour!"

Henry rolled his eyes and casually waved a hand at the mess on the floor. "You can pack it then Miss Nagging."

"I do not nag!" I cried, crossing my arms at the same time.

"Sure you don't. Now hurry up and pack for me, pancake!"

I snorted. "I'm not your slave; I'm your fiancée in case you're forgetting."

"I'm pretty sure my *fiancée* would be willing to pack for me." Henry crookedly smiled at me. Seeing my glare, he sighed. "Fine, I'll help you if you help me."

I stared at him with wide eyes. He was going to help?! I swear, this guy had mood swings. One minute he would be calling me a pancake, the next he'd actually help me out. I nodded cautiously at him. "Ok, where do I start?"

"Well you can go through my underwear drawer and pick out anything you want," Henry joked. "I'm sure you'll be delighted to see my collection of superhero boxers."

I stuck my tongue out at him and ignored the part about his superhero boxers collection. "I'll pack your shirts for you and that's it."

## Fake Fiancee

Henry snickered and led me through his very spacious walk in closet. It was twice as big as mine and looked like a mini mall or a super large luxurious dressing room. Henry pointed to a wall which was also a large mirror. "My shirts are in there. Grab sexy ones, will you?" He even had the nerve to wink at me.

"Ok Mr Bossy Pants!"

I spent the next fifteen minutes picking out random shirts from the large mirror closet (I know, I'm so fast right?) and cracked up into fits of giggles when I found the type of shirt Elvis Presley would wear. It was a very low V neck, (which would display probably half of Henry's chest if he wore it I might add), white, collared, long sleeved and glittery. I decided to bring that one too. Henry *did* say he wanted 'sexy'.

When I finished, I gathered all the shirts and carefully packed them all into Henry's luggage bag. When Henry walked into the room, I gave him a sweet smile and held up the Elvis shirt for him to see. "Sexy isn't it? I'm sure your parents would *love* to see you in this. Do you have matching pants?" I teased.

Henry didn't flinch or anything. Instead, he smirked. "It's very sexy indeed, I'm sure my parents would love it. And unfortunately I do have matching pants. I was forced to wear it to a costume party once I believe."

"Alright, I'll pack the matching pants for you as well," I said stifling a giggle. I was so going to make him wear that sometime.

"Go ahead, my dear."

Once I had found the pants to go with it, I sat crossed-legged on the floor and started on placing Henry's clothes into his luggage bag. Suddenly, I felt Henry behind me, his breath tickling my ears. "Need help?" he whispered.

Shivers ran down my spine and I gulped at the huskiness of his voice. "S-sure," I stammered. I watched, frozen, as Henry chuckled and plopped himself on the ground gracefully in front of me. I blinked and shook my head from the after effect of Henry whispering in my ear. What had gotten into me?

\* \* \*

"You're nervous aren't you?"

"Nope."

"Sure," he snorted. "No wonder you're anxiously glancing around and tapping your foot."

"Can it, peanut," I snapped, folding my arms and looking out the tinted window of Steve's black SUV. Even if he could give me delicate shivers by whispering in my ear, he was so not worth it.

"Peanut?" Henry repeated, raising an eyebrow. "Where in the world did you get that from?"

I rolled my eyes. "You seem to have memory problems. You're allergic to peanuts. Oh wait, I shouldn't have said that. Then you wouldn't remember and you go and eat some nuts and swell and *die*. Then we'll *all* live happily ever after."

Henry and Steve then burst out laughing which made me irritated. What was up with them?!

## Fake Fiancee

"Since when are you allergic to peanuts?" Steve asked, turning his head to Henry. Ok, what? I'm pretty sure a celebrity's manager would know all about his celebrity's allergies.

"Since Lainie froze water in my cereal bowl," Henry replied, smirking at me through the rear view mirror.

Oh that jerk! How could he?! How could *he*?! So he had known what I had had in store for him! How embarrassing! "You liar!" I hissed, leaning forward to glare at Henry. You see, Henry was driving as Steve had needed to talk to on his Blackberry to confirm some things about Henry's big movie deal.

"It's not like you've lied - *I hate you!*" Henry did a poor impersonation of me and then snorted. "C'mon, nobody hates me. They either envy me or admire me."

I stared. "One day, that big ego of yours will eventually swallow you up."

"Never heard that one before," Steve mused, leaning forward to turn on the air con up. There was silence for a few minutes during which I studied my nails. Then Steve turned around to grin at me. "Lainie," he sang. "We're here!"

My head shot up. I turned to my right and pushed down the button to open the window. The hazy, fresh, salty aroma of the beach filled my nose, making me smile. I really liked beaches, even if that was the place where someone had stolen my first kiss. We were passing a street of cute shops until Henry turned around a corner leading into a neighbourhood of houses. Very nice houses I might add. As we passed by all of them, I studied them, deciding which ones looked good and which ones didn't. It was a game I used to play ever since third grade.

The car suddenly slowed and turned left onto a small driveway. The Parkers lived in a spacious double-storey, tan beach house with arch shaped windows. Although it was handsome, I secretly preferred Henry's white mansion. Other than Steve's SUV, a navy BMW sat in the driveway. Why was everyone was so rich!

We all got out of the car and Henry showed off by lifting his and my suitcase in one hand. Jerk.

"Henry quit trying to impress Lainie," Steve barked, taking his laptop bag in his hand. I giggled as Henry's sharp, tan cheekbones blushed a delicate pink. That's twice I've seen him blush. It was nice to know he was human at least. We dragged our luggage (well, only I did, Henry and Steve lifted them) to the front door. Steve rang the doorbell, which was the tune of 'The Saints Go Marching.'

Nice.

I could hear light footsteps coming from the other side of the door making me hold my breath. Would they like me? Honestly, I haven't been this nervous in a long time. Then, the door opened â ;

## Chapter 11: The Parker Household

### The Parker Household

Then the door opened ... to reveal a mousy lady in an unflattering black dress with white frill at the wrists and hem. Her dark hair was pulled back into a stringy bun but her heart shaped face showed kindness and a little bit of shyness too. I had expected elegant and just maybe a bit snobby but she didn't look like that at all. Adrenaline rush came though me and I decided to take a leap of courage and introduce myself first. "Hello Mrs Parker, I'm Lainie. It's so nice to meet you."

Mrs Parker's tawny eyes widened and suddenly, I could hear Henry and Steve's roar of laughter from behind me. I turned to glare icily at them. What would be so funny at a time like this?!

Oh god.

Did I have something in my hair?!

My hand flew to my hair but there was nothing I could feel there. Strange.

"Ahh Bernice," an authoritative voice floated through the hall of the house. "Who's at the door?"

"Hey *mom*," Henry greeted, making sure he stressed the word 'Mom.' I blinked and focused on the woman walking towards the door. Tall and youthful looking, the woman's ash blonde hair was pulled up into a chignon and she wore a black shift dress with matching black pumps. The woman was the epitome of elegance.

Oh no. Don't tell me she was a

"Henry, I wasn't expecting you until later! Oh how I've missed you!" My brown eyes widened as the *real* Mrs Parker embraced Henry with a hug. Henry turned to smirk at my horrified face as Mrs Parker and Steve exchanged pleasantries. After they had finished, Henry placed a large warm hand on the small of my back to which I ignored since I was so embarrassed.

"Mom, I want you my fiancée, Lainie," Henry spoke up, gently pushing me forward. My heartbeat picked up a frightful speed. I think I was going to have a heart attack. Mistaking what now obviously had been the housekeeper for Mrs Parker had totally smashed my confidence. But I knew I had to say something to seem polite.

"N-nice to meet you Mrs Parker," I said awkwardly. Kill me now.

"Oh nonsense! Please do call me Arianne," she replied with a grin. "You do not know how glad I am to meet you!"

I smiled meekly, glad she was friendly. She gushed on, "Henry has never brought a girl home! I was starting to think maybe he wasn't a well you know, *straight*."

"*Mom!*" Henry yelped, horrified his mother would think such a thing about him. "You know I'm not *gay!*"

Steve and I stood there trying not to laugh. The idea of Henry being gay was just plain funny.

## Fake Fiancee

"Well I knew you were with girls Henry dear, but how was I supposed to know if it wasn't just a cover up?!" Arianne said defensively, blushing a light pink, while Henry rolled his eyes. "As a mother, I worry about everything!"

"Well you don't have to worry now," Henry said motioning his head to me.

"I know," Arianne replied with a smile. She turned her alabaster face to me, looking very apologetic. "I'm so sorry you had to hear what I thought previously, Lainie."

I gave her a reassuring smile. My heart had calmed down knowing that Arianne wasn't a snobby lady. "It's fine."

Arianne then gasped. "Oh how rude of me, leaving you all out on the porch! Come in, come in!"

Steve laughed. "You honestly hadn't noticed we were standing out here for the past ten minutes?"

"I wouldn't say ten Steve, maybe five," Arianne replied with a chiming laugh.

As I walked through the door, I smiled to myself. There were a lot of antiques in here. Arianne called Bernice to bring our luggage to our rooms and led us through the golden foyer and into a sitting room. I sat on the ivory and turquoise striped settee by the window and Henry was made to sit next to me. Ugh.

Then he put his arm around my small shoulder and pulled me to him making me widen my eyes. I didn't think I could handle the proximity. Arianne started asking us questions such as how we met and what our first date was like (we used the day when we Henry stole my first kiss at the beach, although we didn't mention it had been my first.) Arianne was very charming - I liked her. I wouldn't mind having her as my mother in law or my actual mother.

"So both of you, have you set a date for the wedding?" Arianne asked, leaning forward eagerly.

Henry and I froze and Steve awkwardly coughed. We weren't actually going to get married. I was supposed to break the engagement off later.

"I was thinking a spring wedding would be very fine," Arianne mused. "Maybe we could hire Evan Molière to cater. His appetizers are to *die* for - especially his zucchini fritters and verrines!"

"Oh Mom, Lainie was thinking of wearing a pink fluffy Barbie dress as her wedding dress," Henry said, smirking.

I elbowed him in the ribs to show that wasn't what we were supposed to say. "Actually Arianne, Henry and I have decided it's a bit too early to be thinking about our wedding. I haven't started college yet." Saying that made me feel like a knocked up teenager.

Arianne blinked. "Oh of course, of course! But it could never hurt to think about those things right?"

"Of course not," Henry replied easily, flashing a grin at me. How could he remain so happy?!

"So, how's Rafferty?" Steve asked as Bernice came into the room with a silver tray of juice and biscuits. I had the feeling Steve was uncomfortable with the word 'wedding' as I was. The weird thing was, I felt Henry stiffen next to me after Steve had asked that. Strange. Who was Rafferty?

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Arianne smiled as she took her glass of juice. "He's very good. He's on a business trip at the moment in New York but he'll be back in two days."

After Arianne had said that, Henry's fists were nearly shaking and his jaw was clenched. Whoever this Rafferty was obviously had issues with Henry. Or Henry had issues with him. "Who's Rafferty?" I asked politely. I was very interested to see who could make Henry like this.

"My husband," Arianne replied.

Oh. So that was why Henry's mood had gone downhill. I took a sip of my juice from the glass coffee table to try and avoid the awkward silence.

"Mom, do you mind showing us our rooms?" Henry asked. "I'm sure Lainie's tired and Steve must have some work to catch up with."

"Of course!" Arianne exclaimed. "Bernice would show you where you are staying."

Henry rolled his eyes. "I know where I'm staying. My room."

Arianne then guiltily looked away. "Actually your father turned your room into his personal office. Please don't be mad dear!"

Henry stood up and scowled. "What gave him the right to do that?!" He yelled.

"He said your room is bigger than his office and he wanted a bigger office. It's not like you live in there anyway!" Arianne exclaimed hysterically.

Henry scoffed. "But I stay here. Just show me where I'm sleeping then."

Arianne sighed and called Bernice to show all of us to our rooms. She led us up the stairs, to the right and past a mezzanine. She showed where Steve was staying, and then continued further down the corridor.

"Here is where Mr Henry and Miss Lainie are staying," Bernice murmured with a little French accent.

I did a double take. What?! "I'm sorry, but did you just say we're sharing the same room?" I asked a little horrified.

Bernice nodded quickly and left while I stood there stunned. I had to share a room with the king of jerks. "Coming in or what?" Henry asked, amused at my reaction. I fumed and walked slowly into the room.

"You're sleeping on the couch," I automatically said. In a house like this, there must be a couch in the room.

"What couch?" Henry asked, smirking. "I see no couch."

I looked around the room we were staying in. There was a queen sized, oak four poster bed with powder blue drapes but no couch. *No couch!* Just arched windows, a Persian rug, a plasma TV hanging on the wall in front of the bed and a closet.

"Looks like we'll be sharing a bed pancake," Henry sang with a wink.

## Chapter 12: Family Time!

### Family Time!

"No we're not," I snapped back. This couldn't be happening.

"Yes we are."

"You're sleeping on the floor peanut."

"You can't force me."

"I will kick you off the bed!" I threatened.

"I'd like to see you try," Henry snickered, pointing to his oh-so-godly chest, indicating his muscles. Failing to think of a comeback, I watched helplessly as Henry took out a towel and his toiletry bag (yes, he had a toiletry bag) and walked into the adjoining bathroom. Groaning frustratedly, I searched through my suitcase to find my iPod and earphones. Listening to music always cheers me up.

After about fifteen minutes of listening to *Tainted Love* on repeat, Henry walked out of the bathroom with only a thin white towel wrapped around his waist. My breath hitched and I tried looking away. I *tried*, but unfortunately I was a normal teenage girl. I cursed myself and quickly tried snapping out.

"See something you like?" Henry asked with a wink. Alright, that snapped me out of it. Henry's gigantic ego snapped me out of everything.

"In your dreams."

"Oh yes pancake." Henry said with a chuckle. He grabbed a pair of jeans and a T shirt from his suitcase and added, "You will starr in my dreams."

Scoffing, I turned my attention back to my music and tried to figure out how to convince or trick Henry into sleeping on the floor. As I pondered on non-realistic possibilities, I distinctly heard the doorbell ring (you seriously can't miss it) and then some talking.

Curiously got the better of me so I sat up and stopped my music. I hopped up from the luxurious bed went to open the door. I walked down the polished parquet corridor and grinned as I rounded the corner to the flight of stairs.

Talking animatedly to Arianne was April; her red wavy hair left down as usual with a pair of Gucci sunglasses perched on her head. As if sensing I was there, she looked up.

"Lainie!" She cried, hurrying up the stairs to hug me. I was yet to get used to her over enthusiasm.

"Hey April," I said, giving her a smile. "How was your drive here?"

She shrugged as we both stepped down the stairs back to Arianne, who suddenly excused herself after Bernice had told her a call from London was waiting for her. I know right, London? "Refreshing."

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She linked her arm with mine and dragged me into a different room, most probably the lounge - with the plasma TV, the leather sofas and the large black piano on a raised platform of carpet.

"I can't wait for dinner tonight!" April exclaimed, plopping herself on the sofa. "We're trialling six dishes of Vivian Redalfo's since Mom invited extra guests for the anniversary party. I bet they'll be so yummy! I heard one of the dishes was a black forest cake! A *black forest cake!*"

I was slightly confused and so not used to all these things rich people do and the luxuries they have. We were trialling six dishes of a caterer? Back at home, I'd have Instant Noodles. "Who's Vivian Redalfo? What anniversary party?"

April clucked her tongue and rolled her lash thickened eyes. "Vivian Redalfo! She's a caterer. I've never tasted her food but I've heard she adds nice twists to her food."

"Ohh," I murmured.

April laughed at my response and continued. "As for the anniversary party, it's the day after father's birthday. Weird if you ask me. It's going to be mom and father's twentieth wedding anniversary. I got them a present a few days ago! I found the champagne they used at their wedding and bought a small box. It's very rare and it took me like a week to track the thing down!"

I noticed April called her mom 'mom' and her dad 'father' but decided not to say it aloud. The word 'father' was more distant than 'dad.' Then I realised I had to get a present for Mr and Mrs Parker's wedding anniversary and a birthday present for Mr Parker! Crap!

"Hey April?"

"Yeeees?"

"Do you think you could take me shopping sometime before your dad's birthday? I haven't gotten him a present, or a present for the wedding anniversary."

"You don't have to! Mom and Dad are not expecting anything," April said with a snort. "Mom already thinks you're a gift anyway. You're the key to giving her lovely grandchildren."

I grimaced. This girl. I never ever wanted Henry Parker's babies. Ever. Not in a billion years. I decided to skip the awkward subject of making babies with my fake fiancée and onto the subject of buying presents. Presents were much more pleasant a topic if you ask me. "But I should buy them something! Take me out shopping so you can help me pick something out!" I begged.

April sighed. "It's already done. We're going out tomorrow because Mom needs to buy some things for the anniversary party. Oh, and she also wants you to see the *'beauty of Newport.'* Oh, you want to go to the beach sometime? Maybe tomorrow or the day after? It'll be fun, I promise!"

I laughed inside my head. April was so talkative and bubbly.

"Oh and maybe I could grab a hot surfer," April mused.

"Sure that'd be fun," I replied, giving her a smile. I never had anything against the beach "Flirting with surfer dudes."

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"Lainie, you're *engaged!*" April squealed, nudging me in the rib.

Ouch. I always managed to forget I was engaged to an arrogant jerk. "Oh yeah," I replied, managing a weak laugh.

"Oh well. A surfer dude is way better than that cad of my brother. And btw, which means by the way, I can't believe you just said surfer dude," April said with a giggle.

I laughed with her. She was so entertaining. It was too bad I hadn't met any girls like her back home. I think April got her friendliness from her mother.

"Well â I can't believe you said btw," I shot back, sticking out my tongue.

"I'm having an influence on you," April said approvingly and looking a bit smug.

"No you aren't."

April put a hand to her heart and grinned. "Well, might as well play something since there's nothing to do. Up for Wii?"

"Your parents have Wii?" I asked dubiously. I couldn't imagine Mr and Mrs Parker playing Mario Kart.

"It belongs to me and Henry," April explained, getting up from the sofa and going to set up the Wii. "We keep a Wii here to entertain ourselves whenever we stay here. Oh, and Mom uses it for yoga."

We ended up playing hours of Wii. I won against April in tennis and boxing in Wii Sport and I was horrible at golf. I had no idea how to play golf and ended up getting bogeys. Meanwhile, April was an expert and had cackled evilly every time I had gotten a bogey. We played other games too such as Kingdom Hearts III (which was kind of addictive to me). But of course, in the end we played the classic Mario Kart for hours. Henry had joined to play too. In the middle of a race on Rainbow Road (which I was coming sixth by the way), the doorbell rang. April paused the game to look out the window.

"Ooh dinner's here!" April exclaimed, turning back to us with excitement in her brown eyes.

"Finally," Henry muttered.

After Bernice opened the door and helped Vivian bring in the dishes from her car, we all helped set up the table. That included Henry, who was absolutely clueless. He put the spoon on the left side of the plate, to which April Gibbs smacked him.

I ended up sitting next to Henry of course. On my left was Arianne, who was the head of the table. April sat across from me, looking excited to be trialling Vivian Re-whatever's dishes. Steve sat next to her, laying a napkin on his lap. I snickered at that. We had to practically drag him out of his room to come downstairs to eat. He really needed something to take his mind off work. As I came up with possibilities, Vivian came out with the dishes and her eyes widened when she saw me and Henry.

I guess she must be a fan of Henry and I. Or maybe just Henry.

I had to admit, dinner was very nice. And the black forest cake April had mentioned had been a little taste of heaven. Seriously. It was my new favourite cake.

## Fake Fiancee

After Vivian had left, we all trooped to the lounge and debated on what movie we should watch. In the end, we agreed on Inception. I was made to sit next to Henry.

Arianne was the only one who was lost, and kept asking Steve (who was sitting next to her) to explain to her what was going on. For me, it was kind of confusing too.

I was suddenly feeling very sleepy and my eyes started closing. Henry somehow noticed and pulled me against him. Maybe it was because I was only half awake because Henry was a very good pillow. As my eyes started to droop, I smiled. I smiled because all of us - me, Henry, April, Steve and Arianne, sitting in the lounge room watching Inception â I don't know, but we felt like a family. A *real* family.

## Chapter 13: Surprises & Secrets!

### Surprises & Secrets

Stretching, I rolled over to cuddle up with my pillow. I could feel the hot sun creeping into the room and burning my back. Groaning, I held my pillow tighter, not wanting to wake up. I never knew a pillow could be so comfortable or smell so *nice*. This had to be hands down the nicest pillow I've ever felt.

"Morning pancake," a deep voice whispered, making me frown. The voice sounded so *familiar*

Opening my eyes slowly, I looked at my surroundings to find that I was in a strangely familiar room and staring at a horribly familiar face.

"AHH GET OFF ME!"

I scrambled out of bed as quickly as I could. No no no. It couldn't be!

"Ehem, you were on *me*," Henry corrected, raising any eyebrow.

"No I wasn't!" I exclaimed, my heart pounding in my chest. I hoped this was just a very, *very* bad dream.

"You were. You were cuddling me all night. I tried to pry your hands off me but wow, you're really heavy." Henry chuckled. Meanwhile, I was completely speechless. How in the world did I end up in the bed with Henry?! I tried desperately to recall the events of last night and remembered *we* were all watching Inception and then *blacking out*.

Oh dear.

Needing some way to release my horror, anger and frustration at my own stupidity, I grabbed a pillow of the bed and whacked Henry until no end, aiming at his precious face.

"Yikes Lainie! You - *ouch!* Geez you're - like - GODZILLA! *OW!*"

I smiled evilly but my smile faded as Henry managed to wrestle the pillow from my hands. Crap. I jumped off the bed immediately and shrieked as Henry ran after me. "You're going to get it pancake!" I threw open the door to the corridor and yelped as I nearly ran smack face into a sleepy looking April.

"Hi Apr-HEY!" I turned around and elbowed him in the stomach. He had hit me with the pillow!

Henry cursed loudly. Rolling my eyes, I turned back to April who was in her red kimono. "Morning April!" I chirped, happy to see her. Then I realised that April was standing outside our bedroom door. Unsurely, I added, "Err ... what are you doing here?"

"You guys are such a racket! Why are you screaming at seven in the morning?" She complained, rubbing her right eye. I guessed she wasn't a morning person.

"Oh *I*!"

"Lainie had a nightmare," Henry lied smoothly. I felt him put an arm around my shoulder as if to comfort me, which made me squirm slightly. "I tried to get her to calm down but she wouldn't. Then she started whacking

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me with a pillow! You women have issues."

"Hey!" April and I snapped. Henry laughed at our over-defensive response.

"Just keep it down. I want to sleep!" With that, she made her way drowsily back to her room.

"You heard her. Stop screaming pancake." I turned around, grabbed a hold of his ear and yanked it. "Ow!" He seemed to be saying that a lot this morning.

"Listen here *peanut*," I hissed menacingly. "You are sleeping on the floor from now on. Are we clear?"

My face must've looked like some serial killer for Henry gulped. "Well â uhh what if someone walks in on us?" He whispered nervously. "They'll think we're getting a divorce."

"We're not even married yet," I reminded him, while repressing the urge to smack my forehead from his stupidity.

"Oh .. right. Well you know what I mean," he said hastily, trying to wave it off. "If someone, and by that I mean *mom*, checks up on us during the night and sees me on the floor â what do you think would happen?"

I shrugged.

"Exactly. We can share the same bed but I'll stick to one side you stick to the other. The bed's big enough so that we can both stretch and not hit each other. And I promise, promise, *promise* â swear on my Grandma Cece's grave I won't make a move on you."

That sounded â alright. Looking at Henry, he seemed desperate. Wow.

"Ok, we'll share the same bed, but I won't like it."

"I'm absolutely offended, Miss Watson," Henry said, feigning hurt by putting a hand to his heart. "Waking up to your handsome fianc e is like a dream!"

I rolled my eyes. He really needed to get over himself. "By the way ... you shouldn't swear on your grandmother's grave. We both know I'm too tempting for my own good," I added, feeling very hypocritical.

"You are," I thought I heard him mutter.

\* \* \*

"April, come and help me pick out some decorations," Arianne ordered.

Arianne, Henry, April and I were strolling along strips of shops in Newport. Steve meanwhile, had resorted to staying his room and arranging our plans for Curacao. Perfectionist.

"But I'm helping Lainie buying the presents-" April then stopped herself and a look of understanding flashed across her face. Arianne was looking pointedly at Henry and I. "*Oh!* I'd love to come!"

I watched, embarrassed as they walked away together. They were obviously trying to give Henry and I alone time.

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"Well this is great," I mumbled.

"Yeah, I'm stuck with you," Henry pointed out.

I sighed. "Well, since you're here, make yourself useful. What does your dad want for his birthday? And what should I get for your parents wedding anniversary?"

"Nothing will ever be good enough for him," he muttered. I flinched. I didn't want to anger him further so I started walking ahead and looking through shop windows to see if there was anything I could buy. As I frowned, thinking of ideas, Henry came up next to me.

"Maybe you could buy some china for their wedding anniversary. Mom loves china," he said, nodding over to a home ware store up ahead.

"Yes! You're the best!" I exclaimed, grinning. China sets seemed to be a very good idea for Arianne. I grabbed his arm and rushed over to the home ware store.

"Did you just say I was the best?" Henry asked, a bit smug.

I rolled my eyes and walked into the store, trying to find some elegant china sets. Henry followed me looking bored. "How about this one?" I asked, pointing to a green and white one. Henry pursed his lips and looked around. I watched as he started walking thoughtfully through the small store. He stopped by a shelf and I frowned.

"This one." Henry said, loud enough so I could hear. I rushed over to him and stared. It was perfect. According to the sign, it was a Vintage English China Set.

"It's perfect," I breathed happily.

"May I help you?"

I spun around at the voice of the plump sales lady and smiled. "Yes. I would like to buy this set."

"Ahh, beautiful choice you've made there," she said. She told us to wait by the counter while she went into the storeroom to grab a new box. When she finally came out and put it into a nice bag, Henry flashed a grin and handed over some notes.

"You can keep the change," he said.

My eyes widened. "No I'll pay!" I insisted, taking my money from the pocket of my denim shorts. Henry folded his hand around mine and tucked my notes back into my pocket. I felt a blush rising up from my neck.

"I'm paying," he said quietly, his face inches from mine.

"Ok." I gulped.

He chuckled and led me out onto the streets again. For Mr Parker's birthday present, we found a nice watch in a jewellery store and Henry ended up paying for it again. That was only because he was a movie star so the lady behind the counter took his money. I couldn't believe him. When did he become such a gentleman? Even though I knew he hated me, I had the feeling he was only buying the watch because I would feel guilty if I didn't get his dad anything. I really wanted to know what was up with his dad. After Henry led us to the car

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and stowed the presents in the trunk, he turned to me.

"Can I ask you something?"

"Sure pancake."

Ugh, what a jerk. "Why do you hate your dad so much?" I asked.

His eyes turned to me and they were intense, making my legs feel like jelly. What was he thinking? His eyes seemed to be searching for mine, looking for something, and I had no idea if what he was searching for was within me. But I guess it was, because he smiled and grabbed my hand, taking me to who knew where.

"Hey! Where are we going?!" I exclaimed, struggling to keep up with him. He wouldn't answer and I saw people staring at us curiously. After leading me out of town, I started to panic.

"Ok Henry! You better tell me where we're going or I'm going to-"

"Do you trust me?" Henry cut me off, his eyes boring softly into mine.

I blinked and replayed the question he had just asked in my head. For some odd reason, all my panic, my doubts and generally my negative thoughts melted away. Did I trust Henry? Of course I did. I knew he wouldn't do anything bad to me intentionally. Even though he was a jerk and liked to tease me I trusted him. "Yes."

He smiled slightly and led me further, through a few alleyways. Finally we ended up by the seaside. We were at the beach! How in the world did a few alleyways lead to a bright, sunny beach? Newport was definitely weird. "We're going to the beach?" I asked, stunned.

"Not exactly."

We walked past the crowded beach and around some sort of cliff thing. There was a small, unsmooth trek on the side of the road. And guess what? Yes, Henry led me there. He helped me as I nearly stumbled which made me smile.

"Like it?" He asked.

Huh? What did he mean? I looked around at my surroundings and gasped. We had reached a secluded area of the beach and there was no one there. It was all to ourselves.

"Wow," I murmured. It was so cool! Ever since I was small, I've always wanted my own little place. I also knew when people showed you their own little place, you meant something to them. I wondered if that applied to the guy standing beside me. "Henry?"

"Hmm?" I watched as Henry moved forward to sit himself down on the sand.

"Do you bring everyone here?" I tried to make it sound as casual as possible, but it was evident I was really curious.

"No. Why?" He asked, frowning.

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I shrugged to make myself look nonchalant and plopped myself down next to him. He was showing me his secret place! And he had never shown anyone else before! I ran my fingers through the soft, warm sand while Henry gazed at the small waves coming in from the sparse ocean.

"I never used to hate my father. In fact, I used to try and get his attention," Henry said out of the blue.

I looked up, shocked he was starting the conversation and that Henry never used to hate his father. "Get his attention?"

"Yeah. Don't tell anyone though. I only discovered my talent for acting and playing the guitar because of my father. When I was eight, I thought if I was Prince Charming in the school play, he would be proud of me. I was wrong. He didn't even come to watch me. I felt like nothing I ever did was good enough for him."

"The first time I played the ukulele for him, he said I was horrible. Everyone said I was talented though, but their opinions never mattered. Only my father's. That's the reason I don't really play guitar unless I'm by myself. I still wonder, did he really think it was horrible?"

"You're not horrible," I whispered. I used to be like Henry too, trying to get my mother's attention. But a few years ago, I realised it didn't matter if she cared about me or not. I stopped giving a damn about her.

He laughed bitterly at that. "I used to try drawing, cleaning his office and buying him the best birthday presents. But it was never enough. I used to cry a lot."

I bit my lip. I had used to try and get my mother's attention, to no avail, and had spent hours in my room crying at night because of that. I knew how Henry felt. We were alone together.

"But things kind of changed. When I was about thirteen, my father had a new business associate. She was always over at our house with my dad. Well anyway, one day mom, April and I went ice skating and I twisted my ankle. Mom wanted to bring me home but I insisted that she stay with April and have a good time. So Mom called Bernice to pick me up and tend to my ankle at home. After she did, I had to limp up the stairs to my room but I wanted to visit my father. So I opened the door to his office and "

Henry had stopped and his fists were clenched. His eyes had turned dark and he bowed his head out of embarrassment? Shame? I couldn't see where the story was leading to. "And?" I prompted gently.

"He and I he was with his business associate. *With* her."

I gasped. What scum Mr Parker was! Arianne was a perfect wife and he had cheated on her?! "I'm so sorry," I whispered, putting a hand gently on his shoulder. Henry had looked up to his father, who was a cheater. Geez, what a childhood.

"He made me promise not to tell. He said it was a mistake. So I did. I wanted my father's love. But god, I felt so horrible. Every time mom did something nice for him, I felt like screaming out his secret. But a few years later maybe around when I was seventeen, I saw him with another woman. I realised what a fool I had been to keep his secret. So when I threatened to tell mom, he he "

I don't know why, but I had the huge instinct to wrap my arms around him. And I did. I could tell he was surprised but he didn't say anything. "You don't have to tell me," I said.

"Nah, I want to get this out," he murmured with a sad laugh. "He punched me in the face. And threatened to do more than that if I said another word. But I said no and he got angrier. He then threatened he would do the

## Fake Fiancee

same to April and I â my mom and my sister are weaknesses. I couldn't. So I kept it secret. I know he still cheats on my mom, but I just â I don't want him hurting April. Ever."

I gasped. Mr Parker was horrible! Oh lord and I had bought him a present! Now I really felt like punching him in the face.

"You know that caterer from last night?" He asked.

I nodded.

"Yeah, well â she was that woman with my father when he punched me. She just stood there, scared out of her mind that my mom would find out," he said darkly.

My eyes widened. "*Her?* She was with your dad?!"

He nodded while I grimaced. "You know, I understand. My mother pounces on every hot guy who walks past," I admitted.

Henry's eyes widened briefly. "I'm sorry ... for being a jerk to you all this time and you've had a ... slutty mother on your hands." Then he realised that he had just insulted my mother and quickly added, "no offence."

I waved off his apology. "Don't worry," I replied. "But *no offence*, your father and my mother would suit each other." I always had the tendency to lighten up a situation. Henry's lips twitched.

My relationship with Henry had changed majorly. He had decided to tell his secret to *me* out of all people. I couldn't help but smile at that. "You know â for a peanut, you aren't so bad," I said with a small laugh, digging my toes into the sand.

Henry's face, which had been emotionless, cracked into a wide smile. "You aren't so bad either pancake."

We both laughed at this awkward situation. Suddenly, his phone went off and he rolled his eyes. "Way to ruin our moment," he muttered. He picked up. "Hello?"

I watched as the happy expression on his face fell. I frowned. I wondered who he was talking to and what had happened. As soon as he shut his phone off, he turned to me. "We have to go."

"Why?" I asked, bewildered.

Henry's eyes darkened and he ran a hand through his dark midnight hair. "Because my father has come back home from New York a day early."

## Chapter 14: Talk About A Dreadful Dinner

### Talk About a Dreadful Dinner

Oh god. My heart was beating so fast it felt like it would jump out of my chest. I was scared. Yes, I was actually *scared*. Henry pulled up on the driveway and I unbuckled my seatbelt slowly and managed to get out of the car. Henry put an arm comfortingly around my shoulder. Who knew he could be so nice?

For some reason the front door was unlocked. Henry pushed open the door and we found April sitting on the foot of the stairs, her arms wrapped around her knees. Once she saw us come in, she smiled weakly.

"Where are they?" Henry asked.

"They're upstairs talking," April answered in a dead tone. "I haven't seen him & I don't want to see him & !"

I was surprised at this new April. She was always so ... *happy*.

"It always happens," she muttered, looking down. "He's going to put me down about my choice of career & I make me give up."

As Henry was about to say something, I cut him off. "April, you know you're good at what you do. You can't just give up because of one person, who is frankly an ass. You're stronger than that."

She smiled at me and I was proud of myself for cheering her up. I felt Henry nudge me and I looked up at him, frowning. "What?"

He nodded over to the staircase, behind April. I gulped. Standing halfway on the stairs was an older, stricter version of Henry. His hair had streaks of grey and he had piercing, glassy eyes. Henry's dad.

And by god, did he look intimidating!

Behind him was Arianne, chewing on her lip at the awkward situation.

"It's a pleasure to meet you too Miss Watson," Rafferty said dryly with a hint of mocking and sarcasm.

Crap! He had heard me call him an ass! And he called me 'Miss Watson'! Not good. Oh god, I was going to be punched in the face too! "I-I'm sorry sir. I didn't-I didn't mean & !"

"Father this is Lainie, my *fiancée*," Henry said, in a tone which told his father to respect me.

"I've heard."

The five of us stood there, quiet. I looked away to avoid the glare Rafferty was giving me. I felt like I should've glare back at him but I just couldn't bring myself to do it, especially after calling him an ass while he was in the room.

Being Steve, he chose to come downstairs right at that moment, whistling to Greensleeves. "Is dinner ready?" He asked, totally oblivious to the tension.

"It is," Arianne recovered, giving everyone a smile. "A feast awaits us!"

## Fake Fiancee

"A feast?" Rafferty asked her.

Arianne nodded. "It's a welcome home and birthday dinner for you, dear."

"What?! I told you not to do anything!" Rafferty said angrily.

Arianne cowered a little, but being strong-willed, she didn't back down. "I wanted to do it. For you."

"God Arianne, you never listen to me do you?" Rafferty muttered, walking off first into the dining room.

What a jerk he was! He was so *à* controlling! Not everything was about him! Arianne flushed at his comment and Steve told her he was probably grouchy from lack of food on the plane. I nearly laughed at that.

The dining room had been decorated with two banners hanging on the wall - one saying 'Happy Birthday,' and one saying 'Welcome Home.' The large table was cluttered with silverware and food. The only food which caught my eye was the roast chicken in the middle of the table. It looked mouth-watering. There was lobster, salads, pastries and even a fancy cheesecake which I assumed was the 'birthday cake.'

Steve whistled. "Nice."

We all sat down. Steve was on my left and Henry on my right. I was grateful I didn't have to sit next to Rafferty. Now that would be torture.

"Shall we open the presents?" Arianne suggested. She seemed like the perfect hostess and wife, with her charming dimpled smile and graciousness. She turned to Rafferty, who didn't respond and took that as a yes.

Bernice came in holding a pile of presents. I suddenly remembered mine was still sitting in Henry's car. "Henry," I exclaimed. "My present's still in the car!"

"I'll get it." I watched as Henry left the room quickly. In less than half a minute, he was back. He put the emerald green gift bag which held the watch on top of the pile of presents. We didn't sing 'Happy Birthday' to Rafferty because apparently it was 'childish.'

He started off with a present wrapped in blue and silver stripes. It was from Arianne. He read the card quickly and set it back down, before turning to his present. It was a new black sleek briefcase with an expensive pen by Parker brand. I found that funny and smart, since his surname was Parker. Being the jerk Rafferty was, he didn't say thank you. He just moved on.

April's present was business shirts and a yearly subscription to some Investors magazine, while Steve's was a silver portable DVD player.

When he found out I had gotten him a present, his mouth had set into a grim line. Arianne had exclaimed happily over the watch and said thank you for him. I was glad at least someone thought it was nice.

There was one more present left for Rafferty and it turned out to be Henry's. I was surprised he had actually gone to the trouble of buying something. So did everyone else.

"You actually bought him something?" April murmured, surprised.

Henry smiled smugly. "Yeah."

## Fake Fiancee

His smile indicated something mischievous. Ok, I was getting excited.

We all waited impatiently (though no one showed it) to find out what he bought. To make it worse, Rafferty was unwrapping it very, very slowly. Finally, we all got to see what it was.

I gaped. Oh my god. Henry had bought his father-

"A pink thong?!" Steve exclaimed. Not bothering to hide his amusement, he burst into guffaws.

I seriously wanted to laugh â so bad. I think Henry was reminding his father about his love affairs. Rafferty's expression obviously said he didn't think it was funny. I also spotted Arianne's pink cheeks. Poor Arianne. She thought Henry meant her and Rafferty.

I turned to Henry who was smirking. "I hope you like it father,' he said with a straight face.

April and I giggled.

"Why don't we start eating?" Arianne said in a shaky voice. But of course, she mustered up a smile for everyone.

"Yes, I think eating is a great idea," Rafferty snapped, picking up his fork and knife. He ordered Bernice to put the presents away, in his room and we finally started to dig into the 'feast.'

Nearly everyone went for the chicken first. How could you not? It looked so damn tempting. My mouth was practically watering.

"Oh I have news by the way," Steve announced, turning to me and Henry. "The schedule's been shifted. Henry, you have to start filming on Saturday, so we have to leave here on Friday."

I blinked. Friday was the day of Arianne and Rafferty's wedding anniversary party.

"Oh! So you can't stay for the party?" Arianne asked, disappointed.

"I'm sorry Arianne," Steve said a little guilty. "I wish we could."

"It's fine, honestly," Arianne assured. It was quiet then, so she turned back to Steve. She was obviously a conversation starter. "So Steve, do you have a special someone in your life? By now you should be married at least!"

"I'm just not looking for marriage," Steve explained with a shrug. "Haven't met the right person."

"Speaking of marriages â Henry when will you be getting married?" Rafferty asked.

Henry stabbed his fork into his chicken. "A few years."

Rafferty laughed the type of laugh which made you want to punch them in the face. "What's the hold up?"

"Lainie and I are just busy â i"

"I thought Lainie here would have wanted a rush wedding," Rafferty mused.

## Fake Fiancee

"And why is that?" I asked before I could stop myself. I had the feeling he was going to say something bad. I was right.

He turned his dark eyes to me. "You're after the money aren't you? Well come on, how much will it keep you to stay away? A million? Two million? I'm not having the Parker reputation ruined anymore by my Hollywood actor son marrying some gold digging commoner."

I heard the clatter of the fork falling to the ground and gasps at Rafferty's nasty accusation. Meanwhile I blinked, processing what he had called me. I was about to call him something ten times worse than a gold digging commoner when Henry grabbed my wrist to stop me. He gave me a warning look so I looked down at my plate sullenly.

Stupid, rich Mr Parker. Who did he think he was?! The President of the United States?

"Father," Henry snapped.

There was an eerie silence which hung over the dinner table. Steve smiled nervously and did the cliché thing: "Potatoes anyone?" He asked loudly. I had to giggle at that and he sent me a rueful smile.

Surprisingly though, Rafferty reached for some potatoes. His face held no expression as he said, "I'll give you a chance to be a part of this family again, Henry. The CEO of ERLA's daughter is still available and my company needs ERLA's allegiance."

Ok, this man was officially deranged.

"I don't care about your damn company! How dare you ask me to marry someone else when I'm engaged!" Henry roared.

"Darling," Arianne said quietly. "Your father just-"

Henry turned his betrayed eyes to his mom. "Why are you defending him?!"

"Because he is my *husband*," Arianne said firmly. "He is your *father*. Henry, show some respect â please."

"He doesn't act like one," Henry muttered, obviously referring to his father's love affairs and punching him in the face.

I could see April biting her lip because she had heard him. Actually, I realised everyone had heard. Steve was nervously tugging at the collar of his shirt, Rafferty was glaring at Henry and Arianne looked confused a bit.

"Did you mean he doesn't act like a husband or a father?" She asked.

"Both," Henry spat in disgust.

"What do you mean? He's a wonderful husband â!"

"He's uncommitted," Henry said with a snort.

Unconsciously, I took his hand and squeezed it gently; silently communicating to him I was there for him. He actually responded by gripping it tighter. Rafferty's eyes had zoomed onto Henry's and he was giving him a warning look. He looked ready to murder him. I couldn't believe this man.

## Fake Fiancee

Arianne deserved to know the truth. We could deal with Rafferty's threat about hurting April. Either because she was grown up now, he wouldn't hurt her or we could find something else. Personal bodyguard â restriction from going one mile near her â

All I knew was that Rafferty deserved to be shamed.

"Henry â I think you should tell them. It's unfair. You're all grown up now," I murmured. Henry didn't say anything. I continued. "Do you really want your mom to be stuck in this awful marriage?"

Henry grimaced. Yes! I think he might've taken the bait â

It turned out I was right because then, all of Rafferty's shameful secrets were laid out to everyone.

## Chapter 15: Tensions & Confessions

### Tension & Confessions

After Henry had told everything, it had been a bit of a mess. Ok, well that was an understatement. It turned out Arianne knew her husband had been cheating on her. A good friend of hers from Rafferty's company had heard he had been with his secretary and told Arianne.

Rafferty's face had been priceless when he found out. He had denied everything and accused Henry of trying to ruin his 'perfect' marriage. I had snorted at that. He called a perfect marriage based on lies? Talk about deluded.

April had been horrified that her father would have hurt her to keep his secret and now wouldn't go anywhere near Rafferty, while Arianne had decided she needed some time to think, and had gone up to her bedroom. Steve had said he was going to make sure she was ok which had made Rafferty turn into a red-faced bull.

He had ended up driving off somewhere. I had hoped he ended driving off a cliff somewhere.

He had ended up coming back home at three in the morning when we had all been asleep. I remembered how I had woken up - a loud high pitched scream had woken me from my deep slumber. The bed I was sleeping on had shifted and I had realised it was Henry, jumping out of bed and bolting out of the room. I had followed and heard Henry yelling, calling his father a bastard. As I rushed into the room, I saw a beautiful sight: Henry had just socked his father in the nose. Sweet payback.

Rafferty had come back home and Arianne had told him she wanted a divorce, making Rafferty turn into more than just a red-faced bull. Plus, he had been drunk and alcohol *always* makes things worse. People don't think straight, get depressed, high or aggressive and end up doing something they regret. That was why I never touched alcohol.

He had punched her in the jaw and that had been when Steve and Henry burst into the room. Steve had comforted a whimpering Arianne while Henry had let out all his anger onto his father.

Henry had called the cops to take him to the station. The next day, Arianne and Henry had paid a visit to the station to give their statements and take a photo of Arianne's bruise as evidence. The rest of the day we just spent hanging out at home eating ice cream and watching movies (April's idea). Even Henry and Steve participated, although they felt like complete idiots. Henry had said to live life, aka party all night, not to stay at home watching chick flicks like girls. Well who could blame us? We were girls.

Now it was Friday morning, the day we would be flying out to Curacao for Henry's filming and the day Rafferty and Arianne were supposed to be celebrating their 20th wedding anniversary. Not much of a celebration when the husband is in jail and the wife wants a divorce. I really couldn't believe we were leaving though. It had been such a short stay!

"I can't believe you get a holiday while I'm stuck at UCLA." April grumbled as she gave me a hug.

"It's not exactly a holiday," Henry said wryly. "For me it's work."

She stuck her tongue out at him and then went to give him a hug too. Steve and Arianne then came into view, standing in the doorframe on the other side of the foyer. While April and Henry joked around about something, I tuned into Steve and Arianne's conversation, feeling a bit shameful.

## Fake Fiancee

"Have fun Steve," Arianne said softly, her smile highlighting the small dimple in her cheek.

"Bye Arianne," Steve said, giving her a smile too. "And remember, don't stress yourself out. You have a habit of doing that."

Arianne's lips twitched. "Well I seem to remember you being absolutely lazy, so you should make sure you're working hard. Remember how you practically made me write half of your English essay for you? In junior year?"

What? They knew each other since freakin' *junior year*?! I strained my ears for more, while pretending to be laughing along with April calling her brother a pig.

"I've grown up now," Steve defended.

"I know," Arianne said softly looking down at her hands. Then she looked back up and ruffled Steve's hair.

I didn't dare believe what was seeing. Both were smiling at each other as if they had some sort of secret and their eyes were twinkling â ;

There was no doubt the way they were looking at each other was love.

\* \* \*

Kicking back, I made a mental note to buy a private jet one day if I ever become rich enough. They were so cool. I was relaxing back on the built in white couch with my feet on the small table in front of me. Henry's private jet had two rooms and I was in the more relaxing one. Henry was sitting across from me and eating some grapes, while Steve was in the other room, most likely on his beloved laptop.

"I want grapes too," I said with my eyes closed and my head rested on the leather of the couch.

"Alright," Henry answered.

"HEY!" *Oh my god!* He chucked at grape at my face! I felt it roll of my face and onto the leather of the couch.

"You said you wanted grapes, so I gave one to you," Henry explained with a snicker.

I rolled my eyes. What an idiot. "I meant *pass the bowl*. Not chuck a grape."

"Oh c'mon! Chucking grapes is fun! I do it all the time." Henry took hold of another grape and aimed it at my face again. I dodged it quickly but it still hit my hair.

"Stop it!"

"Make me."

Oh I'll make you. Grabbing the bowl of strawberries in front of me, I expertly aimed one at Henry's nose.

"Hey!"

I laughed at Henry's incredulous expression. "That's what you get for being such a *peanut*."

## Fake Fiancee

"Oh you're going to get it," Henry threatened. He stood up with a wicked grin on his face. My eyes widened. What was he going to do? Suspicious, I stood up and backed away. Henry still stalked forward, looking like a crazy animal after his prey. I couldn't even get past him to the door which led to the other room where Steve was! I was trapped.

"AHH!" Henry suddenly yelled, leaping at me. I screamed as he tackled me onto the couch, tickling my sides endlessly. Crap. I was done for.

"OH MY GOD! ST-STOP!"

His rough hands poking and tickling my sides was absolute torture. I hated being a person who was ticklish. "Please," I added weakly, trying not to laugh so hard tears would come out of my eyes.

Then Henry stopped. Finally! I caught up with my breathing and looked up at Henry to glare at him. My eyes widened when I realised his face had been closer than I thought. If I moved just an inch forward, his lips would touch mine.

Oh my god. Why was I thinking about his lips?

His golden brown eyes looked shocked too, like he hadn't been expecting to be this close to me. I saw his eyes darken into what seemed like a lust. Like as if he was noticing me for the first time.

But was it? I haven't had much boy experience to tell, but it looked like it from romantic movies I've watched.

Henry then bolted off me, faster than I thought possible. I was breathless and confused. That was weird. I sat up carefully and watched as Henry sat back down on the couch, his eyes flickering to me. I studiously ignored him but after a while, I was becoming irritated at his averted gazes.

"What?" I asked, as he looked at me for the hundredth time.

"Nothing."

Sure Henry. I sighed and decided to escape the silence by paying a visit to Steve. He owed me an explanation too, about his relationship with Arianne. Hopping up from the couch, I strode over to the small door which led to the other room. I could feel Henry's stare on my back which made me shiver slightly.

Steve was sitting forward and typing on his laptop, frowning a bit. He looked up when I came in. "Hello Lainie," he greeted.

"Hi," I said, sitting down across from him. I leaned forward, resting my arms on the cherry wood table. "So what are you up to?"

"Just confirming our rooms."

"Huh?" I asked, confused.

"The hotel we're staying at," Steve explained. "I'm confirming our suites. Of course, you have to share with Henry again. I'm sorry if it bothers you. If word got out Henry and his fiancée don't sleep in the same room."

## Fake Fiancee

I gave him a reassuring smile. "Don't worry. I'm pretty sure there will be a couch this time. Oh by the way, what hotel are we staying in?"

Steve clicked something on his laptop and spun it around to face me. "We are staying here," he said, pointing to the screen. I took the laptop from him. We were staying at the Royal Crystal Hotel. What a name. I handed it back to him after I had scrolled through the pictures.

"That's a nice hotel," I commented.

"Five stars."

I then heard a strange 'bing' noise from Steve's laptop. He smiled widely and eagerly began reading something. Probably an email.

"What was that?" I asked.

He looked up at me. "It's an email," he answered. What a guess. "It's from Arianne. She says she's doing well. April and her went shopping today to get their minds off things â they visited Rafferty at the station â and the divorce papers aren't drawn up yet which is a shame â but generally they're doing good."

I was going to say 'that's good to hear' but the witty side got the better of me. "Yes it is a bit of a shame isn't it?"

Steve frowned. "What's a shame?"

"That the divorce papers aren't drawn up yet."

A look of understanding crossed his face. "Ohh! Yes it is."

"Yes â such a shame for you especially," I said in a bit of a nonchalant voice.

He cleared his throat uncomfortably. "What do you mean?" He asked, a bit stiff.

"Well you know with you being in love with her and all â" I said. I felt like those evil manipulating girls in the dramas who threatened to tell the mega secret of the main character. Well, it was kind of true, except I wasn't going to tell anyone.

"You're deluded Lainie," Steve said nervously.

I raised my eyebrows. "I'm sure I'm not," I replied. I leaned forward with a slight smile on my face. "Now spill. Have you really known her since *junior year*?"

He studied me for a few seconds then sighed loudly. "Fine. Arianne moved into my high school in junior year and became one of the most popular girls in the school."

"How did you meet â or whatever?"

"Well â we shared the same English class and she was, of course, very smart. The stupid teacher arranged a seating plan and she ended up next to me. She used to try and be friendly to be but â I was a bit of an ass and ignored her. Anyway, I was really bad at English - I just wasn't interested. So the teacher asked if Arianne would help tutor me in English since she was the smartest."

## Fake Fiancee

"Oooh how did that go hmm?" I asked. I was so interested in Steve's love life.

He pursed his lips. "She was very annoyed of me because I wouldn't put any effort in. But then after a while, we started to become friends and I realised in senior year that I liked her."

I smiled. It was so weird to think my uncle Steve actually fancied someone. "What happened then? How'd she end up with that jerk?" I was, of course, referring to Rafferty.

He stiffened and looked down. "That had been the worse years of my life."

"What?"

"Well, Arianne and I both ended up at the same college and around about second year, we finally confessed our feelings for each other. But when I met her family, they were displeased. I wasn't some rich guy and her family was from a good background. They told Arianne to dump me, because she had an arranged marriage to Rafferty, the heir of Parker Corporations."

I inhaled a sharp gasp. What was with rich people and arranged marriages? It seemed like when you were rich, you had an unhappy life. "Did she dump you?"

Steve snorted. "Obviously. She didn't want to disobey her parents and she didn't want her family's *reputation* ruined."

The way he spoke made him seem bitter about the whole thing. It must've been hard for him to watch the girl you love go off and marry a jerk. No wonder he hasn't been interested in any woman. It was because he was still hung up over Arianne.

## Chapter 16: Welcome to Curacao!

**Author's Note:** So guys, I hope you like this chapter since it seems a bit rushed ...

### Welcome to Curacao

When the jet finally landed in Curacao and we managed to get into the airport, Henry handed me a pair of sunglasses. He said nothing except 'put it on.'

Alright buddy.

I stuffed them on and let Henry wheel our luggage through the small airport. Once we finally got through the international flights exit, I knew why Henry had wanted me to wear sunglasses.

A large crowd of paparazzi were waiting, and once they saw us, they tried their best to get close. It was annoying. I hadn't seen them in ages. They were snapping pictures, recording videos and shouting questions such as '*Henry please comment on the issue of your father being in jail!*' and '*Lainie, is it true you are only with Henry for his money?!*'

Even though I couldn't see his expression, I sensed Henry had wanted to punch the person who had asked that. We escaped the paparazzi as we headed downstairs via the elevator. Once we reached the elevator, the three of us were relieved.

"Do you think I could stop by the ladies downstairs?" I asked. I had drunk a lot of water on the way here, which maybe wasn't such a good idea.

Steve seemed to be weighing their options. It was weird looking at him now, knowing he actually loved a woman. "Alright, but be quick. I'll wait for you outside." He then turned to Henry, who had been leaning casually against the wall of the elevator, looking bored. "Henry, you go ahead into the limo waiting for us outside. Oh, and take our luggage too."

Steve gave him a grin and Henry shrugged as if it was no big deal. Once we reached the bottom floor of the airport, we headed our separate ways. Steve escorted me to the ladies room in case I got caught up with paparazzi. And I really had no idea how to handle them. All I've been taught is 'ignore them.'

But of course, literally he didn't escort me into the ladies. He just waited around the corner, sitting on a bench.

As I walked into the toilets, my eyes widened as I realised there was a man standing by the basin. A *man!* Oh my god.

He must be a rapist or a perv. My heart was beating double time now. His eyes met mine through the mirror, which meant I was doomed. He had spotted me. I shakily pointed a finger at him (like a warning) and prepared to scream for Steve but his eyes widened and he rushed forward to cover my mouth with his hand. I screamed against his mouth and struggled out of his firm grip. Oh my god! He's going to rape me and kill me and feed my body to the sharks! I managed to get one of my hands out of his grasp and threw a hard punch at his stomach. He grunted and staggered back a bit. That was all I needed - a moment of weakness.

I slammed him against the wall and kned him in his privates. He groaned and fell to the floor.

"That's what you get rapist!" I hissed. But wow, was he a handsome one. What a waste.

## Fake Fiancee

I spun around and jogged back outside to report the guy who deserved to go to jail, but due to my clumsiness, I bumped into a man. "Oh sorry," I apologised.

The man gave me a funny look. "Did you just come out of the men's?" He asked, bemused.

"No, the ladies," I answered. To prove my point, I pointed up at the sign above the door which indicated the men's.

I felt my face burn. Great. I had mistaken an innocent guy for a rapist and beat him up. The man chuckled and continued his way down the corridor. I rushed back inside to apologise for my stupidity. He was slowly getting up from the floor, flinching from the pain. He looked up, saw my apologetic expression and figured that I had made a mistake.

"Here to throw a punch at my face too?" He asked wryly.

I shook my head. "I'm so sorry I never realised this was the mensroom."

His eyes, which were a jade green, twinkled. "I'm sorry, I didn't quite catch that."

I scowled. "You know what I mean."

A hint of a smile played on his lips. I briefly wondered why he was here in Curacao. A vacation most likely. I looked at him, I mean really looked at him. Yep, definitely a vacation. I could imagine him at the sunshine-filled beach hitting the waves. With his messy blonde locks, half hidden underneath his cap, and sun kissed skin, he seemed like a surfer.

"Apology accepted," He said. "I'm Keith."

"Oh I'm Lainie."

"Nice to meet you Lainie," Keith said, a grin tugging his mouth. But then his eyes assessed me. "But I swear I've seen you from somewhere."

I rolled my eyes. "Don't tell me it's a pick up line."

Keith surprised me by laughing. "No," he answered, sincerity in his eyes. "I just really think I've seen you from somewhere."

That was when I realised I was kind of well-known - known as Henry Parker's fiancée. And as friendly as Keith seemed, him recognizing me as the future Mrs Parker might stir trouble. So I did the sensible thing and said goodbye. "So I better go and umm do my thing."

Oh great. Smooth, real smooth Lainie. I mentally slapped myself for not thinking of a witty goodbye, or even a flirty one to say to this gorgeous guy.

Keith looked puzzled for a second, and then laughed. "Oh right! I'll leave you to it."

I awkwardly waved and walked out of the men's and into the ladies.

When I finished doing my business, I reached Steve who jumped wildly when I tapped him on the shoulder. "Well you took long," he said, as we started heading outside.

## Fake Fiancee

I sighed. "Long story short, I thought a guy was a rapist, attacked him, and then found out I was just in the wrong room."

Steve shook his head and laughed, as we went through those revolving doors which led outside. "You're incredible."

"Why thank you," I said with a laugh.

As I slid into the limo which had been waiting for us, I could see paparazzi trying to find us. Lucky we made it in time.

It was a fifteen minute drive to the hotel, which was located a few minutes from the beach. Curacao was such a little, beautiful place. I couldn't wait to get out and explore some new places and see the filming process of Henry's new film.

I then turned to Henry and frowned. He had been uncharacteristically quiet ever since the tickle fight, which worried me a little. What was wrong with him?

I then shook my head and tried not to dwell on Henry's erratic behaviour too much.

\* \* \*

Royal Crystal Hotel was spread across an impressive two hundred acres of land, five minutes from the lovely seaside. I smiled as I looked out of the white paned window. Our two suites (one for Steve and one for Henry and I) were on the second highest level of the hotel - level 34.

We had a few hours to settle in, but at six we were heading to meet the director of the movie Henry was filming - Peter Crosswire. And I think the other important cast members too. All I had done was check out the pool and our suite.

"What are you doing?"

I jumped violently and nearly slipped on the polished cherry wood floor. I turned to find Henry on the far side of the suite lying lazily on the king sized mahogany bed.

Finally he spoke! Henry was alive!

"I was just admiring the view," I answered, walking cautiously over to him. Every step I took though felt like I was on a balance beam, mainly due to what Henry's eyes were doing to me. I felt entranced. His eyes were focusing on my own, intense but pained and a little bit scared. I had no idea what caused him the pain or the fear though and I wanted to find out. Finally, I reached him and sat down on the bed next to his lying figure.

"What's wrong?" I asked, tilting my head to the side. After telling me his secrets back at Newport, I felt like he could confide me with anything. Well I was wrong.

After a few seconds, he sighed. "Nothing," was all he said, which made me irritated.

"There must be something going on," I whispered. "Is it Arianne? April? Are you worried about them? We could call them â!"

Henry gulped and shook his head. "No â it's not them."

## Fake Fiancee

"Well what is it?" I asked, my eyebrows furrowing. I then spotted his hand, near my own. Tentatively, my hand inched closer to his. But when my fingers touched his, he drew his hand back quickly.

"Please Lainie â just don't," he said, his voice a little broken.

My eyes widened. What? He didn't want me to listen to his problems? To care? "Don't what?" I asked, feeling my voice rise a little bit.

"You don't understand do you?"

I could feel my frustration and impatience rising. "Yes I don't understand! Help me to understand! Why have you been so quiet since we had that tickle fight?!"

Henry looked at me, taking in my angry expression and my clenching fists. "Lainie â what I'm doing now is for the best."

What? What was he doing? How could it be for the best? What was he on about? "What's for the best?!" I nearly yelled.

Henry sat up and ran a hand through my hair. I jumped. Sparks flew from my hair to my head and all the way down to my toes. "You should get dressed. It's nearly six," Henry murmured.

I was outraged. So he wasn't going to give me an answer?! Before I could say another word, he had gotten off the bed and was walking out the door. "I'll meet you in the lobby," he called.

I chucked his pillow on the floor. What was with him?! Why wouldn't he answer my questions?! Was he scared? Groaning, I went to get dressed quickly and headed down to the lobby.

Steve and Henry were sitting on the baby blue sofa by the fountain. When they spotted me, they got up and we all headed out. Steve somehow had got us a limo again. Or maybe it was our personal limo our something. We had a good time chatting in the car, but mostly it was just Steve and I talking. Henry just made little comments here and there.

Whenever he looked my way (which was rarely), I would shoot him a look of evil. Quite pathetic really, but I really felt like doing it. We arrived at some fancy seafood restaurant by the beach. The restaurant was very open and smelled of the salty beach, which made it nice.

"Steve!"

The three of us turned in the direction of the booming voice. A wealthy man, (you could tell by his suit) about Steve's age came forward towards us, grinning.

"Hey Peter," Steve said, clapping the man on the back.

"Hello Steve! It's nice to see you!" Peter exclaimed. He then turned to Henry and his smile became even wider. "And my my, Henry! I haven't seen you in years! You look just perfect for the part of Cade."

Henry gave Peter a polite smile. "It's great to see you again, Peter. Thank you for the compliment."

Peter then turned to me and took my hand and kissed it. That freaked me out a bit. "And this must be the lovely Miss Watson?"

## Fake Fiancee

I nodded. "Just Lainie."

"Enchant! Come now, you must meet everyone else!"

I took my seat between Henry and a woman dressed in all white. She introduced herself to me as Leonie, the film producer of the movie. Apparently, a film producer is someone in charge of managing the expenses, organization and decisions of a movie. She makes all the decisions, so she was like the big boss. For me, it was kind of scary sitting next to the 'big boss.' She had laughed at that and assured me that she wasn't a bully.

Our first course arrived to which Peter scowled. "Hudson's not here yet," he said, looking at his watch.

"Maybe he got caught up in traffic?" Leonie offered.

"There's hardly any traffic in Curacao," a girl said. I looked up at her and my eyes widened. She was actually an actress I knew, mostly because of my mother. My mother admires her looks and acting - Veronica Pierce. She was around the same age as me, with long dark tresses, creamy skin, perfect full lips and a curvy body which could kill.

Seeing her in real life made me envious, just a little. She was stunning and I felt like complete trash next to her. What made me feel even worse was that she was looking Henry up and down. Even if Henry was my fake fiancé, I felt slightly possessive? I didn't know what was up with me. As she stared at Henry with something like interest and possessiveness in her eyes, I turned to him and laid my left hand on his chest - my *left* hand, which held my engagement ring.

I saw her eyes flash to me and I tried to stifle a laugh. They were piercing through me, as if telling me to back away. Back away? Henry was *engaged!* This was too funny. I wiggled my left hand at her.

She eyed my ring with disdain, and then her lips turned into an angelic smile. "You must be Henry," she purred, stretching out a hand so he could shake it.

After eyeing her hand, he shook it slowly. "And you are?"

This made Veronica flinch slightly, but her smiling face didn't falter. "Veronica Pierce, your co-star. We'll have a lot of fun, I can tell."

I bit the inside of my cheek at this while Henry raised an eyebrow. "I'm sure we will."

My heart somehow fell into my stomach at his comment. I looked up to find Veronica looking smug and trying to engage in a conversation with Henry.

Little wench.

As I started to eat, Peter's voice suddenly called out, "Hudson! You're here!"

Everyone from the table looked up to see the second most important character in the movie. I remembered that this guy was supposed to be Henry's workmate.

As I met the eyes of Hudson, I froze. He seemed surprised to see me too, but then smiled, as if I being here was the reason to everything. "Lainie," he said.

After composing myself, I grinned back. "Hey Keith."

## Chapter 17: Let's Play The Jealousy Game

### Let's Play The Jealousy Game

Even though I was a bit embarrassed that I had attacked Hudson Miller, a *movie star*, I was kind of glad he was here. Now I had a friend. I watched as Keith took a seat opposite me, next to Veronica, who was *still* eyeing Henry. Geez, he was going to get married and she still had to nerve to flirt with him!

Keith's voice snapped me out of my angry thoughts of Veronica. "I knew I recognised you from somewhere," he said, with a bit of a smirk on his gorgeous face. "Henry Parker's fianc e â it was all over the tabloids, wasn't it?"

I nodded. "Yeah it was."

After a few seconds of silence, I looked up at him with accusing eyes. "Why did you lie about your name? You told me your name was *Keith*."

To this, he uncomfortably shifted in his seat. "Well â I didn't want to say '*I'm Hudson*' in case you recognised me as Hudson Miller the movie star, so I told you I was Keith," he explained. "And well, I wasn't *really* lying. Keith is my middle name."

I scoffed and picked at my king prawn salad. "Whatever. You still lied!"

Keith laughed. "You'll get over it, I'm sure."

"Can I still call you Keith though?" I asked with a grin. To me, he looked like a Keith, not a Hudson. The name Hudson just made him sound so â *Hollywood*. And his personality was not really '*Hollywood*.'

Keith grinned at me. "Sure. Why not?"

Then, the clearing of a throat jerked us both from our talking. I turned to Henry, who was glaring at Keith with his arms folded. "So Hudson, how do you know Lainie?"

I bit my lip to stop myself from laughing. Even though I was still a bit angry with Henry, he was so good at acting. Right now he looked like the perfect jealous over-protective fianc e.

Keith eyed Henry with amusement. "It's actually a funny story," he replied.

Peter, sitting at the head of the table leaned forward. "Well let's here it then!"

So, for the next few minutes, Keith delightfully told everyone sitting around the table of how we met at the airport. My face was tomato red by the time he finished, and everyone was laughing at how ridiculous it was.

"Charming story," Henry said dryly. He didn't seem pleased and Veronica too, whose eyes were criticising me.

"Lainie, that is a gorgeous dress you're wearing," she said, a fake smile suddenly plastered on her pretty face.

"Thanks," I replied flatly, to show I wasn't interested in her games.

## Fake Fiancee

She continued on. "Did you get it from Wal-Mart or something?"

Some people at the table went quiet, since they had heard Veronica's snide comment, while others were totally oblivious and kept chatting animatedly.

"Yeah, it is," I lied, giving her my best angelic look. "I'm surprised you actually know what Wal-Mart is though!"

I heard Keith let out a chuckle along with Steve, and I could feel Henry smirking at the girl who just got shamed. No one messed with me. Veronica's face had turned an angry shade of red. She didn't say anymore to me, which was immensely satisfying.

I mostly talked to Keith, Leonie and a young blonde haired actress whose name was Natasha. She was a bit shy though but kind, and new to the world of film.

Henry seemed troubled throughout the whole dinner and loved to glare at Keith, who seemed not to notice. Since I didn't talk to Henry heaps, Veronica was getting more intimate with Henry - leaning across the table and giving Henry a better view of the deep neckline of her skinky dress. I really felt like slapping her back to Slutville.

Did she have no self respect?

The fun night finished with Peter telling everyone filming started tomorrow, eleven am sharp. It turned out there were others staying at the Royal Crystal Hotel, like Natasha, an actor whose name I had forgotten and Veronica. Yeah, hearing Veronica exclaim she was staying at Royal Crystal as well was like a punch in the gut.

She somehow managed to weasel her way into our limo too because right this instant, she was sitting across from me whispering something in Henry's ear. I just sat there, fuming. She was such a pain - worse than my mother and that was saying something.

"How are you?" Steve asked in a low voice, sensing my irritation.

That made my eyes snap from Veronica to him. "Peachy," I answered.

He laughed under his breath at that, but continued to give me sympathetic looks throughout the ride. Why was he giving me those looks anyway? There was nothing wrong with me! Nothing! Veronica was just annoying as hell. That was it.

But something inside me told me that it wasn't just it â ;

\* \* \*

That's right, you guessed it. I was still mad at Henry.

He had refused to tell me what was going on in his thick head and Veronica had asked if Henry could walk here to her hotel room for safety reasons. Safety my ass!

I bet she had tried to seduce him, but I was sure Veronica and Henry hadn't done anything, as he didn't seem different around her.

## Fake Fiancee

My eyes flickered towards Veronica, who was sitting next to me looking every bit like a goddess. Her dark hair was half piled up on her head in a hazy cloud while the rest flowed down her bare back. Yep, her silky white summer dress was backless. I was pretty sure she was trying to impress Henry.

It didn't help with my self esteem one bit. I looked like garbage compared to her.

We had arrived on set about ten minutes ago and it was a bit of a mess. I could hear Peter was shouting orders at some gangly boy with technical equipment and Steve enthusiastically telling Henry had made the right choice to starr in this film.

Then, something horrible happened. Veronica talked.

"You don't seem like Henry's type," she commented, scrutinizing me. "He's a bit of playboy isn't it? He likes girls like â me for instance."

I turned to her and gave her a fake smile. "You've obviously mistaken me for someone who gives a damn."

Veronica smirked, realising this was war. "Oh I'm sorry," she replied sweetly. "I'm curious though â"

"Hurry up, you're wasting my time."

"Don't you need a license to be that unattractive?"

My jaw dropped at her insult. Unattractive? Seriously? I quickly tried to think of a comeback before I was the one who looked like a fool. "Are you talking to yourself in the mirror again?" I asked.

Veronica's eyes flashed angrily and before she could snap something, Keith sauntered over. "Veronica, it's your turn for make up."

I looked at her with a straight face and added, "You butter hurry! I mean, you really need it."

After she angrily stomped away, Keith and I burst out laughing. God, it filled me with happiness to know that I was the one making Veronica angry.

"You're good," Keith complimented, sitting down the chair Veronica had been sitting on.

"Thank you," I answered. "Did you just come from having your make up done?"

He wrinkled his nose adorably and nodded. "Uh huh. How can you ladies stand the foundation though?" He asked. "It feels sticky."

I shrugged. "Don't ask me - I don't wear foundation."

Keith laughed. "Au' naturel," he said with an approving look on his face. "No guy wants to hug a girl and find foundation on their shirt or face or something â"

I laughed at that and wished I could witness that happening one day. Just as Keith was about to say something, Henry appeared out of the costume room looking like a god.

He somehow looked handsomer than ever before, with his dark windswept hair, his bronzed skin and his defined muscles showing through a light white shirt which was unbuttoned halfway and rolled up to his elbows.

## Fake Fiancee

His blank expression immediately turned into a murderous one when he spotted me with Keith. I didn't get why he was seemed pissed off though; it wasn't like he liked me.

My cheeks flushed as I realised I had been staring at him. I turned back to Keith pretending nothing had happened but he obviously knew who I had been staring at. His eyebrows were raised. "Your fianc  is a bit too protective."

I shook my head. "No he's not. He doesn't care," I quickly said.

"How come? He *is* your fianc ," Keith reminded.

"Well â we're not really on good terms right now," I murmured, sneaking a peek at Henry, who was talking with some other pretty actress. God, did he really have to hit on other girls? We *were* engaged.

Realisation lit Keith's face and he smiled. "Ahh I get it now. You two had a fight."

My eyes flickered back to Keith. I knew it was alright to tell him these types of things. He was trustworthy and I was sure he wouldn't go blabbing to the media about it so they could print some exaggerated article. "Yeah, but I don't really want to talk about it," I explained.

"And you want revenge on him right?" He asked.

My eyes widened. Revenge? "What?!"

He nodded and grinned. "Yeah. The jealousy game, you know? I've seen Veronica all over him and he kind of seems to return the attention. Don't you want some revenge?"

What Keith pointed out irritated me. I didn't like Henry but for some reason the thought of him and Veronica bothered me.

I turned my full body towards Keith and grinned at him. "C'mon Keith. Let's play the jealousy game."

## Chapter 18: Deal with the Devil

### Deal with the Devil

"Henry, be a little friendlier towards Hudson! You're his investigation partner so you two should be easy in each other's company. But not too easy â a bit business like, you know what I mean?"

I bit my lip and watched in the background as Peter instructed what Henry was doing wrong in the shot. Keith seemed perfectly at ease and I knew he was secretly revelling in the fact Henry loathed him. He seemed to be the type who liked being entertained by other's anger towards him, which I found amusing. I still had no idea why Henry sent Keith glares but my guess was that Keith and I being close made him look like a fool. And I knew everyone didn't like being seen as a fool.

The scene they were filming now was Henry and Keith getting past the bouncer at the club, trying to find an important person who supposedly would be hanging inside. At this club, Henry would meet Veronica, who is a temptress to him. I really didn't want to witness their meeting since they would be flirting and apparently, they would dance together.

I know right? How *absolutely* wonderful.

When it was Veronica's time to shine, I couldn't help but feel a stab of sadness run through me. Why did stuck up girls have to be so pretty?

She was dressed in bold red mini dress, to emphasize her seductive nature. Her hair was in messy curls, her eyes smoky and her lips painted a bloody red. She seemed satisfied that the young men who worked on set were ogling her. Keith wasn't though, he was rolling his eyes.

When I turned to see Henry's reaction, I was a teeny bit glad. He was looking at her, but his expression showed he was not interested in anything. His eyes then flickered to mine and I nearly jumped out of my seat. I had been caught *staring*! God, how embarrassing!

"Veronica, you look perfect!" Peter exclaimed, beaming proudly. "Alexia is a bold, seductive goddess and you look just like that."

I snorted. More like a wanton woman.

"Why thank you Peter," Veronica replied sweetly, her lips pulling to a smile to show her dazzling white teeth.

"Alright Henry, you'll be standing here," Peter explained, pointing to a spot a few feet away from the set up bar. "When you stand there scanning the room, you'll see Veronica who will be here â!"

Peter gestured to where they were going to stand and what was going on. When he finished, the extras started filing in and stood there, ready for when the music would start playing so they could dance in the background.

"Hey Lainie, want to be in a movie?" Keith called from the other side of the room.

I blinked. Me, be in a movie? "What do you mean?"

Keith pointed to the group of extras. "Just dance in the background. Or you can dance with me if you want, since I'm not in this scene anymore."

## Fake Fiancee

To this, I saw Henry snap his head towards us. "You can't dance, Hudson," he said. "What if the camera passes by you? The audience will wonder why your character is dancing with a random girl instead of doing his job."

Ouch. He had called me a random girl!

"The man has a point. Although, I can just wear a wig and blend in the crowd," Keith said, giving Henry an amused look. He then turned to Peter and asked loudly, "If it's ok?"

Peter's head snapped to Keith confusedly. "What?"

Both Keith and I laughed. Peter obviously had been preoccupied. "Never mind!" Keith called.

"So you're not going to dance?" Henry clarified. My eyebrows drew together at Henry's hopeful expression. Or was it just me?

"No I am," Keith replied. "Can't miss the chance to dance with Lainie right?"

He sent me a wink and I laughed again. I saw Henry clenching his fist out of the corner of my eye. He was going to piss me off with Veronica so I was going to do the same to him, but with Keith.

After another ten minutes, everyone was finally ready for the scene. Henry was stationed at his place a few feet by the bar and Veronica was across the room, surrounded by a few guys and loftily holding a drink in her hand. Keith, in his ridiculous afro wig, had led me near the disco ball, which was near Veronica. I was secretly thankful for that. Then I could see them acting. Suddenly, 'DJ Got Us Falling in Love Again' by Usher then came on the speakers and the extras immediately started dancing. Those were the orders - start dancing when the music starts and don't stop. I faintly heard Peter count three to one and I watched as Henry started his acting.

I had to admit, he was a good actor, surveying the room with a bored expression. But his eyes met mine and I quickly looked away.

"Lainie, other than watching your handsome fiancÃ©, you are supposed to be dancing too," Keith whispered.

I blushed, as I realised I had just been standing there, which made Keith chuckle. Making my body move to the beat was easy for me. Dancing had always come easy for me, but it wasn't really a hobby. Keith and I started doing funny moves, but I still kept an eye on Henry. I watched as he saw Veronica and his eyes lit up. He looked entranced. I suddenly felt like punching him.

Keith saw my eyes on him and reminded me that it was an act, and that he loved me. I rolled my eyes at him and watched as he slowly made his way through the crowd towards Veronica. She looked up at him and let a slow, sultry smile spread over her face. She shooed the guys with her away, tilted her head to the side and assessed Henry.

"Why hello there," she purred, her eyes sparkling with what seemed like satisfaction. "And what might your name be?"

I felt anger bubble inside me as another song came on and Keith took my hands so we could dance together. I felt as if I was really watching this in real life - that Henry was interested in Veronica and they were just first meeting in a club.

## Fake Fiancee

"Cade," Henry said in a husky voice which made me jump a bit. God, that sounded so hot, and he wasn't even talking to me. "How about you, beautiful?"

"Alexia."

They then started chatting and Keith spun me around to face him. "What are you doing?!" I asked, bewildered.

"You should calm down a bit Lainie," Keith advised.

I rolled my eyes. How could I be calm when Veronica was around?

\* \* \*

After nine tries, Henry and Veronica's scene was finally over. It was now break and we were hanging out in a large room, probably the size of my house back home. Most of us were eating take away chicken and hot chips, which Peter's PA had ordered for us to eat. I was lounging next to Keith on one of the sofas and dipping my hot chips in gravy.

It seemed like I was spending a lot of time with Keith and less with Henry. I remember back at the Parker household, Henry and I had actually gotten along. After finding out about his psychotic father, we bonded. Now, we hardly spoke.

It kind of made me sad really. I didn't like admitting that I missed Henry's company, but I did. I did, I did, I did. How I wished I was that random actor speaking to Henry right now. It was just so unfair.

"Why the hell does this chicken taste so *good*?"

I turned to Keith and laughed at his expression. He looked like he was in heaven.

"You tell me since you're the one eating it," I quipped.

Keith chuckled and said no more, because his focus was on the delicious chicken. I rolled my eyes and turned my attention to what was coming our way - Veronica. She was strutting (of course) and had a little smile on her face.

"Keith," she purred, plonking down on the sofa beside him. I watched as Keith looked up, annoyed he was being interrupted while eating.

"Yes Veronica?" He said with his mouth full of chicken.

I snickered as Veronica grimaced. I was pretty sure it wasn't a good sight. "My birthday is this upcoming Friday and I'm having a masquerade party at a mansion I just rented nearby. Want to come?" She asked.

A masquerade party? Wow.

Keith turned to me to include me in the conversation. "Hey Lainie, you want to go?"

"It's not necessary to ask," someone interrupted. I jumped and looked up at Henry, who had crossed the room towards us with a cup of grape juice in his hand. "She's *my* fiancée so she'll be coming with me to the party."

## Fake Fiancee

I felt my heart beat faster a bit at his words and peeked at Keith out of the corner of my eye. He feigned disinterest by shrugging but there was a twinkle in his eyes. "I'll come anyway. Can't miss a party right?" He said, looking up at Henry.

I think he was trying to provoke Henry.

Veronica interrupted then with a clap of her hands. Out of her purse, she fished out a small stack of white and gold stiff paper. I raised my eyebrows. Were they â

"Invitations!" Veronica exclaimed, handing one to Keith and one to Henry. As she gave one to Henry, she winked.

That didn't go unnoticed. I got up from the sofa, ready to throw a punch at her little pretty face, but Keith stretched out his arm and pushed me back. I fell back with an 'oomph.'

"Hey! Don't push her!" Henry said, taking a step over to me. He gripped my elbow and I looked at him, confused. He had hardly spoken to me and now he was sticking up for me? Was something wrong with him?

"Sorry, I didn't mean to Lainie," Keith apologised, putting a hand on my shoulder. "Are you alright?"

I nodded, even more confused. It was just a light push, nothing much.

Keith looked between us and cleared his throat. "Well â I'll just give you guys some *alone* time."

I grimaced. What a nice way of being subtle. It reminded me of how April and Arianne gave us alone time while shopping back in Newport. I sighed. Newport seemed like a lifetime ago.

"You shouldn't be friends with Keith," Henry muttered, taking Keith's place on the sofa.

I turned to him, flustered. How dare he think he could tell me what to do! "You're just jealous," I spat, out of anger.

Henry was still looking ahead, not facing me. He scoffed. "Why would anyone be jealous of you? You can't get one guy to look at you."

I scowled. I couldn't believe the nerve of him. What had happened to the old Henry? Now he was a cold, insulting mega-jerk.

"You can't even get one guys number," he added.

Ugh. I hoped he would have fun rotting in the pits of hell. "You're right," I replied casually. My amusement grew as Henry's cold expression changed into one of shock. "I can get *twenty* numbers."

Hah! I was *such* a smartass.

"Want to bet?"

My ego deflated as I realised what Henry had just said. He wanted to bet. "What do you mean â !?" I asked, playing dumb.

## Fake Fiancee

He turned to face me and I gulped as I took in his wicked smile. "If you don't get more than twenty numbers at Veronica's birthday, I can make you do whatever I want until this sham engagement is over."

Whatever he wanted? Well, that wasn't good. I then realised something important. "What's in it for me?" I asked.

Henry shrugged. "If you win, I have to do whatever you want."

I narrowed my eyes in suspicion. What if there was a loop hole in the bet and Henry knew it? I tried to think of one, but I couldn't think of any. How in the world could I get twenty numbers? I wasn't an outgoing person and I was definitely not hot. But then, I remembered something which would get me out of the bet. I mean, I wanted to show Henry that I was worth it, but I didn't think I could win. "Guys wouldn't dare give me their numbers since I'm your fiancÃ©e."

"Well that's the beauty of a masquerade party," Henry answered with a small smirk on his face. "You'll be wearing a mask. No one knows who you are."

"All the other people here will know, like Keith!" I argued.

Henry stiffened at the mention of Keith. "Just tell him the truth - we're doing a bet."

I bit my lip, thinking. Maybe I could win â maybe I needed to act more like Veronica on the night. Dress like her, flirt like her and walk like her. "Fine," I decided, lifting my head up high. "You've got yourself a bet."

"May the best man win," he murmured.

I cleared my throat. "Ehem! I'm not a man!"

"You look like one pancake," Henry replied coolly. He then turned away and focused his attention on something else. God, what was I getting myself into?

## Chapter 19: Shopping with the girls ... and Keith

### Shopping with the girls .. and Keith

So I had told Keith about the bet I had agreed to and he had laughed his head off. He laughed even more when I told him my plan to get the guys numbers.

It had been two days since Henry and I decided on the bet. It was awkward between us. For example, Henry and I didn't sleep on the same bed. He decided to sleep on the couch *himself*. I had been in disbelief and still was.

We had organised a group to go on a shopping trip today, to buy new outfits for Veronica's birthday bash. She wasn't coming on the trip of course; she preferred to shop with 'classy people.' Most of our group was waiting for the last scene for finish before going. Including me, there were six people - Keith, Natasha, Clara and her boyfriend, Aiden, and Henry. Yes, Henry. He hadn't wanted to come, but when he heard Keith was coming, he immediately decided to join us. I had asked Steve if he had wanted to come but he had said no (of course).

"We're finished!"

I looked up at the sound of Clara's voice. Clara, like Natasha, is a minor actress in the film as one of the first victims of the serial killer. Henry and Keith were right behind her, with Keith trying to make conversation with Henry, just to annoy him I think.

"I haven't been shopping in ages," Natasha whined. "And I am in need of a new dress for the party!"

Clara frowned as we started heading towards Henry's limo outside the building. "I was just going to wear a skirt with a blouse â"i"'

I bit my lip to hide my smile. I would say something like that too and April would chastise me for not thinking 'fabulously.' And then, Natasha did the exact same thing as April would do. They would really get along.

It took fifteen minutes to get to the shops and on the way there, we chatted about random topics. We arrived in front of a large plaza, surrounded by cute boutiques, cafes and entertainment stores. We all agreed the boys should go in a group and hang out together, while the girls would go shopping for their outfits and then we would meet back in front of the Chinese restaurant to eat lunch, but Keith insisted on coming with us because he wanted to help us with dress shopping.

I laughed aloud at that and especially the looks everyone was giving him. Henry was shooting daggers at him, Clara was tilting her head to the side and looking like as if she thought she misheard what he had said, and Aiden's eyebrows were raised impossibly high on his forehead.

Natasha meanwhile looked at him disgusted. "You perv!" she exclaimed, pointing a finger at him.

Her accusation made us all laugh harder (except Henry) while Keith turned just a bit pink. "What?" He asked with a little careless shrug. "Can't I show my *love* for shopping?"

"You are just weird," Natasha said after a few seconds. She sighed and looked away. "And to think I thought you were hot!"

## Fake Fiancee

Keith blushed even more while the rest of us laughed even harder. Natasha ended up letting Keith tag along with the help of Clara's reasoning.

Clara, Keith and I were dragged us into heaps of shops by Natasha, but most didn't sell a lot of dresses. They sold casual dresses, but we were looking for party dresses. And we ended up finding a large modern looking store which sold a lot of party-like clothes.

We headed inside we were immediately assaulted by a shop assistant, whose name tag told us her name was Belle. She descended upon us and gave us all a charismatic smile. "Hello there! Do you girls need anything?"

I snickered as Keith made a face. Belle hadn't seen him.

"Yes please. We're looking for dresses," Natasha announced cheerfully.

"Dresses? Of course! Do you have a particular dress in mind?" Belle asked.

"I'd like a unique dress â€¦ maybe one with ruffles down the bottom," Natasha said thoughtfully. "I don't mind about the colours, just not brown or orange or yellow."

"And what about you dear?" Belle asked Clara.

Clara shook her head and gave an apologetic smile. "I'm fine. I prefer to find clothes myself."

"Of course, of course!" Belle agreed with a wave of her hand. She then turned to me. "And how about â€¦ oh! You were in *OK!*"

"Excuse me?" I asked, totally confused as what she was talking about.

"Yes, that interview of Henry Parker and you! I'm so happy for the both of you! It's such a pleasure to meet you Miss Watson."

Oh. She meant that interview Henry and I had done long ago, when we had made up a story of how we met. "Um thank you and please, just call me Lainie," I said awkwardly.

"Anyway, how would you like your dress?" Belle exclaimed, beaming.

It was funny how I wasn't talented at all and yet Belle had recognised me. Here was Natasha and Clara who actually acted and they didn't get noticed. But it was most likely due to the fact that both of them were minor actresses, not someone dazzlingly famous like Henry. I don't know about Keith though.

"Well, I want sexy but not slutty," I ended up saying.

"Like a subtle sexy?" Keith suggested.

I clicked my fingers, impressed Keith had contributed. "Yeah!"

Belle gave me a mischievous grin, making me squirm a bit. "Impressing your man?"

My eyes widened and I didn't miss the wink Keith sent my way. "No!" I exclaimed, a hot blush creeping up my throat. "Definitely not!"

## Fake Fiancee

"Whatever you say Lainie," Natasha said cheekily. I glared at her because I had told her about the bet as well and now here she was making fun of me.

"Ok ladies, I will go and find some *beautiful* dresses for you!" Belle sang in an impressive soprano voice. "Feel free to look around as well!"

Clara went off ahead to look for her own dress, while Natasha and Keith tagged along with me to the long rack along the south side of the shop's walls. As I fingered the hem of a strapless flowing dress, Natasha hip checked me.

"Impressing you man hmm?"

I rolled my eyes at her. "I already told you about the bet we made, remember?" I reminded her.

She shrugged as she trailed her zebra painted nails along a dress. "I know. I just felt like it," she said. "And hey! Have you figured out what you're going to make Henry do when you win?"

I blinked and realised I hadn't really thought of anything. I had just been focusing on winning. "Umm â I'll make him clean everything for once."

Keith gave me a look. "Well that's fun," he remarked sarcastically.

Natasha giggled. "I know right! C'mon, Lainie! Think of the possibilities!"

"Yeah," Keith said, frowning as he tried to think of a good idea. "How about making you breakfast in bed? I bet he never does *that*."

Natasha waved off Keith's comment before I could speak. Her eyes were large and sparkling. "No, no! How about a *strip tease*?! I bet you'd love *that*!"

"No way!" I exclaimed, horrified, as Natasha and Keith cackled with laughter. What I was even more horrified at though was the feeling that my cheeks were burning red. My memory was still as sharp as ever and my mind wandered back to the day at the beach and I had first gotten a nice view of his undeniably gorgeous six pack â ough! What was I thinking?!

"She's blushing!" Natasha squealed to Keith, while half giggling.

"I am not!" I denied hotly, giving her a light slap on the shoulder. "C'mon guys! Stop laughing and start thinking of some *innocent* ideas!"

"Well it'd be cool," Keith commented after calming down. He then gave me a flirty wink. "You could dress him up."

"Like a fireman!" Natasha cried excitedly. Then her eyebrows furrowed as she realised something. "Oh wait, that's so clichÃ©."

"How about the Pink Panther?" Keith suggested.

I couldn't help it - I burst out laughing at the ridiculous idea of Henry prowling around in a Pink Panther costume. As I regained my breath, I remembered something. I remembered a certain costume was still in Henry's suitcase â

## Fake Fiancee

"Elvis Presley!" I exclaimed, jumping up and down. I had finally found something else other than cleaning that Henry could do! "I packed his Elvis Presley costume here!"

Both Keith and Natasha's eyes widened. Natasha spoke first though. "*Oh.my.god Lainie! You have to do it!*"

I grinned wickedly. "Oh I will."

After chatting a bit more, Natasha was called over by Belle to try on some dresses. I then made my way around the store with Keith and tried to find a good looking dress.

"How about this one?" Keith asked, taking out a strapless mini dress with ruffles on the neckline. He held it to his body to model it, making me laugh.

"I don't think it looks so good on you Keith," I said ruefully.

His jaw dropped and then he waved his hand at me girlishly. "Oh *please* sister! It totally looks good on me!"

I laughed at his idiocy and the girl voice he had just used. "Ahh Keith," I murmured. "You're like the gay best friend I've never had."

Keith put his hand to his heart and exaggeratedly made an offended face. "I'm insulted Lainie!"

I giggled and nudged him. "Sure you are."

He gave me a boyish grin and I knew he was back to normal. "Nah I'm not actually. I'm quite amused. I've never been called gay â€¦ are you sure you aren't blind?" He joked.

I tilted my head as I studied a little black dress. "I assure you I have perfect eyesight Mr Miller."

After that, Keith and I busied ourselves by searching through the racks. There were pretty dresses, but they didn't seem like 'the one.' April had taught me when shopping; you needed to find 'the one.' Keith was hopeless at shopping like me, except I had learnt a few things from April now. He only knew about guys clothes, although he knew what sort of colours would fit me well.

I scooped up some dresses which were worth trying on and headed towards the changing rooms at the back with Keith behind me. I passed Clara on the way, who was surveying an ivory dress with a large green bow.

"You're not going in are you?" I questioned, giving Keith a strange look.

"Of course not! I'm just waiting!" He cried with a grimace. He motioned his head over to the bench and sat down.

I smiled gratefully and tried on the dresses I had found, but I didn't think they were that good on me, so I quickly changed back into my normal outfit and headed back out. Natasha was there, standing in front of the large mirror at the end of the small hallway of dressing rooms, admiring herself. She looked absolutely fabulous.

"Keith, what do you think?" She asked, smoothing a few wrinkles on the skirt.

"Don't ask me," Keith said, a bit horrified to be asked to criticise clothes.

## Fake Fiancee

"Just say if I look like garbage or not," Natasha snapped. "It's easy!"

Keith scratched his jaw and frowned. "Umm â€¦ you look like garbage â€¦ but not bad garbage! Just like the small garbage you throw in the small bins in the house you know â€¦!"

I burst into laughter as his ridiculous answer while Natasha gave him a glare. "What kind of answer is that?!" She shrieked, running back into her dressing room to take the dress off.

Keith sighed and turned to me. He blinked, surprised. "You were supposed to show me what you looked like!" He whined.

"None of them looked good on me."

"You're being too modest, Lainie."

I rolled my eyes at his 'compliment' and sat down beside him. Pouting, I realised there was just no perfect dress for me. That was until Belle walked over towards us, carrying a small pile of dresses. "*Lainie*," she sang. "I believe I have found the one for *you*!"

I sat up and frowned at the pile. "That is not one," I stated.

Belle laughed and handed me a dress from the pile. "This one will look stunning on you."

She then turned on her heel and walked away, leaving Keith and I sitting there. I looked down at it and a small smile grew on my face. It was perfect for the masquerade party. It was a tight dark purple mini dress with a one shoulder. Surprisingly the one shoulder made it seem less 'slutty.'

"Try it on," Keith urged. "I bet it'll look amazing."

I nodded and headed over towards a stall. It took me a bit of time to get into it, but I finally was finished in the end. It showed off my long, lean legs and my slim waist nicely. I shyly unlocked the door and stepped out into the main area. Keith immediately looked up and his eyes widened as he studied me. His face then cracked into a grin and he said, "Henry's going to die when he sees you in this - die and go to heaven."

## Chapter 20: Partyin' Partyin' Yeah!

**A/N: For the people who don't know how to pronounce 'Lainie' it's pronounced: *Lay-nee*. And by the way, I couldn't help but put that line as the title, if you know what I'm talking about :P**

### Partyin' Partyin' Yeah!

"Be sly, be witty and be mysterious," Natasha advised, as she painted another coat of mascara on her already long eyelashes.

The three of us (Natasha, Clara and I) were hanging out in Natasha's large hotel room, getting ready for the masquerade party, which would start in a few hours. It had kind of been a long day. I had accompanied Henry to the set as usual and watched, but later I had gone off and decided to head to the beach and swim. Then I had gone back to our hotel room and taken a nap. I had woken up to Steve's face about an hour later saying Natasha had demanded that I join her and Clara, and now here I was.

Natasha had wanted to help us get ready and Clara and I were all for it. "I think that would suit you Lainie," Clara added thoughtfully. She also gave me a smile of encouragement, which I was thankful for.

I could really not imagine what I would look like while trying to seduce a guy. I'd probably end up seducing him with my awkwardness. Oh lord.

"Softly touch a guy's abs while you're dancing," Natasha continued. I swear she sounded like she was reciting these tips from a book. I wouldn't be surprised if it were true. She then threw a wink my way. "It's hot."

"What if he has flabs?" Clara asked, just for the heck of it.

"Then don't bother," Natasha answered with a giggle. "Can you imagine that? Rubbing a flabby guy's stomach? What are you going to say? *Ooh, how many fries have you eaten to get this figure?*"

I swear that was the funniest thing I've heard all day. Clara and I burst out into fits of laughter while Natasha started giggling again after she realised what she said had actually been funny.

After we calmed down, Clara chirped in, "I think there won't be any flabby guys at Veronica's party. I can't imagine her letting them in."

Huh. I couldn't either. Veronica would probably kick them out because they weren't good enough for her masquerade birthday bash. I wasn't even invited - I was only going because Henry had been and I was supposedly his fiancée.

"Which is a good thing," Natasha added. Then she turned to me and clapped her hands together. "Lainie, it's your turn! We have to make you extra gorgeous for tonight if we want to see Henry as Elvis Presley!"

I bit my lip as I pushed myself up from Natasha's king sized bed. I walked over to the vanity and let her push me down onto the cushioned stool. Clara came over too and they began musing on how they wanted me to look.

"Tropical colours or smoky black for the eye shadow?" Natasha murmured, tilting her head while staring at me. I felt like a doll.

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"Lainie's going to be kind of mysterious right? Let's go for smoky," Clara suggested as she grabbed the eye shadow pallet. "Silver gray is good."

And it went like that. Natasha always tried to make it more dramatic though but Clara kind of felt how I wanted it. When they finished, I smiled at myself in the mirror. It was how I wanted it. Even though the make up made me feel weird, it made me feel kind of pretty and I never feel pretty. My lids were carefully dusted with smoky silver, coats of mascara made my eyelashes long and my lips just had watermelon flavoured gloss on. My plain muddy brown eyes really popped out too.

"Gahh!" Natasha exclaimed excitedly. "Clara! We could totally become make up artists!"

I heard Clara laugh lightly. "You should get the dress on Lainie," she said. "Actually â€¦ we should all get changed."

Natasha and I agreed on that and we took turns taking up the bathroom to change into our fabulous dresses. Both the girls' eyes widened when I came out of the bathroom in my dress. "You are going to win Lainie!" Clara exclaimed in wonder.

Blushing, I laughed lightly and shrugged the compliment off. "We'll see."

The three of us then put our masks on and we all smiled at each other. My mask was a small slick black one with silver beading around the edges and two raven black feathers sticking out on one side. It was those masks with the elastic band at the back so I didn't have to hold it all night. Clara had the same one as mine, except the colour was a pearly white and light pink feathers stuck out of it. Natasha meanwhile, had to hold hers. It was a bright gold one and suited her well. "Don't we look so good?" Natasha said dreamily.

I laughed along with Clara and looked at the clock hanging on the wall. I needed to go and fetch Henry since we were going together, while Natasha, Clara and Aiden were coming a bit later. "Hey guys, I'll be going now," I announced. We said our 'see you later's' and I headed out of the room and over to the elevator. Natasha's hotel room was five floors down from ours so it didn't take that long to reach our floor.

My heart started to beat faster as I reached the door to the hotel suite. I knew Henry was inside and after a few seconds of taking deep breaths, I knocked on the door.

Nothing.

I groaned. For the heck of it, I tried turning the doorknob and the door opened at my touch. Well that was weird. Didn't Henry care about his safety at all? I stepped in and found and heard nothing - that was until the door to the en suite opened.

I jumped and found Henry dressed in simple black slacks and a light blue button down shirt. The first two buttons were opened and his jet black hair was tousled to perfection. How on earth did he manage to make his hair like that? It looked like he didn't use any products.

"Come on, let's go," I said, striding back towards the door leading out of the hotel suite. I was suddenly aware that Henry wasn't behind me. Frowning, I turned around and found he was still standing in the same spot. His eyes were skimming over me in surprise and his mouth was hanging open. Truth be told, he kind of looked goofy, which made me want to laugh. I guessed I really surprised him.

Changing to a cocky stance, I smirked at him. "Take a picture, it'll last longer," I said. And with that, I turned on my heel and left a gob smacked Henry standing there.

## Fake Fiancee

\* \* \*

I blinked in surprise as I took in my surroundings. The mansion Veronica had rented was gigantic and was one which was probably from the Gilded Ages. It overlooked a large hill and loads of people were hanging in the front and back yards of the house. I could hear music and see lights coming from behind the mansion and came to the conclusion that a dance floor probably had been set up there.

Henry whistled as the both of us walked through the throng of people and to the front door. It was open and we stepped through. I cringed at the crowded room. Inside were where all the food was and where the light chatter was happening.

"Where's Veronica?" Henry asked while craning his head over the crowd.

I instantly went sour and glared at nothing. "Why are you looking for her?"

"Well, we *do* need to give her the present," Henry said with a roll of his eyes.

I sighed and decided I would let Henry do that. I needed to get a move on with the bet. "You can do that. I'm going to win twenty guy's numbers."

Immediately, Henry turned to me and shifted slightly on his feet, but then stood up straighter and gave me a smirk. "Good luck. You need it," he sneered.

My jaw dropped and quickly closed my mouth. "Not as much as you do!" I retorted before walking away from him. I swear I heard him chuckle though, which made my hands itch to slap him.

I surveyed the spacious sitting room and decided to find my first victim. I guess I could cheat and just jot down twenty random numbers but I wasn't a cheater. I played with the rules not against it. As I started walking aimlessly around the room, a voice startled me. "Hey pretty lady."

A silly grin spread over my face. My first victim! I turned around slowly and looked him in the eye. His face was covered by a Venetian black mask and his blonde hair stuck out messily.

"Keith," I said, rolling my eyes at the same time. "What *are* you doing?"

He chuckled. "I just figured you need some help. Now, do you want my number or what?"

Realising that it was acceptable for Keith to give me his number made me beam. "Sure thing, although I already have it."

"Yeah, just add it to the list of numbers," Keith said with a shrug. "Anyway, I better leave you to it. You should go outside by the way. There would be many guys outside wanting to dance with you."

I nodded and thanked Keith for giving me the advice. After a few more minutes of talking, I headed outside to where the heart of the party was. A band was playing on a stage and a mega-large dance floor had been set up. There were benches off on the side where people sat and watched others dance or the band perform.

I approached the dance floor with some confidence and caught the eye of a guy. I gave him a smile and he smiled back, so I decided to head over to him. "Hi," I murmured, with my head tilted to the side.

"Hello beautiful," he said. "May I know your name?"

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I shook my head and hesitantly grabbed his hand. "Why don't we just dance?" I suggested. My heart was beating so fast and I tried to ignore it. I ended up dancing with a few more guys and I got all of their numbers.

After the sixth guy, I was pretty much tired and I really didn't feel like dancing anymore. I took a seat on one of the benches and sighed. I could see Clara dancing with Aiden and Veronica heading out over to the dance floor in a mini black dress with Henry next to her, conversationally talking. My body burned with what seemed like anger. Why was he hanging out with *her* if he was engaged to me?

After a few minutes of watching them talk, Henry's eyes wandered around and met mine. My cheeks flushed as he smirked at me. I somehow knew he was smirking because I was just sitting around and not getting any numbers. Huffing, I glanced around and for some odd reason, the band playing onstage caught my eye.

On stage â€”

That was it! It was the perfect way to show Henry I was the winner! I just prayed to god it worked. I pushed myself up from the bench and headed over towards the stage. I could feel people's curious eyes on me as I went up the small steps onto the stage. The singer looked at me out of the corner of the eye and frowned. But impressively, he kept singing. The song was nearly ending anyway so I waited patiently until they did, and once they did and everyone stopped clapping, I headed over to the singer.

"What are you doing?" He asked with a panicked look on his face.

I gave him a winning smile and decided to put one of Natasha's tips into action. I put a hand on his arm lightly and murmured, "Do you think I could borrow the mic for second? *Please?*"

He blinked and after a few seconds of studying me, he agreed. I beamed and took over, to everyone's bewilderment. I could see Veronica's face looking like it was about to burst, Henry looking suspicious and Natasha and Keith grinning excitedly. I gave him a wink, took the microphone into my own hands and called out, "Hey everyone!"

**What do you think Lainie is going to do?! :O**

## Chapter 21: Some Night This Is

**A/N: So about the update ... I accidentally wrote "chapter 20 is up" but I actually meant 21 of course. \*Blushes\*. I am an idiot.**

### Some Night This Is

Everyone stared at me wide eyed. I sensed I should quickly get it over and done with in case Veronica would start a scene. I nervously gave everyone a smile and gripped the microphone tighter. "So I have a dilemma," I started to say. "My boyfriend has just dumped me for someone else-"

"Well he doesn't know what he's missing out on!" Some random guy hollered out from the crowd. I laughed lightly and so did others.

"Yes, well anyway, I need a man who can make me forget about that *jerk*-"

"I can!"

"No I can!"

"Pft, I'm a way better choice than *you*!"

I smirked just a bit. Everything was going to plan. "So anyway," I called out over the voices of the guys arguing. "I decided if you want to go on a date with me to show me how awesome of a guy you are, just give me your number, and I'll just randomly pick one and call you â so how do you like that?"

As soon as I finished my little speech, the cheering started. I wasn't really going on a date. I wouldn't pick any numbers randomly, and I would never want to go on a date with them anyway. I felt my cheeks redden as someone called out with a dreamy look on his face, "Who *are* you?"

I spotted Veronica fuming out of the corner of my eye and then came up with an idea - a funny idea. "I'm the birthday girl's sister," I replied loudly with a grin.

I knew many guys would be bothering her and asking for my name, and I knew she'd be pissed because her so-called 'sister' was receiving more attention than her. And she was the birthday girl. "Happy birthday sis!" I called out to her, just to make her a bit angrier. She turned red and stormed off the dance floor angrily. My eyes then met Henry's and he was looking at me strangely, but a tap on my shoulder made me turn around.

I found myself face to face with the singer from the band. He grinned sheepishly at me and took out a small piece of paper. "Here," he muttered, handing it to me.

I gave him a gracious smile to hide my embarrassment. "Thank you."

And after that, many guys and I *mean* many guys approached me and gave me their number. I was pretty sure I had more than twenty, which made me so happy. I was on cloud nine and I couldn't wait to dress Henry up in the Elvis Presley costume.

The truth was - I had brought the costume along with me. It was still in the boot of a car Henry had rented for us so we didn't have to travel by a limo all the time.

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Keith decided to accompany me to the car and we frowned as a girl came stumbling towards us. I wrinkled my nose because she was obviously drunk. A slurred "hiiii" came out of her, which made Keith flinch. I looked on curiously as she put her hand on Keith's arm for support.

"Uhh â€” what are you doing?" Keith asked. I rolled my eyes at that. He could be so tactless sometimes. I bit my lip as the girl turned her outraged eyes to him.

"How dare-"

Her eyes then widened as she took Keith in. I think she was checking him out. Oh scratch that, she was *definitely* checking him out. "Wow you're â€” hot," she murmured, looking dazed.

Keith smirked and replied, "My boyfriend thinks so too."

The girl choked on what she was going to say next and started to run away, swaying from side to side as she tried to probably find a bush to puke. Laughter burst out from inside Keith and I. "Good one," I managed to say while holding my stomach from laughing so hard.

"Yes I know," Keith answered cockily. We both then turned to where we could hear the sound of the poor girl probably puking her guts out and grimaced. "I think we should go â€”"

"Agreed!"

We both then hurried to where Henry's car was parked and once we reached it, I used the car keys to unlock the trunk. "He'll look so ridiculous," I exclaimed with a sly smile. Keith whistled as I took it out with a flourish.

"He'll look more ridiculous in a Pink Panther costume," Keith added with a mischievous grin.

My eyebrows drew together at his comment. "What â€”!"

Oh my god. Keith had brought a Pink Panther costume. He headed over to his car and took it out from the front seat. I burst out laughing when I saw it. "I can't believe this!"

We both laughed some more and headed back to the mansion skipping. Well, I was the only one skipping, which was weird. I don't do skipping.

"Well look who it is," Keith suddenly said, giving a wink to Henry. I contained my laughter while Henry stood there with a wary expression.

"You brought costumes?" Henry asked while doing those cool one-eyebrow things. He turned to Keith. "I'm sure you'll look stunning as the Pink Panther, Hudson."

I gave Henry a small smirk. "Oh no, we're not wearing them. *You* are."

Henry's eyes widened slightly as he looked from me, to Keith and then to the costumes. His face was priceless! "So â€” which do you want to wear first?" I chirped happily. "I'll give you a choice. Elvis or Pink Panther?"

Henry grimaced as he considered his two options. Slowly, he outstretched his hand and reached for the Elvis Presley costume. Keith told him to go and change and then to meet them on stage. While Henry walked away,

## Fake Fiancee

Keith and I headed over to where the band was. I was going to ask for one more favour, although I felt like I was pushing my luck.

"Hey," I greeted. The band members smiled at me (although one smirked, probably remembering me as the infamous girl looking for a hot date), so I continued. "So I was thinking â do you think I could borrow the stage? I've got some entertainment for everyone."

The band happily agreed. Bless them.

As I got the stage ready, Henry came out of the back door and onto the patio wearing his Elvis Presley costume. My eyes widened because the costume fit him perfectly, although the pants were a little bit tight, which was a nice sight actually. I blinked and immediately slapped myself for thinking that. I looked up to find Keith staring at me as if I had just grown two heads.

"Did you just slap yourself?" He asked uncertainly.

Oh great, he had actually seen. Well there goes my image of being a normal person. "Umm â mosquito," I explained with a nervous laugh. He didn't seem to believe me but didn't question any further, which made me sigh with relief. Henry walked over to us and as he did, people stared. It was quite amusing to watch.

"So what did you guys want me to do?" Henry asked, pretending to look confident. He was trying to be composed although I could feel his nervousness.

I grinned and waved the microphone in front of his face. "Well â I'm pretty sure you know Jailhouse rock right â?"

Henry froze for just a second and then a smile grew on his face. "Of course I do," he replied.

"Well these guys," Keith said, pointing to the band, "will play that for you and you will sing your heart out, Parker."

"Good luck. You need it," I murmured to him, repeating his words from earlier this evening.

Henry turned back to me and gave me a crooked smile. "Not as much as you do," he quoted me. I childishly stuck out my bottom lip and he shook his head at my immaturity. Keith and I hung back as we watched Henry take over the stage.

He tapped the microphone and everyone turned to him. "Hey guys," he called out.

"ELVIS PRESLEY! WOOOH!" Some girl screamed. I snorted at that and turned my attention back to Henry. He seemed surprised at the girl's outburst but he didn't show it.

"So I'm going to sing Jailhouse rock â and umm hope you guys enjoy," Henry explained.

The crowd on the dance floor grew quiet as they waited for the band to start playing and for Henry to start singing. As the music started, Henry did something which made the girls swoon - he ran a hand through his midnight black hair and winked. Even though he hadn't directed it to me, I still felt a few goose bumps grow on my skin.

As Henry started to sing, my jaw dropped. His voice was about a tenor and boy did it sound good. People started to dance, while I stood there surprised. Henry was an amazing singer. He then turned to me while he

## Fake Fiancee

sung and walked over towards me. I blushed as I stared at him with wide eyes.

*"You're the cutest jailbird I ever did see, I sure would be delighted with your company, come on and do the jailhouse rock with me"*

He grabbed my hand and pulled me onto stage while people wolf-whistled. He twirled me around the stage and I blushed. It was so daunting on the stage now, even though I had been on here earlier, but it probably because I was dancing. With Henry.

My heart started to beat faster as I realised I was dancing with *Henry*.

*"Let's rock,"* he sung melodically as he spun me outwards. *"Everybody let's rock!"*

People cheered as he suddenly thrust the microphone in front of my mouth. He was expecting me to sing as well. Oh great. Even though most people were dancing, there were others waiting for me to sing.

*"Everybody in the whole cell block was dancing to the jailhouse rock"* I sung a bit uncertainly. I probably sounded like a dying cat compared to Henry. I quickly shoved the microphone back to Henry, who smirked and then continued.

*"Dancing to the jailhouse rock ; dancing to the jailhouse rock"*

At the end of the song, Henry dipped me backwards and stared into my eyes. I could barely hear the claps from everyone because my eyes were focused on Henry's. I bit my lip and his gaze travelled down to my teeth, which were sunken in my lip. He leaned forward slowly and

"AGAIN!"

My eyes widened as I realised what was happening and I yanked myself back upright, but as I did that, I managed to somehow hit my head on Henry's jaw. I winced while Henry cursed. I think that was going to leave a bruise.

I headed off the stage as Henry told the audience he wasn't singing anymore. Keith was grinning at us, along with Natasha who was bouncing up and down next to him.

"That was *awesome!*" Natasha exclaimed as she enveloped me in a hug. Once she let go and turned to Henry, she gave him a friendly wink. "And don't you look dashing Henry?"

Henry returned her compliment with a polite smile but I on the other hand, felt irritated all of a sudden. Even though Natasha didn't like Henry that way, I still couldn't help but feel like ripping her hair off

Ok, I really needed to calm down.

After a few minutes of more chatting, Henry headed inside the mansion to change out of his costume. Apparently, it was too tight for him and made him uncomfortable. I stared at his back as he strode off and wondered what had happened on stage back then. Had he been about to kiss me? What would I have done if he did?

I had no idea.

## Fake Fiancee

Natasha's hand waving in front of my face made me blink. "Let's dance Lainie!" She exclaimed, grabbing my hand and leading me away from Keith. I shrugged.

We ended up doing some horrible and crazy moves and people were giving us dirty looks as we took over the dance floor. We did chicken wings, exaggerated moves of the Macarena, the sprinkler and robotic moves where we ended up poking people. I was having such a good time and we were laughing so hard.

After about half an hour of dancing, we both headed back inside sweating slightly. That had used up a lot of energy and I really needed to cool down.

"Want me to get us drinks?" Natasha asked as she craned her head to try and find the refreshment table.

I gave her a smile. "Sure."

I watched her walk away and push herself through the throng of people to find us drinks. I grinned as poor Natasha nearly got knocked down to the floor by a drunken guy and shouted at him for being blind.

My eyes scanned over the people in the room and landed on two familiar people. Henry had already changed out of the Elvis Presley costume and was now sitting on one side of the sofa with one of his arms resting on the armrest. Veronica was sitting next to him, slightly swaying side to side as she babbled on about something unimportant probably.

I watched them as they talked. Veronica laughed loudly about something and I realised she was drunk. That laugh sounded like such a drunken laugh. She shifted closer to him and put her face close to his, pouting. I saw Henry shaking his head at her and murmuring something. I wondered what he was telling her and it made my heart ache a bit.

Natasha then finally came back with two cups of sparkling water. I told her thanks and took a sip from the cup. It wasn't that bad.

As Natasha started to point out some hot guy in the room, my eyes landed back on Henry and Veronica and I wished it hadn't.

I had looked just in time to see Veronica leaning in and planting a kiss on his lips. I quickly turned away because I knew I couldn't handle it. Henry was obviously kissing her back. Why wouldn't he? He was a player and Veronica was absolutely stunning.

My heart was beating erratically and an aching sort of feeling spread throughout my stomach. Not caring that Natasha would worry or follow me; I pushed myself up from the sofa and ran. I ran from the room - I just had to put a big distance between myself and the two people on the sofa.

As I finally reached outside of the house, I took deep breaths to calm myself. Why was I feeling so *empty* by witnessing that? My eyes closed and I bit my lip. After a few seconds of thinking, I decided it was because if anyone found out Henry was cheating on me, he's make me look like a total fool. I could already imagine the headlines: *Naïve Fiancee Falls For Parker's Charm!*

Ugh. I knew it wasn't that though. If that had been the case, I would have stomped up towards Henry by now and be super pissed. But I wasn't angry and I was feeling heartbroken.

When Veronica had kissed Henry, my heart had literally felt like it had sunk to the floor and shattered, and there was only one reason to be heartbroken.

I liked Henry Parker.

## Chapter 22: Rumour Has It

**A/N: I hope I've done an OK job with Lainie's reactions to being around Henry ... anyway, enjoy lovelies! :)**

### Rumour Has It

After realising I actually liked Henry, I didn't think I could look him in the eye ever again. If he ever found out that I did like him, I knew he would shoot me down and ridicule me for falling for his 'good looks.' His cockiness still irritated the hell out of me, although I think I secretly liked flipping remarks back at him. Wait, did I just really think that?

Yes you did, Lainie.

I groaned as the two different sides of my head argued with each other - one helplessly thinking about Henry and the other one telling me to shut these stupid feelings out. After all, it was just a crush right?

It was sad that I couldn't pull my knees together on the lonely bench since I was in a dress. Instead, I hugged myself and gazed up at the stars twinkling the night sky. The bench I was sitting on was far out from the mansion so it was quite peaceful.

I didn't know what would happen if I went back in there. Would I be all nervous to see and talk to Henry, or be heartbroken that he would never like me?

As I started to dwell on the possibilities, I heard a rustling sound come from behind me. My heart lurched as I whipped around. What if it was somebody dangerous?

It was.

I bit my lip nervously as Henry appeared from behind an oak tree which was behind the bench. He smiled sheepishly at me, which made me ask myself: *how long had he been there?*

"Uh hey," he said awkwardly, as he stepped up to the bench.

My eyes widened at the close proximity and I think my heart was beating overdrive. This was not good at all. "H-hey!"

Henry took a seat next to me and it kind of frightened me. I shuffled a bit closer to the edge, hoping he wouldn't notice. "What are you doing out here?" He asked, frowning. "Natasha said you ran away. Everyone was worried!"

If I didn't know better, I think he was upset that I was out here by myself. I then nearly smacked myself for thinking that. He was definitely *not* worried or upset I was out here by myself. Why would he be?

"Uh... I-I didn't feel so well," I stammered. God, I was making a *fool* of myself! I bet he knew something was up with me.

"Do you feel sick?" He asked. I shook my head but he seemed to think I was sick. "Well, let's get you back."

## Fake Fiancee

Before I could protest, Henry pulled me up from the bench. The short walk back to the mansion seemed to take forever. I think it had to do with the fact that Henry was with me though. I didn't want him to want to confront him about Veronica, so our walk was quiet. It felt a bit awkward since I knew I liked him but at the same time, it felt kind of peaceful. As he led me up the front lawn, Natasha spotted me and ran over. I was surprised she didn't fall because of her killer stilettos.

"Lainie! Where did you go?!" She asked frantically, a few worry lines creased into her normally smooth forehead. "You just ran out! We were all so worried! Are you ok?!"

I nodded and gave her a strained smile. "I'm fine. I just needed some air," I lied. Well, it wasn't all a lie - I did need some air.

After a second of eyeing me suspiciously, she bought it. Clara, Aiden and Keith then appeared, and Keith instantly pulled me into a bear hug. That surprised me.

"Where'd you go?" He asked.

Before I could answer, Henry interrupted and put an arm around my shoulders. "I think she's sick, so I'm going to take her home."

I looked up at him and wondered why he had done that. Was he playing the part of a caring fiancé or did he want to do it? Great, now I was just over thinking everything. I hoped this wouldn't go on for long.

\* \* \*

The next morning, I was woken up by Steve, who was repeatedly saying my name and telling me to wake up. I groggily rubbed my eyes as he told me what was on today's agenda. "You have to get dressed quickly Lainie, as we're going to a press conference to get something sorted," he explained, poking me in the head so I would get up.

I swatted his finger away and pushed myself up from the bed. As I squinted at Steve, I saw he was holding a newspaper in his hand. "Get what cleared up?"

He held up the paper and I gasped at the headline and the pictures which followed.

### **HENRY PARKER GETS MARRIED!**

Rumour has it that the young couple, Henry Parker and Lainie Watson, have recently just eloped and are now on a beautiful honeymoon in Curacao, an island off the Venezuelan coast. They have been spotted a few times around the beach towns and had apparently attended the famous Veronica Pierce's wild twentieth birthday bash. They are also staying at one of the best hotels in Curacao - the Royal Crystal. Witnesses say that the couple married in a drive-thru chapel and that the young bride wore a ruffled pearl-coloured dress from Macy's. The store manager of Macy's confirmed the new Mrs Parker had indeed brought a pearl-coloured dress at her store. "I was so excited to see her!" exclaims Jessie. "The dress cost fifty dollars I remember, and I served her at the counter. She said *hi* to me!"

Sources say that the young couple's quick and cheap LA wedding was due to the fact of rebellion against Henry father, Mr Rafferty Parker. The elder Parker had stated many times his disapproval for the couple, and had called young Lainie a 'gold digger.'

## Fake Fiancee

"That's not true!" I burst out, miffed. I had to admit though; the only thing appealing in that article was having the name 'Lainie Parker.'

Steve nodded. "I know. That's why we're going to clear it up. Henry having a cheap and quick wedding because of his father's disapproval is not going to go well. We're going to say that the Parkers love you, you guys aren't married yet and you are both in Curacao for Henry's new movie."

I nodded slowly and sighed. How ridiculous was the media! And that 'Jessie' girl - why had she lied?! To get attention? More customers in her shop? I hadn't been in Macy's in months! I suddenly wondered what Henry's fan websites said about me. I bet it wasn't good, so I made a mental note to find a Henry Parker fan website one day.

"Oh and by the way, Veronica Pierce has a sister," Steve added nonchalantly. I could tell he knew this mess was my fault and my heartbeat rate sped up.

"Oh really?"

"Yep - here it is! Veronica Pierce's Mystery Sister - she apparently has long dark hair like Veronica, was wearing a dark purple dress and her boyfriend had recently just dumped her for someone else -"

"Poor girl," I said with a nervous laugh. "I think I saw her actually."

Steve rolled his eyes. "You'll be in trouble if anyone finds out," he warned. "Now come on, get dressed."

"What do I wear to a press conference?!" I asked, panicking. I didn't know what kind of function it was. Was it simple? Elegant?

"Keep it simple but not too simple," Steve answered, with his head tilted to the side.

I groaned at his use of words. They were such a help. "I'm just going to ask Natasha," I decided. That would be a good idea. "And where's Henry anyway?"

Steve gave me a strange look before answering, "He's already dressed and having breakfast downstairs. He has to sort a few things out for his filming today."

"Ok." I watched as Steve walked out of the suite and left me to get dressed. I took out my cell from the drawer and pressed Natasha's number. She picked up on the second ring.

"Morning Lainie!" She chirped. "Up and early?"

I paused, momentarily freaked out she knew I was the person calling her. "How'd you know it was me?"

"Umm - caller ID?" Natasha replied uncertainly.

"Oh right -" I murmured, feeling stupid. This was what early mornings did to me. "I'm only up early because I have to attend a press conference. What I do wear? A dress? Or is it too much?"

Natasha laughed at my question. "If it's a casual dress then it's alright. But I know you love jeans, so you can wear that instead. Now, I've seen your clothes and I've already got an idea in mind. Wear skinny jeans with a nice top and that white blazer of yours."

"Ok - what about shoes?"

## Fake Fiancee

"Those pink pumps of yours," Natasha immediately replied. "Trust me; it'll look great on you!"

Pink pumps? I never knew those even existed in my suitcase. "Alright â thanks Natasha."

"You're welcome! Have fun at the press conference!" Natasha exclaimed. "By the way, wear some make-up. You'll be in front of the cameras."

"Alright," I replied. After hanging up, I found a nice pair of Guess black skinny jeans and the pink pumps Natasha had been talking about. I smiled as I remembered that April had brought these for me. I missed April. I definitely had to call her sometime and of course, set Arianne up with Steve. I took out a blue cheetah print singlet and the blazer, and then headed to bathroom. Looking into the mirror, I decided my hair would have to make my hair look more presentable. I brushed my wavy hair and added a clip to the side.

After getting dressed, I headed downstairs into the lobby and off to the restaurant for breakfast. I spotted Steve and Henry immediately, mainly because of the three bodyguards standing around them, looking fierce in their sharp tuxedos.

"Morning Lainie," Steve greeted cheerily as I came into view.

"Morning. Can I eat?" I asked, as I plopped into a seat in between Steve and Henry. Sitting next to Henry gave me butterflies, which was pretty stupid.

Steve nodded and called one of the waitresses to take my order, but there was a little bit of a language barrier since the waitress had a heavy Dutch accent. I could feel Steve and Henry watching me amusedly as I tried to tell her that I wanted the chilli red snapper breakfast special.

"*Special!*" I said loudly, pointing to the sign large Special board. The problem was, there were a few fishes on there. "*Red snapper!*"

"Habras espaÃ±ol?" Henry suddenly asked, after about a minute of me failing to communicate to the waitress.

The waitress nodded, so Henry kept talking in a rapid language which sounded strangely like Spanish. I watched with wide eyes as Steve didn't even take any notice and was typing something on his BlackBerry. The waitress then left and I turned to Henry, a little bewildered. "What was that?" I demanded.

Henry's eyes flickered to me and a small smile crossed his face. "That, my pancake, was Spanish."

For some reason, my heart fluttered at the mention of 'pancake.' He hadn't used that nickname in ages. I wondered why. "You speak Spanish?" I asked, still surprised. Who knew Henry could speak another language other than English.

He nodded. "I took Spanish class in â junior year, but stopped after a few months."

"I see," I murmured, as I twirled a strand of my wavy hair. I could feel Henry watching me out of the corner of his eye and it made me smile a little. I ducked my head down though, so he couldn't see.

"Doesn't Lainie look good for the conference, Henry?" Steve suddenly asked, while his eyes glittered. I looked up at him and frowned as I tried to figure out why Steve was asking Henry such a question. Unless â oh dear lord.

## Fake Fiancee

"She does," Henry agreed. I bit my lip to stop myself from smiling like a fool. Even if he was lying, it was nice that he said that.

After I finished my breakfast, we decided to leave for the press conference. It was held in a large warehouse-kind-of building, except it was painted new. It was the type of place to hold big functions. Paparazzi and reporters crowded outside the warehouse with their cameras, waiting for Henry and I to get out of the car and show our faces.

My heartbeat sped up as Henry took my hand and led me through the crowd, but I cringed when the bodyguards had to fight some enthusiastic reporters off.

Steve led the way and I felt a little uncomfortable as I was pushed a little. Henry sensed this and wrapped an arm around my waist. A smile made its way onto my face because I viewed this as Henry being protective.

Hah! I wished, but it didn't hurt to think so.

We had about ten minutes until the press conference officially started as we headed inside through the back door. We were in a kind of backstage room, and there was a large door which I had the feeling led to the larger room outside, where all the reporters and paparazzi were outside. I opened up the door a little bit and peeked. I spotted people filing into the building, where rows and rows of chairs had been set up for people sit in.

"Scared?" A voice came from behind me. I screamed and quickly covered my mouth. It was Henry, smirking just a little.

"Actually I'm not," I replied crisply.

Henry raised an eyebrow and leaned closer to me, causing me to back up against the door. What was he doing?! "I bet you didn't want to come to this press conference," he said, his eyes boring into mine.

I nodded. "Yeah â""

"I knew it," he whispered, a grin forming on his face. "You actually want people to think we're on a honeymoon don't you?"

What? He wished! "No!" I exclaimed, feeling a hot blush making its way onto my cheeks, which pretty much contradicted what I had just said. Great.

"Doesn't look like it," Henry taunted, his face looming dangerously close. "I bet-"

"Henry! Lainie! What are you doing?!" Steve suddenly shouted. Henry and I then sprung apart, wide-eyed and embarrassed. "Get over here!"

The both of us scampered to him to hear what he had to say. "Ok Henry, you know what to say right?"

Henry nodded and a serious expression crossed over his face. An amused smile grew on my lips because Henry was never serious. After a few minutes of discussing things with Steve, we headed outside the door, with the bodyguards in tow. We gave the crowd a smile and sat down on the narrow table. The noise died down and Steve started to clear the mistake about the wedding and honeymoon, which made the majority of the reports raise their hand to ask questions.

## Fake Fiancee

"So you haven't eloped?" One at the front row asked, holding a video camera in her hand.

"No," Henry replied confidently. "Lainie and I are still engaged, not married."

"And you are here in Curacao, why?" Another asked arrogantly.

"We're here because I have a new movie project," Henry explained.

"Then why is your fiancée here?!"

I put my mouth to the microphone in front of me and half-heartedly joked, "Is it a crime for me to tag along?"

The crowd murmured. "Just a question Miss Watson," a reporter called out. "Then why did the shop owner of Macy's confirm you bought a dress for your wedding in LA?"

Oh my god. "I don't know why she said that, but I haven't been to Macy's in a while forever."

More murmurs. I sensed Henry was proud of me for handling the questions with ease. After a few more questions, the press conference was finished. We headed out the back door again and to my surprise, Keith was standing there.

"Hudson," Henry snapped. "What are you doing here?"

Keith flashed me a grin and moved over to put an arm around me. "I'm taking Lainie out!"

### **Lainie's Outfit**

## Chapter 23: Discoveries on the Streets

**A/N: Sorry if this chapter is boring. I just thought Lainie just needed some fun. Well, I hope you enjoy it nevertheless! I promise things will get interesting by the next few chapters ;)**

### Discoveries on the Streets

"No you aren't."

"Yes I am."

"No you *aren't*."

"I think I can do whatever I want," Keith said with a snort.

"Ok guys cut it out!" I exclaimed, my eyes wide with incredulity. Who knew two guys would ever fight over *me*? And one of them being the guy I liked too.

"Where do you want to take her to?" Henry suddenly demanded. I looked over at him, surprised that he seemed angry. Maybe he was jealous â€” or maybe I was reading into Henry's reactions too much. It was most likely the second one.

"Out and about," Keith answered with a shrug. He then gave Henry a wink and continued, "Don't worry my man, I'll keep her safe."

The four of us stood there, unsure of what to do next. Henry spoke up first. "You're not going Lainie."

I was suddenly filled with fury. Did he just *order* me around? Oh hell no! Before I could protest, Steve cut in with his lips in a grim line, "You can go Lainie. Just be careful."

I nodded and scurried over to Keith, who led me off to his newly rented motorbike. I didn't want to look back because I could feel Henry's eyes on me. Keith handed me a helmet and I flipped my hair up so the helmet would go on easier. When I finished, I saw Keith smirking at me, making me frown. "What?" I asked self-consciously.

"Your fiancÃ© is checking you out," he replied with a chuckle. My heart suddenly missed a beat and my head whipped towards Henry, who had been staring at me the whole time. But as soon as I turned my head towards him, he looked away. Damn.

We both hopped on the motorbike and I had to place my arms around Keith's waist, if I didn't want to fall off. I was actually pretty excited to ride on a motorbike, but I secretly wished I was on the back of a motorbike with Henry.

It was an exhilarating ride, and while Keith sped through different streets, I shouted, "This is fun!"

"I'm glad you think so!"

I had no idea where he was taking me, but I felt the need for fun, after that press conference and Henry's mixed signals. Why in the world were guys so confusing?

## Fake Fiancee

The bike suddenly slowed down by the lot of the beach, which made me pout. I had really liked riding on the bike, unlike girls I had seen back home complaining that the 'thing' made them dizzy and was too 'fast' and 'scary'. Keith and I hopped off the bike and I tossed the helmet to him so he could fit into the compartment under the seat.

"Why'd you rent a motorbike?" I asked, as I brushed my fingers through the tangles of my hair. "Do you even have a license?"

Keith smiled as he shoved the keys into his jeans pocket. "Of course I do. I used to ride bikes all the time, so I just felt like trying again."

Interesting. As I imagined a young shaggy-haired Keith wearing a leather jackets and being a bad boy, he spoke up, telling me that he was bringing me on a tour of this 'little town'.

I laughed and followed him down the narrow street, with many intersections adorned with little shops, boutiques and little restaurants and parlours. We stopped in front of a bookstore first, with shelves of dusty classics. Keith and I ended up discussing about Stephen King's awesomeness and having a debate on Wuthering Heights. I didn't really see the point in it, but Keith started explaining how love can destruct and control everything, and that it can turn you into something other than yourself. I pondered on that.

Would loving Henry turn me into something other than myself? I was already different - I could sense it. I'm weaker than before and I get giddy when Henry does the smallest of things. Oh boy.

After that, we ended up in some costume store, and I laughed as Keith slipped on a leather duster. It flapped against him but complimented him nicely at the same time.

"Wait!" I exclaimed as I thought of something. I rushed over to a large accessories box at the back of the store and plucked out a cowboy hat and a lasso. When I handed it over to Keith, he smirked and put them on.

"You should do a Western movie," I suggested, as I took out my cell to take a snapshot of him.

"Hey! No pictures!" Keith cried, trying to cover his face with his hands.

"You're an actor so you're supposed to be used to it!" I argued, pouting.

Keith said no more and shook off the duster to put it back. We headed outside and into the sunlight, not knowing where to go.

"How about the Halloween store over there?" Keith joked. I immediately shook my head. No way were we going in there. "Oh look, Lainie! A fortune teller!"

I crossed my arms and frowned at him. "You really believe in that voodoo?"

Keith shrugged. "I believe that about ninety seven percent of fortune tellers aren't legitimate â '!"

"So you actually believe in the three percent?" I asked with a small scoff.

"Come on, let's just do it for fun!" Keith said with an exasperated sigh. "Ever heard of *fun*, Lainie?"

I immediately whacked him on the shoulder. "I know what fun is," I growled. Did he think I was dull? "Let's just go in."

## Fake Fiancee

Keith grinned at his victory and we both walked inside the cramped little mystical store. It was lighted dimly by lavender scented candles and there were a few shelves of books and a large table with three chairs - one for the fortune teller and two for other people. A thin lady with dark hair came into view, with her purple dress sweeping the timber floor.

"Hi!" Keith greeted cheerily.

"You must be Hudson," the woman spoke as she took her seat. She indicated that we should sit too so we did. Keith nudged me and gave me a look which said 'see?' I rolled my eyes. Keith was a famous actor, so he was easy to recognise.

"And you must be Lainie?" She asked, her eyes skimming over me.

I nodded. "I'm sure you know me since I'm the famous Henry Parker's fiancée." Whoops. That sounded a bit conceited.

The lady smiled. "I am Zera. You are here for a reading yes?"

No, we came here to buy ice cream. Keith nodded and handed over a note to pay for the both of us. Zera then told Keith to cut the deck and after he did, she shuffled it once again and laid down three cards.

Keith and I peered at them - a sun, a star and a pope. "I'm guessing you're going to have a happy life," I commented.

Zera nodded and tapped the first card. "The Sun shows that you've haven't had many tragedies in your life and that your life so far is very happy. The Star and the Pope however, represent wisdom and seeking advice. It seems as though you are seeking advice, am I right?"

Keith nodded and absentmindedly ran a hand through his blonde hair. Hmm. I wondered what that was about. I frowned as I remembered what Zera had said and pointed out, "So this is fortune telling right? Then why were none of these cards about his future?"

Zera shrugged. "I only say what is in the cards, unless you'd like to have a look into the orb?"

I shook my head quickly while Keith laughed. I'm pretty sure I would see nothing in that orb. That only happened in magical movies such as Harry Potter. It was my turn, and when she laid down my three cards, I frowned. How come my gut feeling told me my cards were worse than Keith's? They even *looked* worse than his.

"The High Priestess is about wisdom and studying hard. You must study hard then?"

I shrugged. I guess I did.

"And the wheel of fortune means life can quickly twist and have unexpected changes, and the moon somehow represents a secret will get out and there will be a bit of a storm once it does. So beware."

Well that didn't sound very good. I pondered on what secret I had and the only one I could think of was my true feelings for Henry. Say hypothetically then, if this fortune was true, did that mean if I told Henry about my feelings it wouldn't turn out good? That it was better to keep my mouth shut?

## Fake Fiancee

The only thing I was sure of is that if Zera was one of the three percent that Keith believed in about fortune tellers, then I was screwed.

\* \* \*

It had been about half an hour since leaving the stuffy fortune teller's place. I had dragged Keith into a jewellery workshop and even though it wasn't his thing, I could tell he was enjoying it. I was just finishing off a bracelet I was making for April, with little different fashion charms I had picked up such as shoes, or a bag. It matched her because she was a fashion designer.

I had made in total, five bracelets now - Natasha, Clara, April, Arianne and Keith, who was wearing his on his wrist at the moment. At the last minute, I had shyly decided to make Henry one. It was mainly Keith's fault though, since he had urged me to make him one. I had no idea what he liked, so my mood wasn't very good.

"How about you just put his name on there?" Keith suggested.

I shook my head slowly. "Even though he's obsessed with himself, I don't think that's right."

I suddenly remembered the old times, when I had hated Henry with a passion. He had been way more conceited back then, and had teased me way more than usual. I wondered what had happened to that. I suddenly remembered that time when Steve, Henry and I had been in the car on the way to the Parker house, when Henry had said, '*C'mon, nobody hates me. They either envy me or admire me.*' I had then told him that one day, his ego would eventually swallow him up. A small, hollow laugh escaped from my throat. Good times. That was the time I had also called Henry a peanut because I had thought he was allergic to them.

I blinked. "Peanut!" I suddenly cried. Pushing myself out of my seat, I rushed over to where the beads with letters were and picked up the necessary letters for Henry's bracelet.

Once I strung them onto the navy thick string, Keith questioned my sanity. "What was up with that sudden outburst?"

I quickly tied the string together and showed it to Keith. "That's my nickname for him," I explained, feeling proud of myself.

"I see," Keith murmured, as he examined the bracelet.

We left the workshop after that, and I now carried a small bag which held all the bracelets. Keith and I walked down the streets quietly and while we did, we past a local cafe. "I'm hungry," I announced suddenly, as I peered inside the cafe. "I feel like eating pizza."

A loud growl came out of nowhere, making me jump. I looked around and realised there were no dogs around. That's weird.

I looked back up at Keith and was surprised to see his cheeks a bit pink and he was looking a bit uncomfortable. Wait a second. "Did your stomach just growl?" I asked, confused.

"When people say they're hungry, I automatically go hungry too because I think of food!" Keith argued defensively. I burst out laughing because he looked so cute.

He frowned at me. "Stop laughing! Maybe if you kept your food fantasies to yourself, my stomach wouldn't have growled!"

## Fake Fiancee

I grinned wickedly and rubbed my stomach. "Mmm, I see delicious pizza with *hot melting cheese* !" "

"Stop it!" Keith begged.

"And *pepperoni*-"

"I hate pepperoni," Keith commented.

That surprised me and I frowned. "What? How can you hate pepperoni?"

"I just do."

"Weirdo," I muttered, as I opened the door to the café. I loved pepperoni, but my favourite pizza was Hawaiian, so usually when I ordered Hawaiian, I asked to add pepperoni. That showed just how much I loved it.

"Hey! I heard that!" Keith exclaimed, following me inside.

I laughed and walked over to an empty table. "That was the point!"

A waiter instantly swooped in on us and took our orders. Unfortunately, they didn't have pizza, so I just ordered Shrimp Diablo. Yummy. Keith decided to order the same because he felt up for a challenge. I couldn't believe he had never tasted Shrimp Diablo. What kind of person was he? First, he didn't like pepperoni, and then he hasn't tried Shrimp Diablo?

"So Lainie, how is your love life going?" Keith asked as he took a piece of bread roll from the bread basket in the middle of the table.

I shrugged and decided to be as honest as I could. "It's confusing ; I think Henry's cheating on me too."

Keith shook his head. "Nah I don't think so."

"And why not?" I challenged, intrigued to see what he had to say.

"I can tell Henry really loves you," Keith murmured. "I don't think he would cheat on you."

My eyes widened and my heart beat double time. "What did you just say?" I asked, astonished. Why did he think Henry loved me when our engagement was fake?

"Well, I see the way he looks at you. It's so intense, and it's obvious he cares about you. That's why he sends signals to the guys that you're his."

I was still stunned and tried to process what Keith had just told me. He stared at me intensely? He sends signals to guys? What signals?!

"Hey, so what did you get Veronica for her birthday?" Keith asked, interrupting my thoughts.

I shrugged. Honestly, I had no idea what Henry had given her ; but instantly, images of Henry and Veronica kissing on the sofa filled my mind. I gritted my teeth. *That* was probably her birthday present. "I don't know what Henry gave her, but I'm sure she enjoyed it," I muttered.

## Fake Fiancee

Keith laughed. "Hmm â I bet she didn't. Veronica's avoiding Henry now."

My head shot up at this and millions of questions ran through my mind. What did Keith mean by that? Why was Veronica avoiding Henry? Was it because they were having an affair, so they ignored each other until they were in a room by themselves?

Ok, I was getting a bit too paranoid, but I had to know. "Why?" I asked, fidgeting with the hem of my blazer.

Keith's eyes widened. "You don't know?!"

Don't know what? Oh my god, it must be something serious. "Know what?"

"Well Veronica, unsurprisingly, forced herself onto Henry. When she kissed him, he pushed her off and she started going off at him. It was hilarious. Veronica threw some very lame insults at him," Keith explained. "Veronica then ran off â probably to throw up from all the alcohol she had."

It felt like an air balloon had just been lifted off my chest, and all my jealousy towards Veronica disappeared. The only thought running through my head at the moment was: So Henry hadn't kissed her back.

## Chapter 24: A Fusion of Emotions

**A/N: OK, so I kind of mentioned it last chapter, but I feel like this chapter is a bit of a let down, especially towards the end. I'm sorry about that guys, but I hope you still enjoy. xox**

### A Fusion of Emotions

As Keith and I ate, I felt so much better, obviously due to the fact that Henry hadn't kissed Veronica at all. It was amazing how my mood had changed. Sure, I had no idea if Henry liked me or not but at least he wasn't interested in Veronica.

Keith could sense my happiness and asked me if I wanted to go to a club opening tonight. I was feeling so happy that I told him yes. I didn't even like the clubbing scene, but I guess I had nothing else to do â other than maybe confess my feelings to Henry but I was too much of a coward to waltz up to him say, *'I bloody like you Henry, so you better like me back!'*

Keith brought me back to the Royal Crystal after and told me he would pick me up at eight. That meant I had about two hours of resting time and dressing time. When I reached the hotel suite Henry and I shared, I found him sitting on the sofa. He looked up immediately once I came in and looked relieved for some reason. Had he been worried about me? I hoped so.

"Are you ok?" He asked, a frown forming on his handsome face. I nodded and gave him a strange look. So he had been worried about me? Eek!

"I'm fine," I answered, trying to hide my happiness.

Henry cocked his head to the side and eyed the bag in my hand. "What's that?" He asked, stuffing his hands in his pockets and looking at the bag suspiciously.

I gave him a smile and held up the bag. "I made bracelets for everyone at a jewellery workshop," I explained. My heart started to beat faster as I fumbled to get Henry's bracelet out of the bag though. This was my first real gift for him and I prayed to God he liked it. "Umm â I made one for you too."

Henry's eyes widened as I took a step towards him to give it to him. I kept my head down so he couldn't see the hopeful and scared expression on my face and took his hand to tie the bracelet around his wrist. I tried my best to ignore the little sparks I was still feeling when I touched him.

It fit perfectly. When I looked up beneath my lashes to see his reaction, I found myself staring into his lovely golden-brown eyes. I couldn't place the emotion his eyes held, but he looked touched that I had made him bracelet. I wasn't surprised - I *had* called him a jerk many times over our time spent together.

I then cleared my throat. "Aren't you going to see what it looks like?"

Henry looked at his bracelet and an amused smile grew onto his face as he read 'PEANUT.'

"Thank you Lainie," he murmured as he stared at it. If I didn't know any better, I'd say that the thank-you sounded sincere.

"You're welcome," I replied, smiling widely. He liked it! I couldn't believe it.

## Fake Fiancee

"I should get one for you bearing the name - *pancake*," Henry mused. My head shot up and his eyes were twinkling mischievously. Why did he have to say that?

"Pancake is such a mean nickname," I muttered as I gritted my teeth.

Henry smirked at me. "But it suits you."

"No it doesn't!" I said hotly, as I started to walk away from him. "Do you *think* I look like a pancake?!"

As I headed to where my suitcase was to grab my towel and find a suitable outfit for the club opening, I heard Henry mutter, "You look better than a pancake."

What did *that* mean?! I shook my head to forget it and took out a white singlet with a cute, strapless light blue dress April had bought for me using Henry's credit card. With that, I took a long, warm shower and got dressed. The problem was that my wet hair was dripping onto the back of my dress, so I decided to blow dry it.

I wasn't as good as a hairdresser, but I managed. As soon as I thought I looked good enough to go to a club, I stepped out of the ensuite, grabbed my clutch and headed to where Henry was sitting on the couch. His jaw dropped when I came into the room. What now?

"Where â€” where are you going?" He asked, a frown now replacing his shocked expression.

I took out my clutch buried inside my suitcase to chuck my essentials in there. Cell phone, a small packet of Kleenex, Chap Stick â€” "Keith and I are going to a club opening tonight."

"Why is he taking you out again? I thought he just took you out this morning."

"Are you worried about me?" I teased, a small smile growing on the edge of my lips. I wished.

"No."

"Liar!" I exclaimed, just to tease him.

"I'm not worried!"

I then thought of the jokes about Keith being gay and decided to use in that in action, just to see Henry's reaction. I wondered what would happen. "You don't need to worry about Keith."

"Why not?" Henry questioned flatly.

I gave a dramatic little sigh to make what I was about to say seem real. "Look Henry, I promised I wouldn't tell anyone, but you're so overprotective so â€” here it is," I started to say, watching as Henry took a cup of water and started to sip on it. "Keith isn't exactly what you call '*straight*' and the best thing is he's crushing on you!"

Henry suddenly spat out the water and it stained the carpet. Oh my god, I wanted to laugh so badly but that would ruin my cover. His face had turned an angry shade of red, but to be honest, it kind of looked cute mixed with his bronze skin. "WHAT?!"

## Fake Fiancee

"I thought you'd be happy," I said, batting my eyelashes innocently. "If you were worried he was going to make a move on me, he's not!"

"*Happy?!!*" He half yelled, looking a bit like a maniac. "He *likes* me! How can I be *happy?!!*"

"Well, I thought you would have been flattered," I said, smirking. "Clearly I was wrong."

"Yes, you were wrong!"

There was suddenly a knock at the door and I walked off to open it. "Oh, and by the way, he's got a photo of your six pack on his phone!" I added, just for amusement.

It turned out to be Keith at the door, so I let him in. He had wonderful timing. When Henry saw Keith, he looked like he was going to make a run for it and escape out of the window, the poor guy.

"Henry," Keith greeted with a nod of his head. It was those nods that guys did, just to look macho. Like really?

Henry cleared his throat. "Keith."

I shifted my weight from one foot to another and smiled at both of them. "Well we should get going â€¦ right Keith?" He nodded in agreement and we both walked out, but not before I called out to Henry, "I was joking!"

\* \* \*

I scanned the long line with unease. It would take us ages to get into 'Fusion' (the club's name) and I hated waiting. I voiced this aloud so Keith could hear and he gave me a little grin. Without saying anything, he pulled me along with him around the block to where the entrance was. He strode up to the bouncer with confidence and showed him something. I craned my head to see what it was, but all I caught was that it was rectangular shaped. The bouncer nodded and the both of us were let through. Amazed, I turned to Keith.

"What was that?" I asked, with my eyebrows raised. "You didn't bribe him did you?"

Keith barked with laughter. "Of course not! That was a VIP pass."

Oh, well that made sense now. The club was very modern and had three floors. The first floor was where a very large bar sat, along with booths for people to converse with each other. If you went upstairs, that was where the real party begun. It had the biggest dance floor I had ever seen (even though I hadn't visited many clubs), with a large stage for people to perform, and balconies where there were couches so people could sit and watch others dance. Laser lights shone everywhere. There was also a rooftop, but I didn't bother checking that out.

After about an hour checking the place out, Keith and I were sitting on a couch on one of the balconies overlooking the dance floor, while he sipped on his Kaluha Mudslide (whatever that was) and I with a Long Island Iced Tea.

"Henry seemed weird when I came to pick you up," Keith mentioned. "What's up his monkey butt? Was he *jealous?*"

My mind instantly flickered to Henry's reaction when I had told him Keith was crushing on him. I wished I had caught that moment on camera. "Well, it seemed like it and I wanted to play a prank on him, so I told him

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he didn't have to worry about you, because you had a crush on him."

Even though it was funny, I didn't want to let out a laugh yet in case it had somehow offended Keith. But he let out a snort of laughter and asked, "How'd it go?"

I grinned. "He spat his water out and started going mad."

After that, we talked a bit more but we were interrupted by my phone vibrating in my clutch. I apologised to Keith and flipped my cell open. It was from Henry.

***Henry: It's nearly midnight. Come home.***

Was it nearly midnight already? I looked at the time on my cell and it *was* nearly midnight. Wow. I quickly texted, ***I think I'll stay here however long I want.***

Henry texted back nearly immediately with: ***COME HOME. I don't trust Hudson.***

He didn't trust Keith? Geez, he really needed to stop with that. I looked up at Keith, who was surveying the dance floor down below and frowned. How exactly did Henry not trust Keith? He seemed like one of the most trusted people I had met.

***This whole thing is fake anyway. Why are you so worried?***

Suddenly, a blonde bombshell, sat herself next to Keith. We both frowned at her, but at the same time we realised who it was.

"Natasha?" We both asked in unison.

She giggled and was holding a fruity Cosmopolitan in her hand. Natasha looked amazing, with her platinum blond hair running like a river down her backless red bodycon dress. Her bright blue eyes were rimmed with black eyeliner and mascara.

"Hello guys!" She greeted cheerily.

That was when I felt my cell vibrate again. I checked it and rolled my eyes at Henry's response - ***I don't care. I don't want you near Hudson cos it's bad publicity, so COME HOME.***

How could Henry just tell me - no wait, *order* me, to come home? Was he crazy?! Even if I liked him, I wasn't going to listen to him. No one ordered me around because I was my own person. I snapped my cell shut and shoved it in my clutch, fuming.

"Wow, is that you Natasha?" Keith asked with an eyebrow raised, which snapped me out of my thoughts. I whacked him on the shoulder. How mean of him.

"Of course," she replied, giggling. I think she was drunk. She turned to me and leaned forward to twirl a lock of her hair around her finger. "Lainie, your hair is *so* silky."

I laughed weakly at her drunkenness. "Not as silky as yours," I chirped.

She batted her eyelashes and waved off my comment. "No, no," she denied, being modest. "Oh my god! You guys should *so* hit the dance floor!"

## Fake Fiancee

While Keith shifted uncomfortably in his seat, I spoke up. "Nah, I won't have anyone to look after this." I waved my clutch in the air to show what I meant.

Natasha smiled at me. "Oh no, don't worry, I'll look after it."

Keith turned to me and held out his hand. "So how about it, Lainie?"

I gave him a smile and put my hand in his. Henry *would not* take away the fun from tonight. I was going to party like it was the end of the world.

Keith then led me downstairs and we weaved ourselves through the throng of people, who were flaunting their bodies to what seemed like 'Like A G6' but distorted due to the DJ on stage. Keith pulled me to where the heart of the party, where the music pulsed loudly and lasers shone all over Keith and I.

Dancing with Keith did not take my mind of Henry at all. Even though I was dancing with Keith, I couldn't help but think things like how his hair should be darker and less wavy, or that his eyes should be a dark shade of gold instead of a dull green, and that his skin should be a bit tanner.

After a few more dances, we headed upstairs to where Natasha was chatting animatedly to some guy. I grabbed my clutch and thanked her for looking after it.

"No worries Lainie," Natasha replied, giggling. She then put a hand on the guy's thigh, who was sitting next to her. "Oh, this is Pedro by the way!"

As Keith and I left, I heard 'Pedro' telling Natasha that his name was 'Paolo.' I laughed aloud at Natasha's mistake. I told Keith that he didn't have to bring me back to the Royal Crystal, but he insisted that he would make sure I get back to the hotel safely. Bless his heart, but it wasn't like I was going to do anything stupid.

The ride back seemed short, because before I knew it, Keith was saying, "I had a great night Lainie," and we were outside the hotel.

"Me too," I lied partially. Sure, at first it was fun, but until Henry had texted me, it had killed my mood. I had been furious. Then, I had danced with Keith and secretly wished he was Henry, which made me all the more furious. I was supposed to be thinking about killing him, not dancing with him.

I waved until Keith sped off, and after he was out of sight, I headed upstairs to our hotel suite via the elevator. I was ready to snap Henry's neck off. Sure I liked him, but he could be such an arrogant human being, or maybe he wasn't even one.

When I finally reached the door, I took a breath and swung it open. Turning on the lights, I frowned as I found Henry lying on the sofa, his eyes closed, but then my eyes widened when I saw the empty bottle of vodka on the floor.

**Lainie :)**

## Fake Fiancee

## Chapter 25: The Truth

### The Truth

I situated myself in front of his face on the carpet and studied him. Why had he been drinking? Actually, what had he been *thinking*?!

I suddenly had the urge to push the little strand of hair out of his face, so I reached forward and did so. I felt him stir so I quickly retracted my hand. It would be so embarrassing if Henry woke up to find my hand caressing his gorgeous face â

"Peter?"

I blinked and realised what he had just called me. "Do I look like Peter?" I snapped, feeling just a teeny bit offended.

"Oh â Lainie."

"Henry," I started with a sigh. "Why did you drink? You were passed out! You looked like you came from a beach party from Miami!"

Henry's eyes then snapped open fully. "I was asleep you idiot! I didn't pass out!"

I raised my eyebrow. Like I believed him! He had been known for getting drunk at parties in LA before. "And I'm the President of the United States."

Henry rolled his eyes. "Not funny."

"How do you explain the vodka bottle if you weren't drinking then?" I asked, pointing to the empty glass bottle beside me.

Henry pushed himself up from the couch and rolled his eyes once more. "I only took a sip. Peter was here for while to discuss things about the movie. *He* drank most of it," he explained.

"So â Peter's drunk?" I asked, unable to imagine him walking tipsily around and shouting strings of profanities to random people passing by.

Henry nodded. "He drank more than just one bottle," he added with a wrinkle of his nose. I bit my lip to hold back my smile, because he looked adorable doing that. "He's probably passed out in his hotel room right now. When he started getting drowsy, I kicked him out of here."

"You really kicked him huh?" I knew he hadn't meant it literally, but I couldn't help but ask. I suddenly imagined Henry literally kicking Peter out of this very hotel suite (which looked rather ridiculous), even if it wasn't the appropriate time to think like that.

Henry looked at me like I fell from Mars. "And lose my part of Cade Lionel? No thanks."

It was silent then because I didn't know what to say, and I was surprised Henry was watching me intently, instead of adding some other witty remark to make me angry. I then remembered the real reason of *why* I was mad with Henry, which got me all riled up. It was all about anger tonight. But instead of yelling, I stated

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calmly, "Henry, I am so pissed at you."

He blinked from confusion of what I just said and finally realised what I was talking about. "I'm not very happy with you either, Lainie." He shifted his jaw, which looked pretty attractive but I mentally waved off that thought because I was supposed to be angry with him, not smitten.

I glared at him. "Because I'm hanging out with Keith? Why the hell does he bother you?!"

Henry ran a hand through his hair and wouldn't look me in the eye. "Look, I'm not in the mood for this. Just â€¦ don't hang out with him so much."

He stood up and started to walk away, but I quickly hopped up and blocked him from going further. His eyes narrowed at me, so I did the same.

"Oh you're not going anywhere!" I exclaimed. How dare he try and walk out of this! Coward.

"Get out of my way Lainie," Henry warned.

I crossed my arms and changed to a cocky stance, just to annoy him more. "I think I'm good here thanks. Now tell me why you hate Keith!"

Henry stayed silent, so I decided to make some random guesses, hoping I would guess right, get a reaction out of Henry and make him admit it.

"Is he an undercover spy out to get you? Is that why you don't approve of him?" Even though it sounded stupid, it could be a possibility, although I couldn't imagine Keith as someone wearing all black and snooping around.

"No," Henry answered curtly.

"Your half-brother?"

"No."

"Your *brother*?"

"No!"

"April's ex?!"

"NO!"

"*Your* ex?!" I was really at loss.

"I'M NOT GAY!"

"Your-"

"HE'S TAKING YOU AWAY FROM ME!" Henry roared.

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I jumped. What? What had he just said?! I met his eyes, bewildered. He looked shocked too, as though those words had accidentally slipped from his mouth. I could feel the tension in the air and it somehow excited me.

"He's taking me away from you?" I whispered, praying to God at the same time that what he had just said was indeed the truth. My heart was beating so fast that it felt like it was going to burst from my chest.

Henry meanwhile, was breathing heavily and seemed at loss for words. He finally then looked up at me and laughed. It wasn't a laugh of happiness though, it was a hollow laugh. "Have you ever thought that maybe I feel more than friendship towards you?"

I blinked and had no idea how to respond. It was impossible, impossible for Hollywood star Henry to like *me*. I was Lainie, the plain, annoying girl who had agreed to become his fake fiancée for money. He could never like me. If he did, it would be a miracle. Hell, just Henry thinking I was an alright person was a miracle. I ended up replying with something stupid.

"I actually thought you see me less than a friend."

Henry let out a sigh and hung his head. "I'm sorry you thought of it that way. At first, I didn't see anything in you. I just thought you were kind of pretty. Then, we went to visit my mom and things changed. I ended up telling you one of my biggest secrets, Lainie, and that has to mean something. Didn't you ask yourself that?"

I bit my lip. I had thought of that. I had been astonished he had told me his secret out of all people.

"I don't know â I just had the feeling that you'd understand," Henry continued. "And when we came to Curacao on the plane, all I wanted was to be near you. I thought I was going crazy. I then realised on that plane, that I fancied you."

No wonder he had been all moody and weird when we had arrived in Curacao. I had been pissed at him for that, I remember. Now, I felt like taking it all back. He had been confused. I knew what that felt like.

"I didn't want you liking me back because I knew I was no good for you. I reflected back on what kind of man I had been before I had met you. I had let my father manipulate and abuse me, I had slept with girls here and there, attended parties and gotten wasted â and I realised that I shouldn't be spending my life like that."

I looked up at him and he was staring directly at me. It was â unnerving.

"I felt like - no, I still feel like I'm not good enough for you. Back to the point, I felt the need to distance myself from you in case you ended up liking me. That's why I decided to make you truly hate me, so I acted like you were nothing. I wanted - I still want someone better for you. Someone who isn't a jerk like me."

I was glad that I knew why Henry had been a big, fat jerk to me while we were in Curacao most of the time. But the main thing running through my head was: *He likes me!*

With all the courage I had, I asked, "So â you still like me?"

A horrible silence ensued and I realised I had made a huge mistake by asking if he liked me. His feelings must have faded obviously. Lord, I was so stupid. I felt my heart sinking all the way down to the floor with a loud 'plonk.' I shouldn't have asked him. Now he was probably thinking I was self-centred for even thinking that.

"Yes," Henry said softly, looking away.

## Fake Fiancee

My head shot up faster than a bullet. "Yes?" I clarified. It never hurt to ask again right?

Henry ran a hand through his hair and his eyes were still averted. He looked nervous and it seemed kind of cute. "To be honest, I think I'm falling for you."

"What happened to distancing yourself away from me?" I asked, a little confused.

Henry looked up at me and sighed. "I don't know. I just can't keep myself away from you. I don't want to be a jerk to you again. You don't know how guilty I felt for doing that."

Holy moly. "Am I dreaming?" I checked. "You just admitted that you were falling for me and you just admitted you were a jerk to me. Don't you have a huge ass ego?"

His serious expression disappeared and an amused smile now replaced it. "No you are not dreaming, pancake. I'm here, you're here and I'm falling in love with you."

The heart which had landed on the floor with a 'plonk' had picked itself up and burst into rays of sunshine. It felt like I was flying, flying in Heaven to be exact.

Henry liked me out of the billions of people on Earth! Me, Lainie Watson!

To happy to say anything, I threw myself at him (shocker I know) and wrapped my arms around his neck. He staggered back a bit, startled, but then I felt his strong arms wind themselves around my petite waist. I rested my head in the crook of his neck and sighed contentedly. This was better than I imagined.

I couldn't believe I was really here, in *his* arms, inhaling *his* intoxicating scent. It filled my lungs and made me feel complete.

"So does this mean you're returning my undying love for you?" Henry whispered, his hot breath swirling in my ear. To be honest, it was ticklish, but I liked it very much. Very, very much.

Lifting my head to meet his eyes, I found that he was smiling crookedly. It was a really beautiful smile because it was a smile of what looked like true happiness. His eyes crinkled at the corners and the gold flecks in his light brown eyes were sparkling. It was so breathtaking that I nearly forgot what he had asked.

"Maybe," I answered slyly.

Henry frowned at my cheeky expression. "Well that's no fair." But then, a gleam appeared in his eyes, which I didn't like. It looked like he was planning something. Suddenly, his hands started to tickle my sides and I instantly tried to squirm out of his tight grip.

"*Henry! Stop it!*"

He laughed and finally stopped as I tried to regain my breath. I whacked him on the chest as revenge and he just shook his head sadly at my weak attempt.

"Sorry that I don't have the muscles to lock you in place so I can torture you," I said, poking my tongue out.

"So you admit I have muscles?" Henry asked, smirking as he ran a hand down his smooth biceps.

I rolled my eyes. "Is that all you caught out of that?"

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He nodded, but then his face became serious, which scared me. "You're forgetting something Lainie," he prompted carefully.

I frowned and racked my brains to remember what I had forgotten. I had forgotten to tell him my feelings. Crap. I could feel a small blush crawling its way up to my cheeks from my throat. "Did I ever mention that your feelings for me are reciprocated?"

Ok, why did I just use a big word? Reciprocate? Really, Lainie?

Henry took a step towards me and entwined my hands with his. "You have no idea how long I've been wanting to hear that," he murmured with his eyes closed and his forehead rested against mine.

"Really?" I asked, caught off guard. "What else have you been waiting for?"

I watched as Henry opened his eyes and thought. After a second or two, he gave me an answer. "Well â I have been dreaming about kissing you."

I gasped and smacked his chest, making him laugh. I fought back a smile when I realised that Henry's tanned cheeks were lightly tinged with pink. He was blushing!

"But really, may I kiss you Lainie?"

I swear my heart was beating faster than a hummingbird's wings. He really did want to kiss me? And he was *asking*? Since when did he ask for *permission*?!

"Why didn't you just force a kiss on me?" I asked, curious as to what he would say. "Isn't that what you do? Spontaneously kiss people?"

"Well â after stealing your first kiss, which I admit made me kind of happy at the time and guilty, I wouldn't want to make you upset again," Henry explained. His eyes then lost the sparkle it had about a minute ago.

"You know â I *am* sorry for that. I was such a jerk and I â"

In a second, I made my decision and bit my lip. "Just kiss me, silly."

Henry grinned with victory and before I knew it, he had crushed me to his chest and captured my lips with his. I gasped at the sensation. The touch had been electric and it felt like my lips were on fire. Actually, my whole body was burning - burning for Henry.

His lips had always looked firm but in fact, were surprisingly soft. Although it sounds corny, it felt like we were made for each other really. Now I understood those sappy romance movies and novels. I had used to scoff at those things but now, I was feeling it for myself. And I must say, it felt rather amazing.

Our kiss was slow and wonderful and blissful and â well, it was better than all the greatest adjectives in the world put together to describe a kiss.

Henry pulled away sooner than I would've liked though. We were both a bit breathless and as we looked into each other's eyes, it was official for me. I was falling in love with him.

## Chapter 26: I Spy

### I Spy

The shrill ring of the hotel's phone suddenly rang, which woke me up from my deep slumber. A sigh left my lips because I wanted to stay where I was right now - in Henry's arms under the silk blanket of the king-sized bed. Carefully, I took Henry's arm off my waist and I reached for the phone.

"Hello?" I murmured, my voice foggy with sleep.

"Miss Watson?" A male voice said from the other side of the line. "Good morning! A Natasha Lesley has stopped by and insisted that you and Mr Parker make plans with her sometime in the next few days."

I frowned. This was a weird way to let me know to make plans with Natasha. "Of course," I answered.

"I will be sure to let her know. Goodbye."

"Goodbye."

I put the phone back down and turned around to find Henry staring at me with his dark hair sticking up everywhere. I had to admit, it looked pretty attractive. I suddenly became aware of the blush on my cheeks and cleared my throat, because he wouldn't look away. "What?" I asked self-consciously.

He smiled and reached forward to caress my cheek. "You're just very beautiful, that's all."

I shifted and if possible, my cheeks were now on fire. Henry chuckled at my reaction and pulled me to him. "Don't say that," I muttered into his chest.

"Why can't I say it when it's true?"

After realising I was probably in the process of falling for Henry last night, we had ended up in the bed talking about many things. We played the 'truth' game, where we asked each other random questions and the other had to reply with the truth. I remember vaguely I had fallen asleep while Henry had been telling me about how he had been obsessed with jam and butter sandwiches when he was about seven years old.

"By the way, who called?" Henry asked. I told him about the very strange phone call and he frowned. He wouldn't even look at me.

"Henry, what's up?" I asked. My heart was picking up its pace. What if it was something bad?

He looked away and asked softly, "Will Keith be there?"

I raised my eyebrow. He was asking if Keith was going to be there? He really hadn't gotten over his jealousy issues yet. "Henry, I don't like Keith like that," I told him. He still wasn't facing me, so I put a hand to his cheek and tilted his face so I could see his expression. It looked like sadness mixed with a tinge of anger. "Henry, why don't you trust him? He wouldn't make a move on me, ever."

Henry let out a sigh and looked up to meet my eyes. "Steve told me that there was someone around us who is trying to break us up and working with the media. It seems like they haven't achieved anything yet though

## Fake Fiancee

I involuntarily gasped. Someone was trying to break us up? Why would they do that? I voiced this aloud and Henry shrugged.

"There could be many reasons. Maybe someone wants to have me or you for themselves, maybe they want the status of Henry Parker's girlfriend â I'm not sure."

"And you think it's Keith?"

Henry nodded once. How could Henry think it was Keith? It was obviously only one person. "Veronica," I spat, wanting to badly slap the little wench in her pretty little face and leave a permanent bruise. "I say we take her down."

Henry laughed at my comment and flicked my nose. "You're so cute."

I looked up at him beneath my lashes and glared at him because he wasn't taking me seriously. "Stop smiling, you peanut! I'm serious!"

Henry let out a sigh, seeing that I was angry. "I don't think it's Veronica. She might be evil but let's face it, the girl has no guts."

I wanted to agree with that but instead, I rolled my eyes. "If she had the guts to insult me, then she has the guts to try and break us up," I pointed out. "Come on, Henry! It's so obvious! First she flirts with you, and then she kisses you -"

"How do you know about that?"

I looked up, startled to find Henry clenching his jaw. "I â I saw it," I stammered, as his eyes pierced through mine. "But I walked out of there before I saw you push her off."

"Oh â so wait, how did you know I pushed her off then?" Henry questioned, looking quite adorable with his confused puppy dog face.

"Keith told me," I explained, unsure of how Henry would react to his name. After all, he hated his guts for the stupidest reason of all time.

But Henry surprised me as his lips curved into a smile. "For once I'm actually grateful for that guy," he murmured, taking my hand in his. His face then loomed closer, which caused my heart to skip a beat. "I only want to kiss you, pancake. I'm all yours. No one else's."

I gulped and said hoarsely, "I'm all yours too."

A small smile crossed my face as Henry leaned in slowly and slanted his lips over mine. Instinctively, I reached up to twine my arms around his neck and kissed him back, making him groan softly. To hear that reaction from him made me feel somewhat powerful. I really thought I could go on like this forever. I then felt his arms wrap themselves around my waist and suddenly, he yanked me onto him, without breaking the kiss. My heart was beating wildly by now and it became even more embarrassing as Henry gently bit my bottom lip.

I pushed myself away and felt my head spinning. Who knew teeth could be used for something other than chewing on food?

## Fake Fiancee

"Are you ok?" Henry asked, chuckling.

I flushed because I felt so embarrassed for him to be seeing me like this. Lying on top of him made everything worse, so I leaned sideways so I could be lying on my side again. Henry let me, but he was pouting while I did that.

"I'm fine," I replied, rubbing the side of my head so the dizziness could go away.

Henry was staring at me with a small twinkle in his eyes. "I've never met a girl like you," he mused, reaching out to ruffle my already messed up hair.

My heart dropped. Was he saying I was inexperienced? Seeing the sudden change of expression on my face, Henry scrambled to explain. "I mean that in a good way!"

I sighed with relief. Henry still looked panicked since he thought he had hurt my feelings, so I put a reassuring hand on his shoulder and told him, "Calm down."

He chuckled at my attempt to console him. "You know what? I want to take you out tomorrow," he declared, looking proud of himself for thinking up such a great idea.

"You mean like a date?" Henry rolled his eyes, so I took that as a yes. "Umm ok then," I answered, feeling weird. I wondered what going out for dinner would be like with Henry as my *date*.

After a few more minutes of talking, cuddling and I admit, occasional kissing, we finally rose from bed. Henry had to do more filming today so I wouldn't see him for a while unless I joined him. As Henry walked off to have a quick shower, an idea popped into my head. I could go and spy on Veronica! I grinned and hurried to change into fresh clothes.

When I finished slipping on a pair of sandals, Henry came out of the ensuite looking sexy in a fresh white shirt, dark jeans, a pair of Aviators covering his eyes and his hair still wet from the shower. I silently thanked God for making such a wonderful looking person.

I didn't realise I was checking him out until he gave me his signature smirk. "Take a picture, it'll last longer."

I glared at him. "Take a hint; I don't think you're handsome at all." Turning away, I then stomped over to the door but before I could twist the brass doorknob, I felt Henry's arm snake around my stomach and pull me back against his chest.

"You're right. I'm not handsome. I'm *way* more than just *handsome*," Henry murmured. "I'm more along the lines of tempting, sexy, hot -"

"Oh get over yourself," I snapped, elbowing him hard in the gut so he could let go. It worked and he let out a small 'oomph.' I grinned triumphantly. "Where's your six pack, hey? Shouldn't it be there to protect you?"

Henry gave me a wink and before I could protest, he lifted up the hem of his shirt. I screamed and closed my eyes. Even though they were to die for, I wasn't going to look at them because I knew I would stare, or worse, start to drool, and that would give Henry the satisfaction he so badly needed. As I stood there still covering my eyes, I felt Henry pass me and walk out of the door and into the hallway of the hotel.

"You just wanted me to take my shirt off didn't you?" I heard him say. As I removed my hands from my eyes, I found Henry sauntering down the hallway singing T-Pain's song. "Uh uh uh uh uh uh, take your shirt off! Uh

## Fake Fiancee

uh uh uh uh uh take your shirt off!"

What a jerk.

\* \* \*

As Henry and I entered the film set for the day, we immediately came face-to-face with a young woman. I think she was Peter's personal assistant.

"Mr Parker, you must get your make-up done now," she announced, giving both of us a bright smile.

"Of course," Henry replied. He then flashed a charming smile. "Just give me a minute."

As the woman walked away to talk to some other people, Henry kissed my cheek. "I guess I'll see you later?"

I nodded and tried not to show how excited I was to have him gone. Sure I wanted to spend my time with him, but I wanted to start snooping around and maybe finding clues if Veronica is really conspiring with the media against us.

"You sure will."

I watched him as he left, and when he entered the 'make-up trailer,' I started to pace around and find Veronica. I didn't know what I was going to do exactly, but I would watch her like a hawk â hopefully.

After walking around aimlessly for about ten minutes, I spotted her. She was talking with Peter (who looked pretty good even though he was drunk last night), so I decided to hang around and strain my ears to hear their conversation. It turned out to be boring though, so I sighed and gave up.

Suddenly, out of nowhere, I saw Keith approaching me with his blonde hair slicked back neatly. A smile instantly lit up my face and I walked towards him. "Hey Keith!"

He stopped and seemed taken aback. "What's up with you?"

I frowned, offended. What was he talking about? Seeing the confusion on my face, Keith chuckled. "You just seem â happy."

"Was I not happy before?" I questioned, raising my eyebrow, basically daring him to defy me. He did.

"Yep. Wait â have you and Henry stopped fighting?" He asked.

I couldn't help but let a smile cross my face as he asked me that because my love life was officially amazing. "Got it in one."

Keith smiled hesitantly and pulled me in for a hug. I was shocked at first, but then I eased into his presence and patted his shoulder. As we both let go, I gave him a smile. "What was that for?"

He bit his lip and after a few seconds, he murmured, "I'm happy for you, Lainie."

Aww, how sweet of him! Before I could say anything though, a hand came around my waist, making me jump. Henry was standing behind me with his face rested in the crook of my neck.

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"I missed you," he mumbled quietly, so quietly that I nearly missed what he had said.

For some reason, I ended up laughing lightly. I knew it was hard for him to probably say something so 'non-player' and I found it cute. I then realised that Keith was still here, so I was about to carefully ease out of Henry's arms and apologise to him, but instead, I found that he wasn't here anymore. He had walked off.

"Are you looking for Keith?" Henry asked, taking his arms off my waist and tilting my chin to meet his gaze.

I nodded. "He was just here â " "

"Yeah, well he's gone now," Henry muttered. I sighed because I really couldn't take Henry being jealous.

"Keith is definitely not a threat so you have nothing to worry about. The only person who we *do* need to worry about is Veronica and â ' speaking of the devil!"

Out of my peripheral view, I saw Veronica hurrying across the cement, her eyes darting from side to side. Due to my superior detective skills, I figured that was definitely suspicious activity.

Forgetting about Henry behind me, I followed her around the busy set and wondered where on Earth she was going. I weaved and ducked around everyone and I could hear Henry behind me, constantly asking me what was wrong.

I saw her up ahead, and she made a right turn and disappeared. Panicking, I rushed after her, only to find no one around, except for a few people painting a set off to my left. I groaned because I had been so close to finding her.

"What is up with you?!" Henry demanded as he caught up to me.

I sighed and explained about seeing Veronica rushing off suspiciously. To nobody's surprise, Henry sighed exasperatedly. "I told you before, Veronica -"

"*Shh!*" I immediately exclaimed. I could hear a conversation going on behind one of the large trailers up ahead and I knew it was Veronica. Bingo!

"Did you just tell me to shut up?" Henry asked, offended.

I rolled my eyes at his idiocy and crept forward so I could hear more of the conversation going on. My back hit the trailer door, and I peered my head around the corner to see a tall, dark-haired man talking to who must be Veronica. I couldn't see her though, because the man was blocking my view.

"Do you have it?" The deep voice of the man made me shiver. Who was he and what was he doing here?

"Yes, right here."

The voice of Veronica made me frown, because it sounded somehow different. The voice sounded familiar, but I couldn't place it. Did the voice really belong to Veronica or did it really belong to someone else? And the biggest question of all was: what was being exchanged?

**A/N: Yes, this novel is still going on! There's still a few more chapters to go :) ALSO, I just want your opinion on something! You see, yesterday I just had a burst of inspiration ... how about after I finish Fake Fianc e, I could do a sort of spin-off novel - Keith's romance story. Or April's! I'm better at**

## Fake Fiancee

**writing from a girl's view so yeah .. you'll also see Henry and Lainie in there. So how about it? No or yes? Keith or April?**

## Chapter 27: Showdowns

### Showdowns

I'm still thinking about it. I admit, I'm pretty paranoid of what happened behind that trailer. What if whatever had been exchanged was deadly important? Could it break us apart? Could it ruin Henry?

I pursed my lips as I watched Henry act out a scene with Keith. Although he hated Keith, he had put it aside to act. A smile grew on my face as I realised something. Henry really loved acting.

I had just assumed he acted for the sake of it, or for the money and the girls. I know it's judgemental and I really regretted thinking that, but it seemed like he had never really cared. For example, Henry hadn't really chosen to take part in this film. Steve had pushed him to do it.

To see him actually acting was truly something else. This made me realise that Veronica and the media *really* needed to go down. I then vowed to myself that whatever happens, I will still make sure Henry will be able to act. Henry seemed to be always protecting me and now I would do the protecting. I *would* make sure Henry's reputation won't be stained â somehow. We'll just have to wait to see what happens.

As I sat there absentmindedly watching Henry, I felt someone sit next to me. I turned and I found Natasha smiling softly at me in a grey business suit with her blonde hair straightened and pulled back in a high ponytail. Clara came next with her with a ruffled appearance. I guessed this was what they were going to wear in their next scene.

"Hey Lainie!" They both chirped.

I smiled back at them. "Hey yourselves."

"How have you been? I haven't talked to you in ages!" Natasha exclaimed.

"I'm good thanks," I replied.

She then gave me a sly grin and nodded over to Henry's direction, making my insides squirm. Was she going to interrogate me on our relationship? "So â Henry seems to be quite romantic with you."

Under both Natasha and Clara's scrutiny, I ended up blushing. Ugh, I hated the side effects of being in love with someone. Stupid cheeks. "Yeah. We just had a little misunderstanding before but now we're alright," I explained carefully.

"Oh! That's great Lainie!" Natasha squealed, jumping up and down on her seat. "How is he making it up to you?"

I thought for a moment, and then came up with something. "Well, he's taking me out â!"

"How *romantic*."

You'd expect that to come from Natasha or Clara, except it came from someone behind us, accompanied with a sarcastic tone. Veronica was staring down at us and standing with her a hand on her hip. I clenched my fist and felt like spitting at her. She really thought she was 'all that.'

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"Jealous?" I shot back. "I'm sure *you* don't have a romantic life, what with trying to break my engagement with Henry and taking him for yourself."

"It's not like you deserve him, you *whore!*" Veronica hissed. She did not just call me a 'whore'. "There's only one obvious way in which you got Henry." Out of the corner of my eye, I could see Natasha watching us with eyes as wide as saucers, and slowly backing away. Clara meanwhile, looked torn between choosing whether to break up our verbal fight herself or to go and get help.

"Well, I have news for you! You don't deserve him either!"

Veronica's eyes narrowed into dangerous slits. Before I knew it, she reached forward with blinding speed and slapped my precious cheek. Oh she was going to get it.

Breathing deeply, Veronica gave me a smirk. "Hah! That shut your little -"

I couldn't help myself. There was such a big temptation. Yes people, I slapped her pretty little face and I really hoped that red handprint lasted on her left cheek forever.

As I looked at Veronica, I felt anger but also a tinge of pity. Even though I've done a few bad things in my life, I would never stoop as low as her. She viewed herself as superior and I really hoped some common sense would knock into her one day.

If you thought about it, she could get any guy she wanted but her obnoxious personality ruined everything. If she wasn't such a plastic, maybe guys would actually take a liking to her.

Correction: maybe *everyone* may actually take a liking to her.

"You'll pay for that!" She screeched, lunging for my hair. I felt her pull violently on my hair and I yelped, surprised. To make things even, I grabbed a fistful of *her* silky hair and yanked hard on it, causing her to howl. After getting out of my grip, she tried to claw my face but I kept her at bay. I ended up getting a scratch near my nose so I tried to push her away.

I could hear Clara calling for help and the sound of footsteps coming over to break apart our little catfight in the background.

I finally ended up succeeding with pushing Veronica away from me and she nearly fell backwards since she was in ridiculously high stilettos. If not for Henry, she would have fallen on the ground. As I watched him lock her arms so she couldn't do anything, I felt the same thing happen to me.

"She's not worth it, Lainie."

It was Keith. I slowly started to relax and decided to stop (even though I still felt Veronica still needed to be taught a lesson or two). I could feel my heart beating fast from the exhilaration of our fight and tried hard not to like it.

While Keith had an easy job of keeping me back since I was now motionless, Henry meanwhile, was struggling. Veronica was screaming at him to let go of her and was trying very hard to step on his foot.

"Veronica!" Peter boomed. "Stop NOW!"

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After a few more seconds of flailing around, she finally realised the person who had spoke was practically her boss. She stopped and looked up, her eyes wide and her dark locks looking very much like a haystack. I secretly took a bit of satisfaction in that because she prided herself on her looks.

"I don't know what's going on here but it must stop now and it will NEVER happen again. Do you two understand?"

I bit my lip and felt slightly upset that Peter was not only angry, but disappointed in me. He clearly hadn't expected something so outrageous from *me*. I kept my eyes on the floor as I answered quietly, "Yes Peter."

It felt like I was in elementary school again and the teacher would say she was disappointed in me for something like not sharing food with my classmates. She would give me this look and I would feel so unworthy of myself.

"Good. Now everybody, back to work!" He barked, obviously irritated with the people who had stopped working to watch the fight between Veronica and I.

When I looked up, I saw Keith give me a soft smile. "If you ask me, I thought you were pretty badass," he informed before walking away. Despite the situation I was in, I couldn't help but laugh.

Henry then came over to me after having a few words with Peter. "Come on, we're leaving," was all he said.

My heart dropped as I followed him to the car. He was mad at me for sure. I slowly got into the passenger's seat and sat there, staring ahead. Would he give me the silent treatment or would he go ballistic? I'd rather him shout at me. It was better than keeping his thoughts to himself so I wouldn't know what he was thinking and die slowly. Henry didn't say anything so I decided to start.

"So â I heard guys like watching catfights," I started off in a conversational tone. "Did you like it? It is some psychological thing or -"

"If you want to know if I'm angry at you Lainie, just ask."

Damn. He knew me. "Fine. *Are* you angry?"

As Henry made a right turn, he clenched his jaw. "Yes I am," he answered simply.

I sighed loudly as I realised that he was not going to elaborate. "Look, I'm sorry, but she's trying to break us up along with some *weirdo* and she's got something on us. When she insulted me and slapped me, I just kind of lost it ok? Isn't it ok to '*lose it*' sometimes?"

I sat there fuming for a few seconds before Henry finally responded. "It is, but you could've gotten hurt â!"

I blinked as I registered what he had just said. He had been worried about me? So his main intentions were to protect me? I guess I had some apologising to do â!

"I really am sorry," I murmured. "I promise it won't happen again."

Henry's gaze softened as I promised not to get into a fight and he reached for my hand to squeeze it gently. "I know. But you know want to know something?"

"What?"

## Fake Fiancee

He smirked at me. "You were pretty badass. Other than worrying about if you got hurt or not, I was thinking â *that's* my girl."

I stared at him with incredulity until his cheeks became slightly pink. "You know, that's what Keith said," I commented, realising the strangeness of both of them using the same word. "He said I was badass too!"

"Well forgive me for stealing his word â he says it, I take it."

Something then clicked in my brain. "Wait â did he talk to you?" I asked slowly. I needed time to comprehend this. Henry wasn't even gritting his teeth in disgust as he talked about Keith!

"Yeah well, even though I'm still jealous, I've put that aside â" I raised my eyebrow at him and he groaned. "Fine, maybe not entirely, but I know now Veronica's actually the one who's been snooping around so I guess I could give the guy a chance."

I snorted. "More like he should be giving you a chance. You're the one who's been rude to him."

"Well maybe he shouldn't have tried to get cosy with my fiancÃ©e."

"We're not *really* engaged, genius," I reminded him.

After a bit of bantering, we finally reached the hotel. As Henry and I stepped onto the elevator, he suggested that we should tell Steve about Veronica. I agreed in a heartbeat. Maybe Steve could fix this mess.

Once we reached the right floor, we walked out and headed down the hallway until we reached the right door. I was about to knock, but Henry tested out the doorknob. It worked. I frowned as he wrapped an arm around my waist and pulled me inside. Henry had left the door to our hotel suite open most of the time too. What was wrong with these Hollywood people? Didn't they fear for their safety? I wouldn't be surprised if they were killed one day by a chainsaw man.

We walked further inside and found someone's luggage by the shelf. I frowned. Was Steve leaving Curacao? As we came into view of the couch, I found my answer. Arianne was sitting on the couch â lip locked with my *uncle*.

It wasn't M-rated or anything, just a simple kiss, but all the same it made me uncomfortable. Who would want to witness your uncle and your boyfriend's mother kissing?

"Get your hands off my mother," Henry suddenly growled. Steve and Arianne immediately sprang apart and looked at us guiltily.

"Henry, I can explain -"

"You don't need to explain," Henry spat. "You were all over her. How long has this affair been going on huh? Why would you not tell me?!"

Instead of pleading for Henry's forgiveness, Steve snorted. "It's not like you've been wholly honest with me." He nodded his head to Henry's arm around my waist and I felt my cheeks flush. Oh man, we had some explaining to do.

"Your relationships last shorter than my showers!" Steve continued, as he hopped up from the couch. He then strode over to us and I blinked from the fast movement. I immediately stepped back, afraid of what would

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happen. Would he get into a fight with Henry? "I don't want you anywhere *near* my niece. She'll end up heartbroken like all the other girls you've dumped and I'm not tolerating that."

"He's not going to do that!" I protested, feeling upset with Steve for saying that.

"How do you know, Lainie?"

I gritted my teeth but before I could answer, Arianne rushed forward, teary-eyed. I felt my heart go out to her. "Steve, Henry, please stop this! Let's just talk rationally!"

"I would never hurt Lainie," Henry said darkly, totally ignoring what his mother had just said. "But you! How could you have an affair with my *mother*?! After what my father had *done* to her?!"

I turned to Henry, who looked absolutely furious and tugged on his arm. "Henry, please stop. Steve and Arianne weren't having an affair - they only just had feelings for each other." If you ask me, the word 'affair' just makes everything seem worse.

Henry turned and glared at me. "You knew?!"

I flinched at his raised voice but I didn't back down. "I knew that they've had feelings for each other since high school! They probably just decided to act on their feelings now! They're not playing with each other!"

The room was silent until Arianne spoke up. "Now Steve, I don't know why you are suddenly disapproving of Henry and Lainie but â Henry," she then turned to her son and her lips parted. It seemed like she was looking for the right words to say, but she couldn't think of any. "I â I know it seems absurd, but I really do love Steve. I'm not asking for you to celebrate, but I just want you to be happy for me. I was never happy with your father â just please; will you be happy for me?"

The three of us stared at her, awed that she was saying all this. She didn't seem to notice Steve and me though, as she was focused on her only son. She looked so vulnerable and I really hoped Henry would accept the fact that Steve and Arianne loved each other.

"We won't be exclusive or anything," Arianne assured. "We don't want the media to talk about how strange Steve and I together would be â!"

I peeked up at Henry out of the corner of my eyes to see how Henry was taking it. His eyes were locked with his mother's and the weird thing was, their eyes held the same emotion. Even though they were two different colours, they looked like the same.

"Alright," Henry murmured with his head down. This made Arianne beam and she came forward to hug her son.

"Thank you," I heard her whisper.

I suddenly felt intrusive to be witnessing this, so I decided to go and sit on the couch. As I stared at my hands, I felt Steve sit himself next to me. I looked up and found him staring at me sadly. "Hi," I murmured, unsure of how he would respond.

"I know he loves you," Steve said outright with a small sigh. "There's no doubt that he cares for you and I'm sorry for blowing up like that â I was just surprised. I always knew he cared for you, but I always put it off."

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I bit my lip and slowly, a smile came to my face. At least my uncle approved. "It's ok, I understand. But I want you to know that Henry will never hurt me intentionally."

I said the last bit with confidence. Deep down, I had always known he would never want to truly hurt me.

"I know, and I just want to say that I'm happy for you Lainie. You've always lived with Hazel and I know that she's never really cared for you properly. I'm the worst uncle. I should have had you come to live with me after your father died."

I blinked in surprise of this. Steve thought he was a bad uncle?

"I shouldn't have bribed you to be Henry's fiancée. I should have willingly given you that money for college," he continued, looking regretful. "I'm sorry Lainie. I'm so sorry."

I smiled at his apology and leaned forward to hug him. He was startled at first, but then relaxed and returned my embrace. "You *are* the best uncle," I whispered.

"I'm your only uncle," Steve muttered.

## Chapter 28: Carpe Diem

### Carpe Diem

Last night, Steve and Henry had gone through possibilities of what Veronica could have done. I, meanwhile, had been allocated the job of taking Arianne out because Steve didn't really want to explain to his *love* that he had made her son fake a relationship. Arianne certainly wouldn't be very pleased, but I had the feeling that she would still be happy because Henry and I were *really* together.

As I started imagining what would happen if April found out about it, my phone vibrated in my jean pocket, making me jump. It was a text from Henry.

*Come down to the lobby. I'll be waiting.*

That single text made my skin tingle in excitement. I couldn't wait for today. I pushed myself up from the couch and quickly slipped on a pair of ballet flats before heading out the door. To me, the elevator ride took too long. I was anxious to see Henry. Once the doors opened, I rushed through them and off to the lobby.

Henry was leaning against one of the large pillars of the hotel with a small smile on his face as soon as he spotted me. "Took you long enough," was the first thing he said to me.

I frowned. Well that was nice! "Are you kidding? I was waiting for you for way longer than four minutes. Where were you anyway?"

A wicked grin crossed his face and he tapped my nose. "That is for me to know and for you to find out."

I groaned and reluctantly followed him over to a motorbike? "Henry please don't tell me you stole Keith's bike."

Henry barked with laughter and patted the seat of the red bike. "No, I rented this baby."

Baby? It looked like I have some competition. Henry seemed to be reading my thoughts because he gave me a gentle kiss. "Let's get going," he murmured.

I obeyed. We hopped on the motorbike and I felt pretty damn happy to be where I was at that moment. After about fifteen minutes of speeding through different towns, we finally arrived.

At a carnival. A fair!

"Like it?" Henry asked as we both hopped off the bike. I smiled and nodded eagerly.

"Hell yeah! Just look at that rollercoaster!"

As I started walking forward, I heard Henry chuckle at my enthusiasm. Once we got to the entrance, I bit my lip as I realised something. Tickets weren't for free and I hadn't brought my wallet. Damn. I didn't want Henry paying for me; it was unfair.

"Henry," I murmured. "I don't think we should go come here."

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I saw his face fall, making me cringe slightly. He looked hurt and it was my fault. "What? Why? You don't like it here?"

I shook my head. "No no, it's not *that*. It's just â€¦ I forgot to bring some cash." I said the last bit in a low voice. To my utter surprise, Henry started laughing. I looked up, incredulous and smacked him on the arm. "It's not funny, you peanut!"

Once the jerk sobered up, he gave me a soft look. "Lainie, it's a date. Do you know what that means?" He asked while I stood there motionless. He leaned forward and whispered in my ear, "It means I'm paying for *everything*."

I shivered from the proximity and eventually caved in. When we entered the fair, my eyes went wide. There were so many things to see and do. Henry could sense me being overwhelmed so he pointed out the Funhouse. I agreed and we both had a hilarious time trying to get through the 'barrel of fun,' getting down or up tipped staircases and making our way out through the distorting mirror hall. We headed off to the bumper cars after and instead of sitting in the same car with Henry, I got into my own. "I'm going to get you pancake," he threatened with a mischievous grin.

"I'd like to see you try!"

And off we went. 'Party Rock Anthem' came on and everyone around us started going in the same direction. How boring. I pressed down on the pedal and zoomed towards Henry while he did the same to me. At the last moment, I swerved off to the left and did a quick turn to bump his car from behind.

"Cheater!" I heard him yell. I laughed as he chased after me through everyone and finally bumped into my precious car. I ended up hitting two other people's cars and they gave me dirty looks. Whatever.

Once we got off, Henry pulled my hand and dragged me away from the bumper cars. "Hey! What do you think you're doing?!" I exclaimed.

He didn't answer. We ended up in front of the 'Kamikaze,' a thriller ride. It was a gondola with rotating arms. "That looks â€¦ dizzy," I commented.

Henry grinned. "I know. That's why we're going on it."

When we came back out, I was swaying from side to side and I had a slight headache. I was never going on *that* again! As I veered over to the left, I grabbed a rail for support while Henry chuckled from behind me. "That's for playing dirty back at the bumper cars."

I turned around slowly to glare at him and questioned, "What kind of fiancÃ© are you?"

"The very best baby."

\* \* \*

For the past few hours, Henry and I had tried out all the roller coasters and the rest of the thriller rides. That included the 'Haunted Mansion Horror'. Can I just say, I have never done anything funnier in our life? There had been real life actors in gruesome costumes waiting to scare us, but since Henry was an actor, he knew what would happen. Apparently, when he first started acting, he had worked in a haunted mansion ride. So our plan had been to attack them.

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And we sure did. It had been so much fun.

We were on the bike now, going someplace else to eat. I still didn't know what was wrong with carnival food. Corn dogs and cotton candy was delicious if you ask me.

I frowned once I realised Henry had stopped. We were at a small beach which reminded me of Henry's 'special spot' back at Newport.

Oh my god.

It looked perfect. The sun was setting over the beach and guess what was on the lovely white sand? A picnic rug complete with a picnic basket and a guitar case.

"Henry â€" I was utterly speechless and awed that he would go to the trouble of setting up a picnic.

He kissed my forehead and caressed my cheek as I stared wildly at him. "No need to thank me."

I had the strong urge to roll my eyes but I managed to refrain myself from doing that. "Well thank you anyway."

Henry smiled and took my hand so he could lead me over to the chequered picnic rug. Curiously, I peered at Henry as he opened the flap of the straw basket and took out the various foods he had brought along with him.

First came out a medium-sized plate of cold chicken, then some cheese cubes, crackers and dips and fruit such as cherries, strawberries and bananas. He also took out a bottle of deep red wine and two small plastic cups.

Henry seemed anxious as I stared at the food. It seemed like he was waiting for me to say something, so I did. "This looks great Henry. Seriously."

Out of the corner of my eye, I saw him scratch his neck. "Thanks."

We started on the chicken, sharing the same plate and fork. Henry fed me a few pieces and I chewed slowly. It was delicious, especially the sweet chilli flavour which came with it. "Where did you buy this from?" I asked with my mouth full of chicken. It wasn't polite, I know, but I was sure Henry would dump me for being a pig.

"Uh â€" I didn't buy it."

That surprised me. "Well â€" who made it?"

I watched, confused, as Henry worked his lips in agitation. "I did," he finally mumbled.

"I thought you didn't know how to cook?"

Henry looked uncomfortable and very embarrassed I might add. "I got someone to teach me so I could cook for you."

The confession warmed my heart and I couldn't stop a silly grin from forming. I leaned closer to him and kissed him on the cheek as a way of saying 'thank you.' He did the same to me as well and I felt him slightly relax. "It's corny."

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He said it like it was a bad thing. "Corny's good," I assured him. He smiled wider and I could see his confidence slowly returning. Of course, his ego returning was usually a bad thing but I couldn't bear to see him insecure.

"Let's keep eating, shall we?"

I laughed at how badly Henry wanted to change the subject and complied, but not before adding evilly, "I'll never forget this by the way. If I need a comeback or some way to make you shut up I'll just mention what had just occurred."

"Some fiancÃ©e you are."

"The very best." I remembered Henry had said that to me earlier that day and poked my tongue out at him.

We continued eating through the rest of the foods after that. Henry sneakily spat the cherry pits into the sand, so I had scolded him for that and I stopped him from eating the cherries altogether. He then thought it would be fun to throw the cheese cubes at me, so that's what he did.

I squealed as a cube hit my nose. "You jerk!" Henry ignored it and continued to fling cheese cubes at me, one by one. I grabbed a fistful from the container it came from and aimed one at *his* nose. Instead, it hit his mouth, but the weird thing was that before it fell to the ground, Henry had somehow managed to open his mouth, seize it between his teeth and swallow it.

I was in shock. "How did you do that?!"

"I don't know honestly," he replied, laughing. "Hey, keep chucking them to me will you?"

"Are you crazy?" I raised an eyebrow to emphasize my point.

Henry rolled his eyes. "I want you to chuck them at me so I can catch it in my mouth and eat it," he explained slowly, as if I was dumb. What an insult. "You know that game? Usually people use grapes instead but -"

He was cut off as I hurled a cheese cube at his head. I couldn't believe my date was making fun of me. "I get it now!"

I watched sullenly as he burst out laughing. Once he stopped, he realised I was not impressed and his face fell. "Oh â!"

"Yeah," I muttered angrily. "*Oh.*"

I heard Henry sigh. He then came to sit beside me and put a comforting arm around my small shoulders. I wanted to protest but he pulled me closer and his amazing scent was making my thoughts incoherent. I felt his lips in my hair as he murmured, "Do you want to me to make it up to you?"

I nodded eagerly. How would he do that? In an instant, I figured it out. Henry's idea of making up was most likely making *out* â!

He then pulled away from me so I frowned. Ok, I guess I was wrong.

"Remember long ago I promised that I would play a song for you?"

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My eyes widened as he took out his light brown acoustic guitar from its case. I had forgotten about that. He was playing me a song? This day couldn't get any better.

"I hope you like it."

Entranced, I watched as he started to strum the guitar strings slowly and started to sing.

*"For the way you changed my plans, for being the perfect distraction"*

An automatic smile made its way onto my face as he sung; his voice deep and beautiful. His singing somehow soothed me and made me feel like I was in a different world than the one I was in now. That's how incredible it was.

*"You're the best thing I never knew I needed"*

I bit my lip as I listened carefully to the lyrics. It did apply to me right? I didn't want to ask because 1) I wanted him to keep singing and 2) I didn't want to sound self-absorbed or stupid.

*"So now it's so clear, I need you here always"* His dark ocher eyes stayed locked with mine intensely and felt my heart starting to beat faster. How freakin' perfect could he get? *"I must admit you were not a part of my book, but now if you open it and take a look, you're the beginning and the end of every chapter, oh"*

Throughout the whole song, I sat there patiently and nodded my head along to the song. I had never heard of it but I didn't care. The lyrics were meaningful. Once Henry finished, he bit his lip. "So did you like it?"

"How did I like it?" I repeated. "I didn't like it."

Henry blinked and he looked ashamed of himself. "I'm sorry."

I then started to laugh. "I didn't like it, I loved it!" I exclaimed happily, throwing my arms around him. I felt his chest rumble as he laughed. "Sorry for bringing your massive ego down for a few seconds."

He ran a hair through my hair. "You're such a pancake."

"And you're such a peanut."

"Pancake."

"Peanut."

"Pancake with maple syrup."

"Peanut with almonds and cashews!"

We both stared seriously at each other, and then started to laugh. I think we were officially the weirdest couple out.

"Almonds and cashews? Seriously?" Henry questioned with an amused smirk.

I huffed. "I didn't know what to say! I said the first thing which came into my head!"

## Fake Fiancee

He ruffled my hair. "That's just like you."

"Whatever do you mean?" I frowned and when I met Henry's eyes, he was looking down at me affectionately.

"I don't know but Lainie, I just want you to know something." He then tilted my chin so I could meet his eyes. I wondered what this was about. "I've never felt this way about anyone. I'm serious about us and I'm not using you. What Steve said, about me moving onto different girls yeah I did do that and I'm not proud of it, but I promise you, I would never hurt you like that."

My lips smiled on their own accord. I had known this somehow anyway, like a gut feeling. I told Henry this and he looked sighed with relief.

"But you know if you *do* ever hurt me, I'll find a way of revenge," I whispered as I ran my fingers down his chest.

He shivered and I suspected it was because of my touch. "I know, but really, I don't think I ever want anyone else. I" He gazed intensely into my eyes and then quietly, he added, "I love you."

Shock filled me. What would I say? Did I love him? Henry seemed to sense I was confused and he took my hand. "You don't have to say it back. I just wanted to tell you."

I nodded, still stunned, then out of nowhere, Henry's cell rang. He groaned and fished it out of his pocket before answering. I sat there gazing out at the sparse ocean and thinking about 'love.'

What *was* love? How did I know if I loved Henry? Was it that contented feeling whenever I was with him? Was it understanding each other? Two halves of a whole? That's what it felt like when I was around Henry. I was just plain happy and content. It felt like it was just the two of us. I didn't need anything or anyone else except him.

Was that qualified as love, or was it just a crush?

Henry's voice snapped me out of my swirling thoughts. "Steve says we need to get back. He said it was urgent."

"Did he apologize for ruining our first date?" I joked lightly.

Henry chuckled. "No he didn't."

I snorted at his answer. "How rude of him."

Henry then started to pack up the picnic and whenever I tried to help, he would refuse. I smiled to myself as I watched him pick up the stray cheese cubes which had been thrown around by the both of us. "How are you bringing this home?" I asked.

Henry gave me a crooked grin which made my heart skip a beat. "I asked Keith to set up the picnic and bring it back."

Keith and Henry? They were getting along? Wow.

As we headed over to his motorbike, Henry added, "He helped me cook you know."

## Fake Fiancee

I raised any eyebrow. "Really? Why did you go to him?"

"He's a good friend of yours and I want to know your friends," Henry explained. "Wait now I look like a stalker."

I wrapped my arms around his waist after I hopped on the bike. "Don't worry peanut, I get what you mean."

I seriously felt like screaming into a pillow because of Henry's cuteness.

\* \* \*

When we arrived at the hotel, I was busy with my thoughts, my thoughts on Henry to be exact. He had changed so much and I was pretty sure it was because of me. He had trusted me with his secret about his father, he had put effort into our date, learned to cook for me, made friends with Keith because he was my own friend and so many other things.

And I used to think he was king of the jerks.

As Henry pressed the elevator buttons, I realised how thoughtful he was and how caring he was. I couldn't stand it - I pulled him to me and kissed him. He froze and then finally responded slowly by pushing me against the wall of the lift. Our gentle kiss turned humid and we were both suddenly hungry for more kisses. I pulled lightly on his hair which made his arms tighten around me. I think he liked that. Suddenly, his lips left mine and travelled slowly down my neck. Oh my god, I think we were slowly losing control. I had to stop before things went too far, especially since we *were* in a lift.

So I pulled back and found myself short of breath. I found myself staring at Henry smiling at me and I couldn't help but blurt out the words, "I love you too."

The doors of the lift then opened and Henry was still standing there in shock. I guess he really hadn't expected that. Finally, he grinned so wide I was afraid his face might split and took my hand to lead me out of the lift. He seemed to be shining with happiness.

We didn't say anything on the walk to Steve's hotel room because we understood each other now. When he knocked on the door, it opened immediately, revealing my distressed uncle.

"Come in guys." He sounded grim and now I was afraid. What was he going to tell us? Had he changed his mind about my relationship with Henry? The three of us sat down on the couch and I fidgeted with the hem of my top as I waited for Steve to say something. Finally, he did.

"They know."

## Chapter 29: Crashing Down

**A/N:** Have you seen the first page? Fake Fiancee was on FEATURED WRITING! I was so shocked and happy at the same time! I started jumping up and down in my seat like a maniac, because I never would have thought that I would EVER make it there. Seriously, this is only my first novel! Anyway, I would like to thank every one of you who has supported this novel and me :) If it wasn't for you guys, I don't think I would have continued this novel. You've inspired me to keep writing and to start a spin-off story for FF. I know which character I'm writing about and what it's going to be about but I'm not too sure about the ending and everything. Ehh, I'll get there sometime. I hope you enjoy this chapter, lovelies! Once again, thank you so much for reading! I love you all!!! :) XOXO

### Crashing Down

My heart dropped the second Steve uttered those two words. They know? Who knows? Who knows what? I wished I could speak but I found that I was slightly dumfounded.

"Here." My uncle tossed the paper to us and Henry slowly unfolded it with shaky hands. I leaned in closer to get a better view and was horrified with what I saw.

### **GINA'S GOSSIP COLUMN: FAKE ENGAGEMENT!**

The sudden engagement of handsome Henry Parker and Lainie Watson has baffled me since day one. Of course, I was awfully happy for the Hollywood actor to find '*the one*,' but there were loopholes. Why hadn't we seen or heard of Lainie Watson earlier? Surely someone would have met her, but no one has.

The reason for this is because their lovely engagement is in fact, *fake*! I know, I was truly shocked when I found out but on the other hand, I wasn't *that* surprised. We *all* know Henry Parker is not capable of settling down with just a girl.

Check out these texts leaked out straight from Lainie Watson's cell phone to see the proof!

~

***Henry: It's nearly midnight. Come home.*** - Where was Lainie exactly and what was she doing at MIDNIGHT?!

***Lainie: I think I stay here however long I want.*** - Ooh, there's a bit of tension there, don't you think?

***Henry: COME HOME. I don't trust Hudson.*** - Who is Hudson? Could he possibly be THE Hudson Miller, who is Henry's crime partner in his new movie which is still filming?

***Lainie: This whole thing is fake anyway. Why are you so worried?*** - See that? Their engagement is a LIE.

***Henry: I don't care. I don't want you near Hudson cos it's bad publicity, so COME HOME.***

There you go! In my opinion, Henry had hired Lainie Watson to be his fiancée so he could get his reputation back. It's quite obvious, since he was always Hollywood's 'party boy' before. I remember those days when the headlines were about Henry getting so drunk he couldn't see at the biggest parties and hanging around a billion girls! I've also talked a bit with my good friend, the lovely Veronica Pierce (Henry's co-star in his new movie) and she's said, "*I'm not surprised. I've seen Hudson and Lainie together all the time. They've*

## Fake Fiancee

*gone out and had fun and it's so obvious they have feelings for each other.*" When asked about if Henry had any interests in other girls, she confessed bashfully, "*Well actually, Henry and I have been getting along so well! We're quite intimate with each other.*"

That was when I stopped myself from reading more. This was obviously the work of Veronica. She had said her opinion of my relationship with Henry in the gossip column herself! That snitch!

"They know it's fake," Henry stated slowly.

Steve nodded grimly and turned to me. I was suddenly starting to sweat bullets. "Lainie, where is your cell phone?"

I bit my lip as I tried to remember desperately where I had placed my phone, but I couldn't remember. I hadn't used the thing in days! "I â I don't know," I stuttered.

I gripped Henry's free hand in panic and questions swirled in my head. How had my cell been stolen? Or had I just simply misplaced it? My head hurt just from thinking about it.

"Look on the next page," Steve added suddenly.

Henry flipped over to the next page and a large photograph of Keith and I hugging with smiles on our faces appeared along with a caption - *Lainie Watson's REAL fiancÃ©?*

I groaned and so badly wanted to slap Veronica. That picture had been from the day after Henry and I had confessed our feelings. Keith had told me he was 'happy for me.' See how an innocent, friendly hug could be manipulated into something more?

As I stared blankly at the photograph, it suddenly dawned on me.

I had ruined Henry's reputation.

Everyone thought badly of him and it was my entire fault. If only I had been more careful! I felt like sinking into the ground.

"We're going to have to come up with an excuse and fast," Steve told us. "The texts don't exactly say the *engagement* is fake. Lainie only wrote '*the whole thing*' is fake, so maybe we could use something else for 'the whole thing.' Maybe we could say you two had a bet going on â!"

"No, we're telling everyone the truth," Henry cut in determinedly. "We'll tell the public the engagement was a sham, but now we're together and apologise. I'm sure the public will forgive me sometime."

Steve shook his head. "The public don't hate you Henry â!"

My stomach twisted in knots and I had the feeling that I wouldn't like what my uncle would say next. "What do you mean?" I asked.

"I've read other articles and watched some TV gossip shows and they think â they think that it's your fault, Lainie."

Confusion filled me and I uttered the only word I could think of. "Huh?"

## Fake Fiancee

"I don't think this is good," I heard Henry mutter.

Steve ignored Henry's comment and started to explain slowly, "Fan websites of Henry's think that you â€¦ played whore so Henry could propose to you."

What the hell? Seriously? "But that's so stupid!"

"And what Rafferty said about you before doesn't help," Steve added.

Ah man, I had forgotten about that poor excuse of a father and his insult about me being a gold digger.

"I'm telling the press the truth," Henry calmly stated to Steve, whose eyes bugged out of his head. "Whether you like it or not."

\* \* \*

Steve hadn't been happy with Henry's decision to tell the truth but he couldn't stop the guy could he now? All he could do was stand next to him at the press conference and pretend to be supporting him. I wasn't going because I didn't feel like it and Steve had suggested I should stay at home if I didn't want to get attacked by any girl fans of Henry Parker. Although we were in Curacao, they could have travelled here just for their celebrity crush.

"You'll be ok?" I rolled my eyes as Henry asked me the same question for the hundredth time.

"I'll be fine." I stressed the *'fine'*. "Now go, you're going to be late!"

Henry nodded and ran a hand through his gelled hair. "Do I look good?" I raised my eyebrow at him as if to say 'you really have to ask?' Even though it boosted his ego heaps, I'd rather him be confident than insecure. It was heartbreaking to watch Henry in a vulnerable state. He kissed my cheek and gave me a wink before leaving.

Once he left, I took a quick shower; blow dried my messy hair and changed out of my pyjamas, because I was meeting up with Natasha and Clara so we could have some needed girl talk.

Once I slipped on my sandals, I walked out the door and made my way down the hotel. It was three in the afternoon, so they should be waiting for me in the lobby. And they were. They both rushed up to me the instant they saw me and gave me a hug.

"So it's true? The whole thing is fake?!" Natasha asked, looking disappointed in that Henry and I weren't really a couple.

Clara's eyes widened. "Natasha! Stop being so nosy," she hissed, and then turning to me, she gave me a sympathetic look. "Lainie, are you ok? How are you holding up?"

I shrugged. "I'm actually fine to be honest, but I don't like how everyone's viewing me as some sort of desperate woman."

"That does suck," Natasha agreed while nodding her head. "So â€¦ your engagement to him wasn't real?!"

I decided to just tell the truth, since Henry was announcing it at the press conference anyway. "It was â€¦ but we've fallen for each other."

## Fake Fiancee

Clara's dewy eyes sparkled. "Wow â that sounds like a fairytale romance story, don't you think?"

I laughed. She was right. After that, we got into Natasha's rented car and she drove us to the beach. There was hardly anyone there, which was a good thing, because I didn't want anyone to witness anything.

The three of us hopped out of the car and Clara asked us if we wanted ice-cream. We agreed to get some ice-cream and headed over to the small stall. Cookies and cream was definitely for me and I ordered it with some chocolate sauce to be drizzled on top. Meanwhile, Clara ordered a lemon sorbet and Natasha wanted a strawberry cheesecake flavour. We all started to lick our ice-creams quickly because the heat of the day was making them melt.

"So, are you going to tell us the *real* story?" Natasha raised a perfectly shaped brow as we sat down on the white sand.

Clara whacked her on the arm. "Don't push her," she murmured.

I gave them a reassuring smile. "It's fine," I said. "Henry wanted me to be engaged to him because his reputation was stained."

Natasha snorted. "I'm not surprised. He *was* a real party boy."

"But Henry's changed because of Lainie! Can't you see it? He's a man in *loooove*."

I blushed. Usually Clara was shy but now she was more confident, which baffled me slightly. Maybe she was just a hopeless romantic. "He's not in love with me," was my immediate response.

"Are you kidding? Have you seen the way he looks at you?" Clara asked, disbelieving.

"She's got a point there," Natasha muttered. I was going to disagree, but out of nowhere, I heard a voice.

"It's *her*!"

The sudden outburst startled the three of us and we whipped our heads around to see who had spoken. A skimpy blonde was huffing a few feet away with her little posse standing behind her, smirking at me. With the lead girl's short pink skirt, straight-as-pin blonde hair and puckered lips, she reminded me of a Barbie doll, or better yet, Regina George, but smaller and more pathetic-looking. She looked strangely familiar as well, but I just couldn't place it.

"Do you know these girls?" Clara asked.

I shook my head, making mini Regina's eyes narrow into red slits. "You can't forget me!" she screeched. Her voice honestly sounded as bad as nails running down a chalkboard. "I'm Gabby Thornton!"

I have never in my life heard that name. "Who?" I stared blankly at her, making my amusement grow as she became even more frustrated.

"I'm from LA. We met at Venice Beach!" She clucked her tongue as it suddenly clicked. I remembered now. We had met Gabby when Henry and I had our first public appearance at the beach.

"Oh you!" Out of the corner of my eye, I could see Clara still looking confused, while Natasha had resorted to texting on her iPhone.

## Fake Fiancee

"Yes, me!" Gabby growled with a hand on her bony hip. "I can't *believe* you got Henry to propose to you. How did you do it?"

I gave her a sickly sweet smile just to piss her off even more. "With my awesomeness, of course."

"You liar! You obviously attended to his *needs*."

I gritted my teeth and was ready to throw an insult at her, when Natasha suddenly defended me. "Hey! Just because you can't have Henry, it doesn't mean you can go around insulting his girlfriend."

I gave her a grateful smile. "Yeah. You need to get your delusions sorted, plastic," I chided. "A girl like you with Henry? You have a bigger chance with Scooby-Doo."

"That's it! Egg her!"

Wait, what?

Before I could say anything, her little friends had taken out eggs from a plastic bag and begun chucking eggs at me, except it was pretty amateur because they mostly splattered on the sand or Natasha, who shrieked.

"Let's get out of here!" Clara exclaimed. I silently agreed as she pulled me up from the sand and ignored the egg yolk which was currently sliding down her top.

"The paparazzi are here!" Natasha pointed them from the street and I mentally groaned. Could this get any worse? First, I'm accused of sleeping with Henry to get him to propose, then the Mean Girls attack me with eggs and now, the paparazzi are here to get the live proof, which would surely air on TV worldwide.

The three of us ran for our lives, but I was feeling so uncomfortable because I could feel sticky egg whites and yolk running down my hair and clothes. I was also embarrassed, because the paparazzi were chasing us down the street and getting this all on camera. Now I *really* understood Henry's hatred for them.

As we rounded a corner, Clara exclaimed, "Over here!"

She pulled Natasha and me into some bushes, and we panted slightly from all the running. "Nice hiding spot," Natasha whispered.

We waited for the paparazzi and the girls to pass by our bush before stepping out. I could see people on the streets watching us, bemused, but I brushed it off. I stretched out my tan legs and groaned to see them all icky, along with my clothes and hair. I brushed off some green leaves out of my hair and some which had gotten stuck to my shirt. Natasha looked like she was about to cry when she saw her reflection in the glass window of a nearby surf shop, but Clara wasn't fazed and I admired her for that.

"Come on," she said. "Let's get back so we can get cleaned up."

We smiled sadly at each other and headed off towards Natasha's car so we could get back. Even though we were getting the seats dirty, we didn't really care. Natasha was so pissed off that 'the little brats' had dared to egg us.

Once I arrived back at the hotel, the people working there gave me weird looks and I smiled back at them, just to make them baffled or feel ashamed of looking at me. When I reached the elevator, I was relieved, because there was no one in there who would make any comments about my awful attire.

## Fake Fiancee

Steve raised an eyebrow at me when I entered my hotel suite. "What has happened to you?"

I sighed as I shut the door behind me. "Long story. But to summarise everything, I was egged by obsessive Henry Parker fans and later chased by the paparazzi down a street."

My uncle pursed his lips. "That doesn't surprise me." He was right, but what he said next shocked me. "Lainie, I think it's best if you leave."

*Leave?* The word echoed in my mind as I stood still, rooted to the spot. I was starting to panic at the thought of leaving Henry. But maybe he just meant that I should leave Curacao and go back to LA. "What do you mean?"

"I mean *leave*, as in go back home, back to Hazel," Steve told me. Oh no. No, not my mother. I looked at him with wide eyes and I realised he was having a hard time saying this. "It's dangerous for you in the Hollywood world. It's better if you go back to living in a quiet town."

"But why?" I choked out, horrified at what my uncle was asking me to do. How could he think I would be able to walk away from Henry?

"Girl fans of Henry can be very obsessive Lainie, and since they think you're the bad guy here, there's no telling what they'll want to do to you. As long as Henry is a famous actor, you will be despised, and Henry also."

When he finished saying that, I suddenly remembered my promise which I had made a few days ago - that I would do anything to keep Henry acting with a good reputation. Sure, his girl fans thought he was innocent in all this, but there were many others who still thought Henry had hired me to help his reputation. If I left, everyone would slowly forget about my relationship with Henry and everything would go back to normal.

In that moment, I knew what I had to do.

## Chapter 30: Decisions & Heartache

### Decisions & Heartache

My uncle had allowed me to stay at Curacao for another three days, so I could say goodbye and to experience what was left of the beautiful country, but I didn't feel like exploring, which was weird. I was usually an independent person and now I was moping around. Well, not really. I wasn't literally dragging myself around everywhere, bursting into tears and complaining about my situation. I just kept quiet.

Last night while Henry had been contently asleep, I had been lying still in his arms while my thoughts were all over the place. How could I tell him that I was leaving? And more importantly, for *him*?

I was too cowardly to tell him, but I knew I had to sometime. I couldn't just leave without an explanation. That would be horrible and Henry would just come after me.

So I had to do it now, since I have the chance.

We were eating breakfast at a restaurant by the beach because Henry had decided that we should enjoy some Curacao cuisine - different skewed meats with peanut sauce, soups made from okra and seafood and pastries filled with dripping hot cheese, fish and herbs. It was delicious, but I couldn't focus on the food when the dreaded conversation about me leaving was still in the back of my mind.

"Do you like the food?"

I turned to Henry and gave him a small nod. He was watching me intently and I had the feeling he knew that I was zoning out while he was speaking, but he didn't want to pry. I was kind of impressed by this.

"What about you?" I asked back, just to make some conversation and to get my mind of leaving Henry. "Does that â€¦ thing you're eating taste nice?"

Henry rolled his eyes when I offended his food by calling it a '*thing*'. "It's called *Plantain*, you pancake. Fried bananas."

I started to laugh when I realised the pieces of golden food Henry was chewing on were indeed fried bananas. How could I have not noticed that?

"Do you want some?" Henry asked uncertainly as I laughed like a maniac.

I stopped myself from giggling further and gave him a wide smile. "Sure! Now that I know that it's not something unusual, I'll try it."

Henry smirked. "The whole point of eating here is to try *new* food."

"But fried bananas is new food for me," I argued.

"You only agreed to it because you've tasted bananas before," Henry pointed out.

I gritted my teeth and eyed the fried banana irritably. "Are you going to let me taste it or not?"

## Fake Fiancee

Henry's deep chuckle filled my ears and he stabbed a fork into one of them and leaned forward. I raised an eyebrow as I watched it hover in front of my mouth. "Open wide," he commanded playfully.

My lips spread into a small smile. I found this so weird. "Since when do you feed people?"

I could see his tan cheeks warming up and laughed through my nose. "Just eat," he snapped when he saw that I was amused. I rolled my eyes at him and took a large bite out of the plantain. Very yummy.

Henry ended up paying for the food (after a heated argument which consisted of me repeatedly shoving him with my elbow so that I could pay for once) and we headed to the motorbike he had rented. He'd gotten rid of the car and decided he liked the motorbike better. I still couldn't believe my boyfriend knew how to drive a motorbike. How much more of a bad boy could he be?

"Where are we going exactly?" I asked with a slight pout as I sat myself on the padded seat. Henry had told me he had found something very interesting to do in Curacao and I had agreed to come. I wondered what it was. Swimming with sea creatures? Now that would be something unique.

Henry revved the engine. "Now why would I tell you that? It would ruin the element of surprise."

I groaned and slumped my face into the back of his striped shirt. He smelled damn good. I wondered what cologne he used. I would have to find out sometime before I left. "Why do you like surprises?" I muttered darkly, not expecting him to hear.

"Because you have the best facials when you find out," Henry answered with a laugh before speeding away.

\* \* \*

"We're going bungee jumping?"

"Yep!"

"Are you crazy?"

"Now why would you think that?"

Henry had brought me to a Queen Juliana Bridge in Willemstad, the capital of Curacao, where you could go bungee jumping off the bridge. There were a few others here and they all seemed excited. Meanwhile, I was unsure. Yes, I had gone super-large roller coasters in my life and everything, but â jumping off a bridge with a single string stopping you from falling to your death in the ocean?

"I don't know about this, Henry." I felt kind of queasy.

He frowned when he realised that I was indeed unsure. "Hey, it's going to be ok! I thought you like feeling the rush of adrenaline?"

I let out a sigh. "I do!"

"Well this is the same thing â!" Henry paused and tilted my face to meet his with his index finger. "Do you trust me?"

## Fake Fiancee

Why the hell did he need to ask the question when he already knew the answer? I gave him a nod and he continued. "Then trust me pancake, you won't fall."

I know I felt childish asking this but I couldn't help it. "Promise?"

"I promise," Henry said seriously. He even put out his pinkie to show me he was serious. I smirked so I could stop myself from smiling and twined my own pinkie with his.

The instructor introduced himself to us and taught us how to harness ourselves, although I had the feeling that Henry didn't like him very much. He then walked off to introduce himself to some other tourists but suddenly, I realised I had a dilemma. "I'm stuck," I announced sheepishly.

As Henry was about to reach forward, the instructor was faster. I heard Henry growl from beside me and I fought back the urge to giggle. Was he a little jealous?

He was still shooting daggers at the instructor and it reminded me of the time when he used to do that to Keith. Did it show that he cared for me? That he wanted no one else to be with me?

These thoughts made me want to reconsider my decision to leave but I firmly stuck to my decision. Henry would get over me soon, I was sure of it, but a teeny bit of my mind screamed that he would not because we had something special between us and that he could never forget that.

When the instructor finished helping me, he walked off to help some other people and answer their questions about the safety of the bungee jumping cord. "Finally," I heard Henry mutter.

After watching a few people go first, I decided that I was ready to jump off a bridge with only a string holding me up. Henry laughed at that and asked if I wanted to go before him and or after. I ended up choosing the second option.

Henry stretched his arms and rolled his head as if he was stretching for a jog. I laughed. "You're not running a marathon you know."

I watched as he shrugged. "I know."

"You're nervous aren't you?" I teased, knowing that I was being hypocritical. Even though I was just kidding, I could actually see that he *was* kind of nervous. He was shifting his weight from one foot to the other and avoiding my eyes.

He scoffed, pretending that bungee jumping was a daily activity for him. "I am *not*."

"Alright then, peanut."

An amused smile grew on my lips as I watched Henry step onto the platform and do a double take as he looked down below. "You like the view?!" I called out.

I saw him gulp. "Definitely!" And then, after taking a deep breath, he jumped.

I'm not sure why but I nearly screamed my lungs out. Only the sound of a small shriek came out of my throat. I know it was just bungee jumping and that it was safe, but I felt like he was jumping off the bridge because of suicide.

## Fake Fiancee

This was another moment when I realised how much Henry meant to me. I let out a sigh. Realising how much I needed him did not make anything easier.

I heard Henry yell of excitement and I felt a whisper of a smile on my lips. I guess he was enjoying it.

My nerves increased when he finally came up from his jump, grinning like a fool. "You'll love it, pancake!" He told me once he was out of his harness. I uncertainly eyed the water below and suddenly felt his arms wrap around me. That made me look up into his eyes. "I promise. It's amazing!"

Trusting him, I stumbled my way over to the platform where the instructor from before was smiling at me comfortingly. The thing was, it wasn't very comforting. "You'll do fine," he said with a hint of a Dutch accent.

I nodded and turned my head around to see where Henry was. He was a few feet away smiling at me encouragingly. Bless him. I then turned myself the other way and blinked as I took in the sparse river underneath me. Oh my god. I couldn't believe I was going to jump off this bridge in a second. Why Henry wanted to do this escapes me.

Sure, you get a good kick out of it but *â* ; I could *die* for goodness sakes! I didn't take death lightly.

I realised that these frightening thoughts of dying was not making this easier, so I closed my eyes and shook them away.

"You can do it!" I heard Henry tell me, as if I was going to kick the final goal for a soccer game or something.

I inhaled and exhaled slowly, and told myself that I would be fine, and that if I died, I could always haunt Henry as a ghost. Ok.

I rocked on the balls of my feet, shut my eyes tightly and finally, launched myself off the platform. My heart leapt as I fell down from the bridge. I couldn't even scream or make a noise because nothing would come out of my throat. Air rushed past my face and I gasped when I nearly hit the clear sea underneath me.

My gasp then turned into a relieved sigh when I didn't land in the water. For a second, I had been quite terrified of drowning there, but the cord was still holding me. I'd never thought I'd say this, but thank goodness for the cord!

Once I got back up to the bridge, Henry came over to me. My legs felt like Jell-O and he caught me in his arms. I was safe now. "Did you like it?"

Despite how terrified of dying I was, I nodded and laughed softly. I had liked it somehow. "Yeah I did."

He grinned and nudged me slightly. "I told you so."

After getting out of my harness and thanking the instructor (Henry hadn't been very happy to do that), Henry drove us back to the hotel. Throughout the ride, my nerves set back in. I would have to tell him about my plan to leave. Damn.

Once we arrived at our hotel suite, Henry collapsed on the sofa and brought me along with him. I smacked his arm and laughed aloud. "You idiot!"

I heard him chuckle. "I'm *your* idiot."

## Fake Fiancee

"Well that was corny," I remarked.

His arms tightened around me and I felt him place a light kiss on my head. "I'm always corny around you," he murmured. "I love you."

I stiffened because Henry telling me he loved me just made me want to stay here with him forever. I managed to squeak out, "I love you too." Then, he sat up slightly and I backed off him a bit so we were both sitting properly on the sofa. My face fell when I saw him studying my face. What was he thinking?

"Lainie, just tell me what's on your mind." He sighed.

I rubbed my arm. "What makes you think that I'm thinking about something?"

"Well let's see â you've kind of been nervous and zoning out a lot all day and you've got that guilty look on you." I groaned and smacked my forehead. I really needed to update my acting skills around him. "Please tell me what's wrong."

I closed my eyes briefly, and then opened them to find him looking slightly worried, so I took one of his hands in mine and started to draw soothing circles on his palm. "Henry â I need to tell you something."

"I figured." Smartass.

I took a deep breath. "I â I'm leaving," I whispered. I saw his eyes bulge and quickly continued before he could say anything. "I *need* to leave Henry. I was supposed to be here to fix up your reputation but now I've ruined it. This whole thing is all my fault. If it wasn't for me â!"

Henry then gripped my hands. "No Lainie," he said tightly. "I won't let you leave."

I felt a tinge of annoyance at what he said and snapped, "You can't stop me Henry."

"Lainie, I â need you. I *love* you," he choked out. I bit my lip and looked away from the alluring colour of his eyes, because they were just too good at persuading. "We'll show the world that we love each other. Please don't leave."

I shook my head. "Steve said you'll always be looked down on if I'm with you and it's true Henry!"

"*Steve*," Henry growled, realising that he was the person who had implanted the idea of leaving in my head. A vicious glint I didn't like entered his eyes.

My eyes widened as he hopped off the bed. Was he going to â *no!* I scrambled off the bed and ran over to him to stop him. I tugged hard on his arm and he turned to face me. He seriously looked like he was ready to murder my uncle, I'm not kidding.

"Henry, don't! This is all my decision!"

He looked hurt by what I said and shook his arm out of my grip. "You're ready to throw our love away just like that?"

When he put it like that, it did sound horrible, but I wasn't going to let that comment get to me. I would brood over it later when I finally left. "No! How could you say that?!"

## Fake Fiancee

"Well how can you tell me that you're breaking up with me?"

I wrung my hands. "This is what's best for you Henry. Your reputation â"¦!"

"And who are you to decide what's best for me?" he retorted.

I flinched. Henry saw the movement and his face slowly softened. I watched as he bit his lip and stared at the floor. I longed to be able to read his mind and know what he was thinking. Was he going to let me walk away? Or was he thinking of strategies for me to stay by his side? My logical side hoped he would let me go but my romantic side prayed for him to fight for me.

"Do you really want to go? For my reputation?"

No. "Yes." I watched as he continued to stare at the floor and felt hope. Was he reconsidering?

"Then we'll have a long-distance relationship."

What?! That wasn't the point! My eyes widened and I peered up at him. From his angry expression, he seemed to look quite hopeful now. "What do you mean?"

He scratched the back of his neck. "Um â"¦ well maybe we could date in secret?"

Was he serious? I felt like punching him. Was I that horrible that I had to be hidden away from the world? He saw the look on my face and he scrambled to explain. "We could date in secret and later, one day, we could finally be together."

"Everyone will know who I am," I pointed out. "You'll still be hated."

Henry shook his head and he grinned slightly. "I know what I'm doing." I didn't think so, but I didn't voice this aloud. What kind of plan did he have in his twisted mind? "So what do you think? Please Lainie?"

One look in his eyes and I couldn't help but blurt out, "of course."

His face lit up at my answer and he swept me into a hug, but I wasn't so sure if this was the right thing to do.

\* \* \*

It was nearly nightfall and Henry was doing some last minute filming along with Veronica. I had grimaced at that and was still quite annoyed. But my negative thoughts flew out of the window when the 'someone' who knocked on the door of the hotel suite turned out to be Keith.

"Keith!" I pulled him in for a bear hug and he laughed. "What are you doing here?!"

I let him in and he shrugged slightly. "I hope you're not upset about the ... uh â"¦ pictures all over the tabloids."

I rolled my eyes as we sat down on the sofa, knowing that he was referring to the picture of us hugging. "Do you think I am? It was just a friendly hug."

His face showed relief and he leaned his head back. "*Thank God.* I thought you would have been pissed or something."

## Fake Fiancee

"Then you must not know me very well," I teased.

He grinned but then it looked like he remembered something because his face suddenly fell. "Right â€¦ I was doing a few scenes today and I saw Henry. He seemed â€¦ weird. What's going on, Lainie? Did you guys have a fight again?"

Well he was straightforward. I was going to lie but then I remembered that he was my friend and I couldn't just leave Curacao without telling him. "I'm going back home, Keith."

He suddenly burst out laughing and I patiently waited for him to stop. When he realised I hadn't cracked a smile, he stopped. "Oh, you're serious?" I nodded and couldn't help but giggle at him. "Oh â€¦ Lainie! Why?! I'm going miss you!"

"It's for the good of all humanity," I exaggerated, letting him attack me with a hug. "And I'll miss you too."

"Promise we'll keep in contact? We'll email and phone and whenever I can, I'll visit you!"

He sounded so excited about the plans that I had to agree. Keith then snapped his fingers. "Let's go and visit Natasha! You have to say goodbye to her too!"

"What, right now?" I asked, surprised that he brought this up. He nodded and after a few seconds of thinking, I agreed to visit her. He gave me a few minutes to change out of my pyjamas and into a pair of shorts and a flannel shirt.

We headed out and rode on his motorbike off to '*Hilton CuraÃ§ao*', the place where Natasha was staying along with Clara and her boyfriend. It took kind of long and when we arrived, I gawked. The hotel was a white, gigantic rectangular structure with the beach right in front. I wondered where Natasha's hotel room was, out of all the windows.

We hopped off the bike and started to walk inside when suddenly, Keith's cell blasted out 'Barbie Girl'. I burst out laughing at his choice of ring tone and he swatted my arm. "It was stupid Henry's fault," he muttered, defending himself. "Hello?"

I listened to his very short conversation and started panicking when he let out a sigh and ran a hand through his hair. "I'm really sorry Lainie but Peter called me in."

Oh. "It's fine, you can go," I reassured him.

"Are you sure? I'll pick you up when you call me then," he promised. I nodded and let him go, while I walked up to the front desk feeling insignificant.

"And what do you want?" the pretty receptionist asked, looking at her polka-dotted painted nails. What a snotty â€¦ "Are you sure you're in the right place?" She eyed my attire and I fought back the urge to slap her.

I forced myself to be polite. "Yes I'm sure. Now may I ask which room Natasha Lesley is in?"

"I'm sorry, we don't help stalkers," was her instant reply. Feeling sick of being treated like a piece of dirt, I slammed my hand down on the counter, which made her jump in her seat.

"Look here, if you don't tell me *right now* which room Natasha Lesley is in, I will seriously damage those pretty little nails of yours," I threatened.

## Fake Fiancee

Her eyes widened and she hurried to type in Natasha's name into the computer. I felt like laughing. Girls were all about looks these days. "Room 90," I heard her murmur.

"Thank you." I turned around to walk away from her but not before adding, "Oh, just a word of advice. If you don't want to get fired, I'd suggest you should get that stick out of your butt."

She gasped, while I snickered evilly as I headed for the elevator I had spotted when I had first entered the lobby. I punched in the right level and leaned against the silver wall of the elevator. I couldn't wait to see Natasha because she always made me feel better. She was cheerful and bubbly and always made me laugh.

When the elevator doors slid open, I stepped out and scanned the corridor. The door nearest to me indicated that it was number 75, so I kept walking, staring at the golden plates on the doors. 87, 88, 89 & 90.

I hesitated before I knocked. No answer. Great. Now what? I'm not sure what it was, but suddenly a force pushed me to try the doorknob. The door opened at my touch and I took a small step inside. What the hell was with Hollywood people leaving their doors unlocked?

I knew Natasha was in because I heard the water running in the shower so I decided to sit myself on the chaise longue by the window. I admired the view from my seat as I waited for her to come out of the ensuite. I hoped I wouldn't scare her, but I didn't feel like waiting outside in the quiet corridor.

The sudden shrill ringing of the phone in the room snapped me out of my daydreaming and I eyed it, feeling wary. Should I answer it? I stared at it, not knowing what to do until it stopped, and a 'beep' went off. Voicemail! Yes, I'll just let it go to voicemail.

*"Natasha, I have to congratulate you. Everyone is disgusted to find out that my son and his so-called fiancée's engagement is not real. You did a wonderful job and I liked that extra touch with the picture of Hudson and Lainie hugging. Once I am out of jail, I will be sure to contact your father and make arrangements for the engagement. Henry will love you, I am sure. I am very proud to be able to call you my daughter-in-law. Please call me soon so we can discuss the alliance between ERLA and Parker Corporations."*

What the? Was that & Mr Parker?! Why was he calling Natasha his daughter-in-law?! My head started to hurt as it spun with possibilities and questions.

"Lainie & what are you doing here?!"

I slowly turned to the source of the squeal (aka Natasha), who stood by the doorframe of the ensuite in a nightie. I looked her in the eye fiercely, but all the while, my body was shaking from shock, anger and disbelief. She was supposed to be my *friend*. What kind of friend backstabbed you? "Why are you in cohorts with Rafferty Parker?"

Natasha's plump lips dropped into an 'O' shape and she took a step forward. "I & I had to! I'm so sorry!"

"I didn't *ask* for apologies, I asked for a reason," I replied coldly.

She flinched, hurt by my indifference. "I had to Lainie, you have to understand! My father & his company & my family are going to become *broke!*" she blubbered through her tears. "Marrying Henry means saving my family &!"

## Fake Fiancee

I shook my head at her, disgusted that she would still go to lengths to save her family. Even if she was trying to save her family, why did she have to split Henry and I apart and make us miserable?

"Please forgive me," she pleaded, inching closer to me. I automatically stepped away and took in her tear-stricken face. She looked sincere about being sorry for hurting my feelings, but I couldn't just bring myself tell her that everything was ok between us. I felt nauseous. I needed to get out of here.

"The reason why I came to visit was to say goodbye, because I'm leaving, so goodbye Natasha. I hope karma hits you in the face someday because you ruined the best thing that ever happened to me."

After giving her one last, hard look, I turned away from her and ran out of the room as fast as I could, away from Natasha, my so-called friend.

**So what did you think about that?! Surprised that Mr Parker was involved?! I hope so :D xox**

## Chapter 31: Addicted

**A/N: I know you're probably thinking that FF is quite long so I'm here to tell you that according to my 'chapter planning' there are another five chapters left (including the epilogue).**

**Also, just in case, I think I should recap or explain about Natasha's betrayal in 4 steps!**

- 1. Natasha's father owns a company called ERLA and they are becoming bankrupt.**
- 2. Rafferty Parker actually thinks that ERLA Company is doing well and that's part of the reason why he wants Henry to marry Natasha. He's friends with Natasha's dad. (He mentions that he wants Henry to marry her in chapter 14).**
- 3. In chapter 24, Natasha 'looks after' Lainie's purse at while she dances with Keith and that is when she takes her cell phone. Then, in chapter 26, she gives the phone to some media person. The phone was 'the object'.**
- 4. So, Mr Parker and Natasha team together to try and break Henry and Lainie up.**

### Addicted

My hands wobbled as I searched the pockets of my jeans for my cell. I then finally remembered that Natasha had taken my phone. A groan escaped from my lips. I did not want to go back in there and face her again; I wanted to get as far away as I could. An idea then popped up in my head and I headed towards the lift to find the receptionist in the lobby.

When I reached the administration desk, the receptionist's eyes bulged and I knew that my plan would work. "Do you think I can use the phone please?" I asked in a polite tone. Maybe I wouldn't need to be scary.

I watched as she shifted her eyes. "Phones are only for members and workers of the-

"I'm sure you don't want me to fulfil my threat from last time â right?" I batted my eyelashes and made my eyes wide, so I could look innocent.

She sighed irritably and shoved the phone to me. "Hurry up. I might get fired if my boss finds out that I'm helping out people like you."

I didn't bother asking what that meant. "Will do," I muttered. I stared at the phone and tried to remember Keith's number, but I only managed to remember the first four numbers. I would have to make do with Henry's.

It rang twice before he picked up. "Hello? Who is this?"

"Henry!" I let out a relieved sigh. "Do you think you can pick me up from somewhere?"

There was a pause from the other end of the line. "Where *are* you exactly?"

I smiled sheepishly, even though he wouldn't be able to see it. "Uh â Hilton Curacao? You know the hotel?"

"How did you end up there?" Henry asked, in a rather slow tone.

I heard a cough from the other side and Keith saying, "Uh well â that was me."

## Fake Fiancee

I listened in onto their conversation. "What?!" I heard Henry demand.

"She has to say goodbye to Natasha as well! I dropped her off but I got called here."

"You left her *stranded* there?"

"I was going to pick her up when she rang!" Keith exclaimed defensively.

"Lainie's cell was stolen."

"Oh â"'

I sighed exasperatedly. "Henry! Stop interrogating Keith. Do you think you could come for me or not? I could walk back or-"

"Of course," he answered in a heartbeat. "I'll be there in twenty."

"Kay," I answered. When I hung up, I gave the phone back to the receptionist, who gave me a small smirk. The nerve of her. "Trouble in paradise?"

I gave her a big, fat smile. "The opposite actually."

She leaned forward with a not-so-convincing sympathetic look. "It's ok to admit it, you know. I advise you to see a counsellor." Her voice then dropped to a loud whisper. "It might help."

I held my hand to my heart. "Oh honey, I'd advise you to see one too. You need to get your issues sorted out."

"Sorry to disappoint you, but I have no issues," she replied back, smiling smugly.

I widened my eyes on purpose. "Why, don't you remember about the stick up your butt?" Before she could retort, I walked away, eager to escape from the annoying presence of the stuck-up receptionist. Everywhere in the world, there would always be the good, the bad and the downright ugly. It was a shame.

I checked out the hotels restaurant by the beach and drooled over the menu for a minute. I had no cash on me so I couldn't buy anything. I decided to just sit on one of the chairs and ignored the weird looks the few waiters were giving me.

My thoughts went to Natasha and Mr Parker. I still couldn't get over the fact that they had been behind all of this, although it all perversely fitted together.

I wasn't that surprised that Mr Parker was involved, since he was such a prick and had seemed pretty determined to have his son marry for a business alliance. I had underestimated him - even in jail he was still capable of stirring trouble. I wished I could strangle the stupid, old bat.

Natasha on the other hand, had betrayed me. Our friendship had meant nothing to her. Hell, it wasn't even a true friendship if she had been lying to me the whole time and faking her friendliness. To know that it was all an act hurt me. I could never forgive her. Henry and I weren't the same now.

If they hadn't started to articles on the engagement being a sham, Henry wouldn't have confessed to the public. We both could have gone under the pretence of being engaged until Henry proposed to me for real, and then we could have gotten married.

## Fake Fiancee

I immediately shook my head to get rid of those thoughts. What was I thinking?! *Marrying* Henry?! Wasn't it a bit too early to be thinking about that?

But then images of being with Henry till death do us part flashed through my head. Living in the same house, waking up to his face everyday, eating dinner together â it all sounded so, so tempting.

I leaned my head in the palm of my hand and wondered how on earth I was going to keep myself from falling apart when I would go back to my hometown.

I had enjoyed my stay with Henry but I realised that my stay seemed like a dream, a holiday. This wasn't right. I wasn't fit for the world of Hollywood. I still don't like the lives of the famous and the rich. You were in the spotlight all the time and that meant no privacy.

I was the type of person who liked privacy. I always knew, from when I was a little girl, that all I wanted and needed was to get married and lead a peaceful and homey life as a normal person, but I couldn't do that if I was with *Henry*.

Our long-distance relationship would have to remain secret, so we were always in risk of being founded out, and when Henry and I will get together, we'd still be talked about. I don't know what Henry's plan was, but I was sure it would still be that way. I didn't want it. I didn't want any of this, but I hadn't realised until now.

I had been too caught up with Henry's intoxicating love, and now that I had found out that my 'friend' was actually my 'enemy', I finally had.

How could I live in a world where I'd be thrown into the spotlight constantly? When I wouldn't know who was my friend or my foe? And wherever I walked, I would be talked about?

I couldn't live like that. I couldn't let my future *children* live like that. Even though it was too early to be thinking about that, I couldn't help it. I would want them to have a serene, secure home. They could be attacked too if you thought about it.

Being famous was dangerous. Oh god, what was I going to do?

It was twenty minutes later when I looked up at the small, blue clock on the wall of the hotel restaurant, so I walked out and made my way through the lobby to get outside to the parking lot, where Henry would most likely be.

I was wrong.

He was standing in the lobby looking as handsome as ever. I ran up to him and hugged him, surprising him and myself. His warm embrace was the perfect medicine. I was ridded of my anger and hurt over Natasha's betrayal.

"Hey there pancake," Henry greeted, sounding happy that I was all for PDA. "Let's go, shall we?"

I nodded and followed him out of the hotel, but in my peripheral view, I saw the receptionist from before gawking at us, or more likely, my boyfriend.

Henry sensed my negative mood and stopped walking just as we reached the motorbike. I had been looking at the ground while walking so I bumped into his chest. "Sorry," I mumbled.

## Fake Fiancee

His eyes, which had turned black in the moonlight, showed concern. "Are you alright?"

No, I was not alright, but I assured him I was. It looked like he didn't believe me, but he didn't say anything.

When we reached our hotel suite, it was eight-thirty pm. I wasn't sure whether to tell Steve and Henry about the Natasha thing. After mulling over whether to tell them for a few seconds, I decided that there was no point. I knew that Henry wouldn't date Natasha in a billion years and if his father tried to force him into anything, he would stick up for himself. How Mr Parker expects Henry to agree to his plan puzzles me. Henry has stuck up for himself and is more confident now.

I also knew that Arianne and April were away from harm. Part of Mr Parker's sentence was to stay away from his family by a mile radius. I also didn't want Henry to get into any fights with his father, or go to threaten Natasha. They weren't worth it.

As I showered, I let a few tears escape. I wasn't sad or angry â I was just a bit emotional. Everything was kind of overwhelming me at the moment. My life was a mess.

When I finally finished having a shower, I stepped out in my pyjamas and found Henry sitting on the bed, grinning foolishly. I wondered what was up with him. "What are you smiling about?" I asked suspiciously.

"Come here, I have something for you."

I raised an eyebrow and crossed my arms. "Oh?"

"Please pancake!"

Hearing Henry beg and seeing his puppy dog face made me roll my eyes. It was unfair how he could successfully use his cuteness to persuade me into doing things. I clambered onto the bed to join him and sat cross-legged. I wondered what he had in store for me. A kiss? It didn't seem likely because if that was the case, he would have done that by now.

He ordered me to face the other way, so I did, frowning. "Will you please tell me-?"

I then felt something cold on the base of my neck and looked down. Oh my god. He had bought me a *necklace*! Once he clasped it, his lips brushed my ear and I shivered.

"Do you like it?"

I nodded and fingered the chain. "Yes," I whispered hoarsely. "Very much so."

The necklace was a silver heart shaped locket with a rose carved into the front. I opened it gingerly and smiled at what I saw.

On one side, the words 'Peanut & Pancake' were engraved, and on the other, sat a picture of Henry and me smiling at each other, with Henry's arm around me. It was the type of picture every couple wanted.

I was a bit confused about something. "When was this taken? Who took it?"

"Natasha did, at the filming studio. It was the day after we â confessed. She sent the picture to me."

## Fake Fiancee

A pang of sorrow hit me when Natasha's name was brought up, but I waved it away. "It's beautiful Henry. Really."

He grinned like a kid at Christmas and then added shyly, "Thanks. I wasn't sure if you would like it."

I gave him a kiss on the cheek. "Of course I would!"

We gazed at each other for a few seconds before Henry spoke up. "Then you'll like this too!"

My eyes widened as he jumped off the bed to retrieve something from the drawer of his nightstand. Dear lord. Did he buy me something else too?

When he bounded back onto the bed, I saw that he was holding a red box with a strand of a white silk ribbon tied together in a bow. I eyed it warily. "Please don't tell me there are tickets to go on an outer space journey."

After his bungee jumping idea, who knew what he had up his sleeve? Or rather this time, in a box. Henry just laughed and told me to open it. I slowly unwrapped the ribbon and once it fell away from the box, I lifted the lid.

A sleek white cell sat there with its instructions and charger, earphones, a small pamphlet about social networking and games, a protection screen, a striped mobile phone sock and other little accessories.

I cracked a smile at my boyfriend's thoughtfulness, but it was quickly replaced by guilt. I had accepted the locket, but now a cell phone? It was just too much. It must have been expensive too.

"Henry â€¦ I can't take this."

He blinked. "You don't like it?"

"No!" I exclaimed quickly. Why did Henry always assume I never liked his surprises? "I do!"

Henry let out a sigh. "Just accept it. It's a gift. I don't know what to do with my money anyway. I might as well spend it all on you."

I shook my head and looked helplessly at my brand new gift. "Don't worry; I can get my own phone."

After a moment's pause, Henry said, "Fine. Consider it as an early birthday present." I raised an eyebrow and caught his murmur. "Even though I'm still going to buy you something for your birthday."

"You don't even *know* my birthday," I pointed out smugly.

"Actually I do. It's the twenty-second of December."

Henry smirked as he watched my smile fade. How did he get a hold of my birth date? My birthday was going to be a disaster. "First you know my full name and now you know my birthday," I stated slowly. "Fess up, you've been stalking me, haven't you?"

"No!" Henry looked offended.

"Facebook?" It could be a possibility, but my settings were all on private and I hadn't befriended Henry yet, or announced that we were in a relationship, like everyone did these days. That would be awful actually.

## Fake Fiancee

Everyone would be commenting. Anyway, I didn't even use my account that much.

"I didn't even know you had one," my boyfriend mused.

I huffed. "Yeah, well I do."

"Your uncle told me all the stuff I needed to know actually," he explained as he was lying on the bed and casually played with my fingers. I looked down at him. "That's how I knew what type of restaurant to propose to you in, what sort of engagement ring to buy you â" "

"What?!" All this time, I had been under the thought that Steve had done all those things. Henry had even told me himself that my uncle had handpicked the fake engagement ring.

He continued on, while I sat there speechless. "You like elegant, but simple. Classy."

"*You* bought me the ring? And you lied to me about it?!"

Henry blinked and realised his mistake. He smiled sheepishly at me. "I didn't want you to think of me as a sweet guy back then."

I'm not sure why, but I found something humours in it and laughed. Henry poked me in the side so I could stop, but I just kept giggling at his embarrassed expression. It wasn't something you saw often. He cleared his throat and changed the subject so I would stop. "So do you like your gifts?"

"I love them very much. Thank you so much peanut." I took his face in my hands and kissed him enthusiastically to show him how happy he was.

"Now you have a phone and we can call each other when you have to leave," Henry murmured as his lips hovered above mine. He then rolled me onto my back and smiled angelically at me while I was frozen. I hadn't been thinking about my epiphany I had about two hours ago, but now it all came rushing back to me as Henry's lips trailed from my jaw and down to my throat. I then realised I was over thinking, and that definitely killed the romance, so I pushed the thoughts of leaving him to the back of my mind and concentrated on Henry's presence instead.

**Lainie's locket :)**

## Chapter 32: Goodbyes

### Goodbyes

Last night's sleep had been wonderful, but the moment my eyes fluttered open to see a bright new day, panic rose in me. Today was the day. Steve had given me three days and today was the third. I was leaving Curacao and more importantly, Henry, *today*. It felt like Dooms Day, the end of time.

Luckily though, most of my possessions were packed into my suitcase already, so for most of the day, I would be able to spend it with Henry.

He was still asleep beside me and I inched closer, wanting to soak up more of him. Everything about him overwhelmed me, but at the same time, managed to make me feel at home. It was funny how about a month ago I was totally disgusted by the thought of even talking to Henry and now we were inseparable.

My eyes drifted shut and I concentrated on the feel of his smooth cheek and jaw, his steady and calming heartbeat and his arms, which were encircled around me like a safe, cosy cocoon.

I laid there in silence until I felt him stir a few minutes later. For some reason, we always seemed to wake up within a few minutes of each other, even if it was three in the morning. I found it so strange. It was as if our subconscious could sense when the other one was awake.

"Good morning pancake," Henry said, his voice thick with sleep.

I smiled as his arms tightened around me. "Good morning to you too, Mr Peanut." I felt his chest rumbled as he chuckled softly and decided that I liked it very much.

"I don't want you to leave."

He nestled his nose into my hair and I sighed softly. "Me too."

I still hadn't told him about how my revelation from last night. My decision was border lining on breaking our relationship off. Was it selfish to break up with Henry because I didn't want a life in Hollywood? How complicated things were. When I had agreed to pretend to be engaged to Henry, I had expected to act like a perfect couple in love then leave without any regret, and here I was beating myself up. I knew that he would be so heartbroken if I decided to end our relationship, but I knew I couldn't handle the spotlight for the rest of my life. Honestly, it sounded like a death sentence.

Right now, I was lucky. We were in Curacao, away from LA, so less people would know or despise me. I knew for sure that if I flew back, I would be classed as an outsider. A fake. A whore. A gold digger.

You get the idea.

As I met Henry's smouldering gaze, I knew that he would stick up for me, but I still didn't want all the drama which came with being famous. My decision was becoming clearer by the second.

Suddenly, both Henry and I heard a gentle knock on the door. I immediately tensed up, even though it was stupid to. It wasn't like Mr Parker or Natasha would be there â right?

## Fake Fiancee

Henry kissed my forehead tenderly before slipping out of the bed and shrugging on a black singlet he found resting on the back of a chair in the corner of the room. I blew a strand of hair out of my face from frustration of being intruded upon by someone and grudgingly pushed myself out of bed. I wondered who would want to visit Henry and me at this hour? It was probably Steve.

"Lainie?" I heard Henry call from the other room, where the television and settees sat. I rolled my eyes and walked out of the bedroom to see what Steve wanted to talk about, but the problem was â my uncle wasn't the person who was standing next to Henry.

"Arianne?" Confusion and happiness swept through me. I was confused because I had no idea why she was here so early in the morning and happy because I was glad to see her. "What are you doing here?!"

She laughed lightly and came forward to envelope me in a hug. "Lainie! I've missed you so much!"

Henry cleared his throat, making us break apart. "I guess I should get going then."

"What? Why?!" I exclaimed.

"We need some alone time, that's why," Arianne explained cheerily. Her voice then turned into a reprimanding tone as she gave Henry a look. "Boys aren't supposed to join in our girl talks."

Henry scoffed before he walked out of the suite. "Who said I was staying?" The door was shut a bit harder than usual, making it rattle slightly. I flinched. Was Henry mad?

My instincts were telling me to run after him but Arianne pulled me back from him, to sit on the settee. I bit my lip as I stared at the door.

"Lainie, how are you?" I finally tore my gaze away from the door and looked into the delicate face of Arianne. She looked at me as if she pitied me and I didn't like it. I've never liked pity. Her voice went lower as she added, "Steve told me everything."

Surprise filled me. I never knew my uncle had it in him to tell Arianne. That was just â weird. I was proud of him though. "What did he say?"

"The whole story. He told me how he set all this up. At first, I was upset but something good came out of it right? Henry is in love with you and you with him." I nodded as she said that, but surely she knew I was leaving?

"I really have no idea what's going on now. You're leaving? I thought you love him," Arianne asked, puzzled. She put a hand on my shoulder for comfort. "But I know that you are a person who makes a decision for a good reason, so I had to come and talk to you to find out what it is."

"I do have a reason," I admitted as I played with my fingers. Arianne gave me a soft look which urged me to continue. "I wanted leave for Henry's reputation first but now â" I paused and looked up at Arianne. I hadn't told anyone about my epiphany yet. She smiled reassuringly at me. "I realise that I don't want a Hollywood life. I'll never have any privacy you know? I want to go to college and come out as a successful woman. I want to live peaceful life in a small town. I want to be able to get married and have kids without the media always spying on me. I want â a normal life."

"Oh, I know what you mean sweetie, but I guess that's how life is when you're with Henry."

## Fake Fiancee

I shook my head. I didn't think she understood what I was saying. "I know, and that's why I want to â ; b-break it off with him."

A sharp gasp emitted from Arianne's lips and before I knew it, small tears had sprung from my eyes and were trailing its way down my cheeks. Damn, why was I crying? Since when had I gone all soft and weak?

"Shh, it's ok," Arianne soothed, as she pulled me to her. "There, there. I'm sure everything will work out perfectly."

I shook my head as my wiped my tears. "I-I don't think so." Arianne didn't say anything. She just sat there and comforted me with her hug and stroked my hair lightly. It felt a little weird though. I had never been comforted like this. My mother had never hugged me close when I cried, ran a hair through my hair and whispered sweet nothings to me.

With a shock, I realised something. Was this what motherly affection felt like? I had never felt it before so this was new to me. I felt supported, loved and important. I know Henry made me feel like that but still â ; it was nice to know there were others who felt the same. I smiled and realised that Arianne had left the love of her life too. She had chosen her family, their reputation, over Steve. I kind of related in some way and I needed to know her opinion on this.

"Arianne?"

"Hmm?"

I bit my lip before looking up to meet her eyes. "Do you think I'm doing the right thing? Should I be staying with Henry instead?"

She let out a soft sigh. "Well, I want you to choose what will make *you* happy, want *you* want," she replied carefully. "But for me â ; marrying Rafferty was the worst thing I ever did. It should have been Steve. Although some good came out of it â ;!" A smile grew on her face as she stared off into the distance. "Henry and April are the most cherished things in my life. So really, you never know. Something beautiful can come out of something bad, Lainie. I'm not here to persuade you into staying or going though. I want *you* to pick. This is your choice, not anyone else's. Don't let Henry's heartbreak sway your decision. *You* have to decide what *you* want to do."

I hugged Arianne and thanked her for her advice. That's what I liked about her. She gave her opinions and experiences, but never pressured you to do the right or wrong thing. She left that up to you since she respected the idea of free will.

More tears were pouring from me because I knew now what I was going to do. I loved that she wasn't the type of person to persuade you into things. We stayed there like that, until I regained my senses and forced myself to stop crying. *Everything is going to be ok*, I told myself. *Everything will be ok*.

\* \* \*

Henry came back to the hotel suite after Arianne left and brought back brunch for me. It was so sweet of him, that I tackled him into a hug, but I still remembered that he had kind of slammed the door when he had left earlier, so I wanted to ask him about that.

After I took a sip of juice, I took a deep breath before asking, "Hey, were you angry when you left Arianne to talk to me?"

## Fake Fiancee

"Why would you think that?"

It was obvious he was trying to play it cool. "You slammed the door," I stated.

He blew out a sigh before rolling his eyes. "Fine, I was kind of angry."

"Would you care to elaborate?" I put down my glass of apple juice on the small coffee table in front of us and took one of Henry's hands in my own. "You know, just so I can understand."

His lips tugged into a smile at my sarcasm. "Well if you must know, I just want to spend every second with you today, and I overreacted."

Could he get any more romantic? I had always wanted a guy like that and when I had first met Henry, I had told myself that he definitely wasn't anything like my dream guy, and look where we were now. If it weren't for the sham engagement, I wouldn't have fallen for him. *So really, you never know. Something beautiful can come out of something bad, Lainie.*

I shook my head to get Arianne's voice out of my head and concentrated on Henry talking about his possible music career. I was glad that he was more confident in his musical talents. "I could release a single? Do you think people would buy it though?"

I laughed. "Of course! Millions of girls would be lining up to buy *your* single!"

"You really think so?" Henry questioned dubiously. Man, what had happened to his huge-ass ego? Or was he just insecure because his father had ridiculed his love for music?

I nodded enthusiastically so he could feel positive about this too. "Yeah! Definitely!"

Henry grinned and devoured my lips until we were both breathless. Shock filled me. "What was that for?" I gasped.

He leaned his forehead against mine and whispered, "For being the best girlfriend I've ever had and will have."

We spent the next few hours talking and cuddling, but I couldn't even get the words, "Henry, I think we need to talk," out of my damn mouth. Every time I wanted to say it, his smile blinded my world and I just couldn't let that smile fade away. Every time he talked about our future, I couldn't stand it. I pretended I was listening but in reality, I was blocking his voice out and telling myself not to burst into tears. He would have this crooked smile on his handsome face when he spoke about visiting me in my hometown and his eyes would sparkle when he said things like, "And then we'll really be able to be together, pancake."

Before we knew it, three o' clock came and there was one hour until I would have to board the plane (Henry had offered me his jet, but I insisted on flying on a normal plane in economic class). Steve, Arianne, Keith, Clara and Henry were all with me as we headed out of the hotel. Steve had hired a van to take us to the airport so we could all pile into the one same car. He drove with Arianne beside him. Henry, Clara and I sat in the middle and Keith had volunteered to sit by himself in the back seat, although he made good use of it by repeatedly poking the three of us in the head for fun.

"Stop that!" Clara exclaimed for the fifth time. One thing I learned about her is that if you annoy her badly, she can turn into a tornado.

## Fake Fiancee

Keith laughed as he flicked her in the head again. "It's all good-natured humour Clara! Geesh, learn how to take a joke will you?"

I rolled my eyes at his immaturity. "Keith, maybe you're taking the joke *too* far."

"Yeah, I'm getting a bruise," Henry muttered from beside me.

"Aww you guys are no fun at all!" Keith complained loudly. "This is our last day together, let's have fun!"

I laughed. "I think we'll have fun if you stop abusing us."

"Abuse? How dare you accuse me of *abusing* you?!"

"Well you were!"

"I wasn't!"

"You're lying!"

"You're truthing!"

What? "That isn't even a word," I pointed out.

Keith let out a snort. "You are such a kill joy."

"And you're such a-"

Steve interrupted loudly, "Ok guys! Cut the nonsense!"

"What nonsense?" Keith and I questioned at the same time.

Arienne, Henry and Clara started to laugh. I groaned and sunk in my seat, slightly chagrined that everyone had witnessed that. After everyone calmed down, we started to sing along to songs on the radio. I couldn't help but be awed at how everyone was trying to project an optimistic attitude so nobody would think about my leaving.

We arrived at the airport with thirty minutes to go. Luckily, the airport wasn't very crowded at all.

Keith and Clara pulled me into a three-way hug and I laughed. I would miss them so much. "We'll definitely have to catch up one day," Clara told me.

"Yeah! I'll email and phone you too!" Keith added.

They let go of me so I could walk over to embrace my uncle. He patted me on the back gently and smiled. "I transferred all the money you need into your bank account a few days ago."

"Thank you," I said sincerely. "I'll miss you."

He winked. "I'll miss you too. Look after you mother for me, will you?" I didn't like doing that, but I promised to try.

## Fake Fiancee

Arianne came over next and she gave me an affectionate hug. "Do what you have to do," she whispered. I felt myself stiffen. She let go of me and smiled. "I'll miss you so much, Lainie."

"Me too."

I gave her one last hug before Henry took me in his arms. "Once you get home, I'll call you," Henry told me as he spun me to face him. "And I'll call you every day after that. I've got your email too and we can Skype. When I find the time, I'll tell you when I'll visit you. I'm sure your mother will let me stay?"

I bit my lip. *Now*. Now was the time that I had to tell Henry. I couldn't tell him once I got home. I wanted to do this face-to-face.

"I don't think we'll talk as much as you want to," I murmured, scared of his reaction. His smile faltered, and I pushed myself on to talk more. "I â I'm breaking up with you."

This time he flinched and stumbled backwards, shocked by my words. The golden quality which made him rakish disappeared. "What?"

"Henry," I pleaded, reaching forward for his hands. I had the feeling he would persuade me to stay because of our love so I decided to tell him why I was leaving. He wouldn't ask me to stay if I didn't *want* to stay. "I can't live like this."

He was still trying to process what I said by the looks of it. I could see his large hands balling into fists. Oh god. "Live like what?"

"I can't live a Hollywood life, where we'll be constantly watched and judged. I just want to live in a small town and lead a life of normalcy."

He choked and looked at me with all the hurt in the world. I wanted to take him back so bad. So, *so* bad. I couldn't believe I was breaking with the guy I *loved*. "You're â you're breaking up with me?"

"Yeah â" I fidgeted with my fingers, but decided to stop. I was getting too nervous.

Henry gritted his teeth and his knuckles were white. I wouldn't mind if he punched me. I deserved it.

"Are you sure about this?"

I nodded and felt small tears trickling from my eyes for the second time of the day. I needed to do this. Gently, I unclasped the locket he had given me, took his hand in mine and folded the locket into his palm. "Here. I should give this back."

He shook his head stubbornly. "No, this belongs to -"

"Henry, no. Just keep it ok?" I murmured. I looked up at him to find that his eyes too were glistening. Right there, I felt my heart shatter into pieces. "Henry, you *will* fall in love again. Remember that."

A tear ran down his cheek as he shook his head. I had never seen him cry, ever. I felt like such a selfish girl as I looked at him. Sadness was written all over his face and I couldn't do anything about it. "I'm sorry," I whispered as I placed a gentle kiss on his lips. I couldn't help but think: that would be the last time I would ever feel his mouth on mine. "Goodbye Henry."

## Fake Fiancee

With that, I headed towards the terminal because they were calling my flight number. I didn't dare look back because I knew I would go back straight into Henry's arms once I caught a glimpse of how heartbroken he was, watching me walk away from his life *forever*.

**~ I'm not very good at emotional chapters, so sorry about that :( I wanted to make you guys cry (because I am just that mean!) but I don't think it'll work \*pouts\*. Anyway, tell me your thoughts on this chapter? I can't wait to see the comments!**

**PS. I added another picture of Lainie on the character pictures page and changed Henry's photo into two NEW ones!! Go and check them out ;)**

**PPS. I stumbled upon this picture of Jensen Ackles and I just HAD to use this! It would be so typical of Henry to say something like that!**

## Chapter 33: One Last Cry

**A/N: I'm cutting off one chapter so there will be 3 more chapters *including* the epilogue! Anyway, tell me your thoughts on this chapter? Please? \*Puppy dog face\* xoxo**

### One Last Cry

It's not a nice feeling when you realise that no one can pick you up from the airport. It's a lonely, sad feeling and I didn't need any more of that. Throughout the whole plane ride, I had tried to sleep so I could take my mind of Henry's tears but I couldn't, so I had distracted myself by 'ooohing' and 'aahing' at the wonders of first class.

Steve had sneakily managed to give me a first class seat even though I had requested for what a normal person would do and choose economic.

The meals had been delicious and the air stewardess had offered fruits, Belgium chocolate and wine. I sampled everything but the wine. I had also played around with my plush velvet seat. I had turned it into a bed, and while I had been pushing the seat back, the seat nearly smacked the nose of the business man behind me, who had been sitting up straight and working on his laptop.

While I had laid back, my mind had wondered off to Henry. I shouldn't have been surprised. What was he doing? Where was he? Did he hate me? - Those were the through running through my mind at about 200 miles per hour. Ok, that was an exaggeration but you know what I mean.

I headed outside to where the line of cabs were waiting and hopped in the first one. I gave him my address and he drove off.

It took long to arrive home, but once I did, I wanted to throw up. My house still looked the same - it was made of timber, had white paned windows and the Corolla was sitting on the narrow driveway. I paid the cab driver, took my luggage bags out of the trunk and took a deep breath before walking up the narrow driveway to my home. I couldn't wait to move out, but I still didn't have enough money to rent a flat. I had saved up a fair amount from working part-time as a waitress, but I still had a bit to go before I could get a loan off the bank. I knew Steve would happily give me the money, but he was already paying for my college fees so I didn't want to bother him anymore than I already have.

I walked up to the front door and hoped my mother wasn't home. I quickly took out the spare keys from under the 'Welcome' mat and cautiously stepped inside. Dust enveloped my senses. Phew! She wasn't home! I let a smile take over my face but it fell when I came face to face with a burly man.

"Who are you?" he asked as his crossed his muscled arms. "What are you doing in my home? How did you get in here?"

I gulped. Who in the world was he and what on earth was he doing here? "I'm Lainie and this is *my* home!"

"You said your name was Lainie?"

I nodded and before I could demand him to tell me what he was doing in my home, my mother appeared from behind him. She looked exactly the same but there was something different about her and I wasn't sure if it was a good or bad thing. "Lainie? You've come back?"

## Fake Fiancee

My mother squealed and ran forward to knock the breath out of me with a hug. Oh my god. Call 911 everyone! Hazel Campbell was finally hugging her daughter! Seriously, what was going on?!

"I'm sorry I spoke to you like that," the strange man apologised. He was smiling crookedly now and his stance had relaxed. "I thought you were some intruder, but it turns out your Hazel's daughter."

"Oh no, it's fine," I assured. I then turned to the blonde woman who was still clinging onto me and gently pried her hands off me. "Um â mom? Why did he say this was his house?"

I nodded my head to Mr Stranger, who was leaning against the wall chuckling. My mother in return, bit her lip and smiled at me sheepishly. "Well you see Lainie â"

"HOLY CRAP!" I suddenly yelled, making the man and my mom flinch. "What is that ring doing on your finger?!"

A stunning rose gold wedding band with little white diamonds sat on my mother's left hand, and I was sure that she didn't just buy that for fun.

"Weston and I are married honey," mom announced happily, and that was when the world went black and the floor collapsed beneath me.

\* \* \*

"Lainie honey? Are you awake?"

I groaned and my eyes fluttered open to find my mother's and Weston's faces filled with concern. Oh man! What had happened?

"You fainted," Weston answered, as if he was reading my mind. "Do you remember anything?"

I pushed myself up slowly and took in my bedroom. My head spun a little. "How could I forget? You've gotten yourself *married*." I let out an exasperated sigh and turned to look at my mother. "Seriously mom? Are you crazy? I've only been away for two months and you've tied the knot?"

Mom clucked her tongue. "Well, it's not like you went off to have a holiday! You got yourself engaged for goodness sake!"

I'm not sure why, but I wondered what was up with my mom. She wasn't asking me for the juicy details of gorgeous Henry Parker and asking me if she could possibly hook up with him. That's what Hazel Campbell would have done. What happened to her?

"It's over now mom," I said dryly. "That's why I came back."

A sigh came out of mother's mouth. "Weston, do you think you could give Lainie and I some alone time?"

Weston nodded and before he walked out of the door, he kissed my mother's forehead, making me ache for Henry. Stupid married couple. "I'm proud of you Hazel," I heard him murmur. I watched as he walked out of my room and closed the door. What was that about? Why was he proud of my mother? I prayed to God that she didn't rob a bank.

## Fake Fiancee

Once I heard his footsteps descend the staircase, I rounded on my mother. "Why are you marrying him?! You've rushed into this decision clearly. You can't keep your attention on one guy and you *married* him?!"

She pursed her lips while I stared at her, furious. "Is that really what you think of me? You think I'm some sort of promiscuous woman?"

I rolled my eyes. Who wouldn't think that? Oh wait, my *mother*. "Really mom? You bring a different man home every week."

My mom looked down as if she was ashamed of herself. "It was the only way to deal with the pain," she murmured.

"What pain?" I frowned and thought of a possibility. "Don't tell me you have cancer."

She shook her head and wiped a tear away. "No honey. I meant the pain of not having your father around."

Immediately, I froze. Had my mother felt like that?

Ever since my father's funeral five years ago, his name was never mentioned in our household. Mom had gotten rid of the family portraits which had once hung on the walls of the lounge room and had stored them away in the attic. She had also tucked away all of father's belongings there, never to be seen again. It had been as if he had simply faded. Sometimes, I had used to sneak into the attic when mom had been out and look at the old and dusty photos of our once happy family. There had been pictures of me as a baby in my mother's arms in the hospital, pictures of the three of us in the park, eating gelato at the local ice-cream parlour, making funny faces at the camera, me holding his stethoscope and dressed up in my dad's oversized doctor's coat â ;

Mom laughed lightly. "I haven't talked about him much have I?"

I shook my head and waited for her to continue. Where was this going?

"Teddy Watson is the most charming man I have ever met. He's highly intelligent, has a good sense of humour and is actually a bit of a flirt."

My eyes widened. My father was a *flirt*? Did that mean he was like Rafferty? "What do you mean?" I asked, bewildered and scared.

"Oh no, he didn't flirt with others. Just me. I remember the first time I met him; he used a pick up line on me." My mother laughed as she reminisced.

I hesitantly asked, "How did it go?"

"Did you just fart? Because you blew me away."

My father had said that?! Holy moly! I burst out laughing and so did mom. I never knew he had this side to him. I bet he was chuckling to himself right now in Heaven as he watched both of us talking properly *after years*.

"Yes well, what I wanted to say was that he treated me like a queen, and Weston does too-"

I rolled my eyes at her statement. "That doesn't mean you should marry him."

## Fake Fiancee

"Wait! You haven't heard the whole thing yet!" She took a deep breath before continuing. "I really love Weston. He was actually my friend before you left to visit Steve and he stuck by me even after I told him everything. I'm really lucky to have him Lainie. He's the one who encouraged me to change and he helped me throughout the whole process."

"Process?"

Mom nodded. "He went with me to go and see a therapist and he helped me find a job as a photojournalist. I work for the local paper and write my own column!"

My eyes bulged out of their sockets. "You're a photojournalist?!"

"I have a degree in photojournalism!" She looked shocked that I didn't know. How would I anyway? "I really hope you didn't think that I didn't attend college!"

I shrugged. It was surprising news but it made sense. I knew my mother had gone to college, but I had never been bothered to ask what she had decided to major in.

"I think you've got your artistic side from me," my mother mused. She then turned to me. "You want to be an architect don't you?"

She had never paid attention to me. How in the world did she know that then? I sat there dumfounded as mom laughed gently.

"Anyway, I should get to the point. Weston really, really, *really* wants you to accept him but he knows it'll take some time and he's prepared to wait." I had the feeling that Weston wasn't the only one who wanted me to accept him into the family. I knew that no one could ever replace my father but I guess I could get along with him as a friend. "I'm really sorry for neglecting you Lainie. I still see you as my baby girl." I took in a sharp breath. Mom had used to call me baby girl all the time but ever since my father passed away, she had stopped and resorted to my given name. "I know you're stubborn like your father so I'm not going to ask for forgiveness right now. Maybe you can forgive me sometime but for now, I just hope that we can get along and re-build our relationship?"

I wanted to snap, '*we never had a relationship to begin with,*' but then I realised we had. We used to get along so well.

There was a part of me which wanted to reject her offer because I was still bitter about the past few years, but the more mature side of me told me that saying 'yes' was the reasonable thing to do.

"Alright but if you go back to what you were before, I'll move out of here and never see you again," I warned.

My mother squealed and wrapped her arms around my shoulders. I patted her arm gently, feeling a bit awkward. "Thank you Lainie! I promise I'll be a better mother and make it up to you!"

I smiled weakly and really hoped she stuck to her promise. I've always wanted my mother back secretly. We talked a bit more until she announced that she needed to cook a 'welcome home' dinner for me. I was shocked that she was cooking again, but I guess that was a part of her big change.

I was left to unpack my things, but I only unpacked some because my mother had told me that they've bought a lovely new house in the neighbouring town and we were moving in probably next week or the one after. As

## Fake Fiancee

I opened the flap to one of my bags, the Nokia N97 fell out and I groaned. I had forgotten to give that back to Henry.

There were a few missed calls for April and the rest were texts. I hesitantly started to read through them.

***Steve: I'm sorry Lainie, but it's better this way.***

***Keith: Life's boring here without you loser! :P***

***April: Mom told me everything. I'm so sorry! Call me!!! XOXO***

***Clara: How are you? Did you get settled in well at home? We all miss you!***

The last text was scary though. Somehow, Natasha had gotten a hold of my number. I was going to delete it by instinct, but curiosity got the better of me. I pressed her text to open it.

***Lainie, I'm so sorry. You don't have to forgive me fully but I hope you're not completely angry at me.***

I let out a tired sigh, I couldn't forgive for what she had done, but I couldn't stay mad at her forever, so I just typed: ***I'm not mad anymore but I haven't forgiven you.***

Although I was telling her that, if I ever see her in the future, I wouldn't probably talk to her much. Maybe say a simple, 'hello' and walk away, and I think the text managed to convey that message. It was kind of the same with my mom. I wasn't angry and bitter with her but I haven't forgiven her for her mistakes.

My cell started to vibrate, which broke me out of my thoughts. I picked up because the name 'April' was flashing across the screen.

"Lainie! Oh gosh, how are you doing?!" Her voice was frantic as if she'd been worrying all day. Knowing her, she probably had.

"I'm alright."

"I'm so sad. You guys are really perfect for each other but I really understand your point of view. Hollywood isn't as glamorous as it seems."

As I fell back onto the bed, I sighed. "I miss him."

"Want to talk about it?" she offered gently.

And so I did. I poured my heart out to April. I told her about how I had hated his arrogance and how we bonded over his father's abuse. We smiled and gushed over how we had confessed our feelings and our first date, and then I started to tear up as I told her what I missed most about him - his thoughtfulness and support, that charming smile of his, those soft dark locks, his smooth tan skin and most importantly, those eyes which could be so intense so second and so playful and light the next.

Oh how I missed them. How I *loved* them.

April tried her hardest to reassure me that everything will be ok, but it was just so hard to think positively. After I got off the phone, all our memories together flooded my mind and I swear for a second that I could feel his arms wrapped around me, his alluring voice whispering that he loved me in my ear.

## Fake Fiancee

Never in my life did I think I would ever shed tears for a guy, but I guess Henry wasn't just any *guy*. I saw myself as a strong person, so crying for anyone or anything wasn't acceptable, but I couldn't stop the bitter tears escaping. He was really my biggest weakness. My heart ached. My heart hurt.

Everything hurt.

The more time passed, the more soaked my poor pillow became. I mentally promised myself that this would be the only and last time that I would ever cry over Henry. It wasn't because he wasn't important enough, but I was strong. I couldn't let this bring me down. I couldn't regret my decision to leave because I had done the right thing for me.

My once quiet tears turned into heart-wrenching ugly sobs as I thought of the most beautiful thing which had ever happened in my life - meeting Henry Parker. He was a total jerk, my best friend, as well as my ex-lover. But more importantly, he was my first love.

**Hazel's ring. I loved the look of it so I HAD to show it off :P**



## Chapter 34: 2 weeks later ...

*2 weeks later* :

Royal blue or gingham yellow? A frown made its way onto my face as I surveyed the two pieces of curtain fabric in my hand. I had the feeling she would like the yellow one better so I climbed onto a stool and hung it up to decorate the rest of Weston and mom's room. They had allowed me to have free reign of decorating the new house because they trusted in my interior designing abilities. Not only that, but I suspected they were pretty bad at that sort of thing, especially since they practically beamed with relief and exclaimed, "Go for it!" when I asked if I could help decorate the place.

"Careful there, Lainie." I turned my head to see who the intruder was. "You might fall."

"I'm fine."

"Well make sure Hazel doesn't blame me if you end up in hospital," he joked.

I laughed. Weston is actually a really great person. The first few days after I had arrived home, I had been quiet around him, but I ended up loosening up after we bonded over singing along to 'Uptown Girl' by Billy Joel in an offbeat tone in the car. He liked to make jokes and was friendly, but was also protective of his loved ones. I was extra thankful for him, because he was the main reason in which my mother pushed herself to be a better person, and he also could keep her in check.

For example, the other day when we had been moving boxes from our old house into our current one, she had been complaining that the porcelain china set boxes were too heavy. I had rolled my eyes because they weren't that heavy; you just needed to use a bit more strength than usual.

Weston had voiced what I had been thinking but in a nicer way - "Hazel, your *daughter* is carrying more than you!"

I had sighed and waited for her complaints, but instead, she just laughed with him, gripped the cardboard box tighter and made her way into our new kitchen to unpack them and put it into the cupboard. I had been struck speechless and never questioned Weston's existence in our home again.

After I got off the stool, he spoke up again. "Your mother and I finished cooking dinner now."

I nodded. "Ok. I'll be right down!"

A huge part of me was relieved that I didn't have to cook meals as much as before. Weston, mom and I had a routine in the kitchen now. I had volunteered to make dinner, but Weston had given me the job of making lunch. I had realised that on weekdays, they were usually away because they were working, so I only needed to cook for myself. He was a smart guy wasn't he?

When I reached downstairs, I gasped. They had gone to more trouble than usual and cooked heaps of food - pieces of steak, along with baked potatoes, gravy and pumpkin purée, garlic prawns and gnocchi.

"What's this all about?" I stood there with my jaw dropped, looking very much like an idiot.

"For making it into Yale, of course!" Mom beamed as she ushered me to sit down. "We were going to go out for Chinese but the restaurant was all booked," she added sheepishly.

## Fake Fiancee

*Yale.*

Just the sound of the word made me shiver in excitement. I could not *wait* to start college, because for me, attending an Ivy League had been my life-long dream. Hopefully, I could do a master degree in architecture in Harvard someday and study in the very same place where my father had.

It had only been yesterday when I had received a few other quite impressive acceptances, but I ended up narrowing it down to Princeton versus Yale. Let me tell you something: that had been one of my hardest decisions in my entire life. I had been stuck in the same room with mom and Weston weighing the pros and cons of each college. It had driven me up the wall and I had exploded and told them all to 'shut up'. I had immediately felt guilty, but they had just merely chuckled and decided to leave me be. Since they've been close friends for a few years, Weston and mom are like partners in crime. Anyway, about half an hour of researching the two colleges online, I had finally made my decision: Yale.

My living arrangements had been all sorted after that - I was going to be sleeping in the dorms until I found a flat nearby. Although I was going to make friends, I didn't really want to live in the dorms. I'd rather live on my own.

I had told Steve the news and told him to pass it on to everyone else. My heart had tightened when I said that, because one obvious person who would catch wind of the news would be Henry.

"This is all too much though," I protested weakly, referring to the extravagant meal sitting in front of me.

"Not it's not!" Weston waved away my worry as if it were a mere fly. "We've made chocolate pudding for dessert too!"

"We should have gone for the coffee cake," mom said with a sigh.

Weston turned to look at her, disbelieving. I think he had a thing for chocolate. "What? Why?!"

Mom rolled her eyes at him as if he was stupid. "You *know* chocolate is fattening and I prefer to keep my figure."

"Oh Hazel, you'd never get ugly!"

I watched as her cheeks heated up and Weston grinned, as if he was proud that he could have that effect on her. Personally, I found this scene unfolding before me totally weird, but at the same time, I thought it was a definite 'aw' moment.

For the rest of dinner, we talked about random topics and laughed at ridiculous stories Weston had read about in the newspaper, and while Weston and I washed the dishes, mom headed off to the attic to find a photo album of their wedding.

Honestly, I was scared to see them, because I was so used to the image of my father and mother together. I still remember around my tenth birthday, they had gone through their wedding album with me and I had thought that they were the most beautiful couple in the world, and that they would be together forever. I guess I was a bit naïve back then.

Once we finished the dishes, mom came into the room with a gold album in her hands. I forced myself to smile so they wouldn't know how uncomfortable I was.

## Fake Fiancee

"We didn't have a big wedding," mom explained as she placed the album carefully on the kitchen island. "We got married in the local chapel and then had a reception in Weston's parent's backyard."

I was quite surprised to know that my mother (who liked glamorous), had opted for a quiet and modest wedding. Maybe this was more proof that she was changing back to her normal state.

"Only family and a few friends were invited to celebrate," Weston added.

My body suddenly tinged with anger and hurt. Family? I was family, wasn't I? I was the bride's *daughter* and Steve was her younger brother!

"Really?" I questioned, looking directly at my mom. "What about me? What about uncle Steve?"

"I *did* invite both of you!" Mom claimed. "But Steve said that you both couldn't make it because you were both busy!"

I blinked in surprise. Steve had told her that we were busy? I guess we had been - visiting Arianne in Newport, Henry had a new film project but that still doesn't mean that Steve should have said that. I was beginning to think that there were two sides to my uncle. I loved him and I know he loved me too, but he sure could be a bit selfish.

The tension was gone after that, and mom started to comment on the various photographs in the album. I was actually surprised to find that Weston and mom made a good-looking couple. Although I wasn't used to it, they complimented each other. With the bride looking like a Grecian goddess in that chiffon white gown which flowed down her body like a waterfall and the groom looking quite preppy in his light grey suit and baby pink bow tie, you could clearly see that opposites attract.

Mom and Weston was recounting the story of how Weston's great-aunt Gertrude had been majorly drunk and ended up knocking into the tiered stand of apple and cinnamon cupcakes, when suddenly, the phone rang.

"I'll get it," Hazel my new stepfather exclaimed at the same time. It turned out that my mom beat him to the phone, and after a few seconds, she came back into the room holding the phone with her hand covered over the speaker.

"Lainie, it's for you!" she half-yelled, half-whispered.

I frowned. Who would be calling me? Nobody I knew except Steve knew our home phone number, and mom would have mentioned that it was him if he had called. I pushed myself out of my seat and walked over to take the phone out of mom's hand. As I headed towards the stool in the kitchen, I pressed my ear to the phone. "Hello? Who's this?"

"Lainie? This is Mr Ramsey."

A shock went through me. Mr Ramsey had been my graphics design teacher for senior year and we had gotten along really well. I had shown him some of my sketches and he had been very impressed. I was proud to say that I had been one of his favourite pupils.

"Oh, hello! What can I help you with?"

There was a pause from the other end of the line. "Well Lainie, I have news."

## Fake Fiancee

"News?" I gulped. I prayed that it was good news. "What type?"

"The type of news where I've scored you a job with a semi-famous architect as his intern â!" he sang proudly. "What do you say? It's really good for experience, Lainie. He's expecting you next Monday."

My eyes widened. I was speechless, totally dumfounded, but I finally managed to squeak out the single word, 'yes'.

"Great! I'll fax you the details tomorrow!" Mr Ramsey then hung up, leaving me standing there in shock. Could things get any better than this?!

## Chapter 35: The Start Of Something New

**A/N: Just remember that this isn't exactly the last chapter! There's an epilogue which comes after this ;) Also, some of you have asked if I will be writing another novel. The answer? Yes I will. It won't be the spin-off story to this novel (because I'm still not sure about the whole plot yet), but I hope you'll still support my writing after FF! I do hope you'll enjoy this chapter! xoxo**

### The Start of Something New

A grumble escaped from my lips as I sifted through my closet. It was seven o' clock, on a dull Monday morning and I *really* needed to find something to wear for my first day on the job. I wanted to impress (obviously), but I wasn't going to overdo it. That was a definite no-no.

In the end, I picked out a baby blue sleeveless blouse with little white pearls as buttons and light grey tailored pants. My hair was unruly, so I quickly fishtail braided it and let it sit on my right shoulder. My overall appearance looked pretty good to me but I wasn't sure if it was perfect, because maybe my perspective on myself was messed up.

The door of the bathroom slightly creaked and my head snapped up. Mom was leaning against the doorframe and studying me with a slight smile on her face. "Excited?" she asked.

I bit my lip and did a twirl. "Does this look good?"

She came forward and smoothed down my hair. "Of course it does," she answered. "Just perfect. It's good that you didn't choose a skirt, or a dress. That would overdo it a bit."

"Good." I nodded and smiled with relief at her answer. "I should be eating breakfast now."

"Alright baby girl, but I haven't cooked anything so you'll have to make do with something else like jam and toast."

Mom locked the door so she could have a morning shower after I walked out. When I reached downstairs, I scurried the kitchen cupboards for cereal. As I poured some Crunchy Nut into a bowl, I felt an odd sense of déjà vu. The memory of pranking Henry by freezing his cereal bowl came back to me and I felt myself smile. My knees became weak and I felt like I was dreaming.

How had it all turned into this situation, where I wasn't waking up to Henry's gorgeous face every morning? I already knew the answer of course. It was because of me. Henry and I had no chance of being together because of my selfishness.

*Ugh.* I shook my head as sat down at the dining table. *Why was I thinking about him?*

"Lainie, you better hurry." I looked up and saw Weston heading into the kitchen to make breakfast. "Time's running out."

I looked up at the clock hanging on the wall and nearly spat out the milk and cereal in my mouth. Damn!

"I'm leaving now Weston!" I called, as I grabbed my bag and rushed out the door. The Corolla mom and I used to share was now officially mine because she had bought a new car, so I hopped in and backed slowly out of the driveway.

## Fake Fiancee

It took about half an hour to reach the office building and when I did, my heart was pounding so loud that I wouldn't have been surprised if the passer-by's could hear. I couldn't *believe* I was actually going to be working with a real architect. I would have so much more experience and insight into being an architect.

The instructions Mr Ramsey had left me said that my boss's office was on the fourth floor, so I headed over to the lift. A '*ding*' noise notified me that I had reached the right floor and I hesitantly stepped out. I was standing in a small waiting room, where faded green chairs lined the opposite wall and by the fish tank, a receptionist sat on a spinning chair, looking through some papers. She looked up when I walked up to her and offered me a generous smile.

"Good morning. How may I help you today?"

I gripped the strap of my tote bag tighter and bit my lip. "I'm here to see Mr Benally?"

The receptionist glanced at her computer and raised an eyebrow. "You're Mrs Franks?"

"Excuse me?"

The receptionist continued on kindly. "Well Mrs Franks, your meeting with Mr Benally isn't going to be for another two hours so I suggest you should go out and enjoy the sunshine and then come back."

I frowned because I realised that she must have mistaken me for a client. "I'm here because I'm Mr Benally's new intern or assistant? Whatever you call it?"

Something clicked in the receptionist's mind. "Oh! Welcome! I'll show you his office."

Once she got up, I followed her down a narrow hallway which led to my new boss's office. Oh man! What if he didn't like me? What if he was some grouchy old person who'd get annoyed with me easily? Or what if he was a stuck-up person?!

"Good luck," the receptionist told me. As encouragement, she pushed me gently forward and nodded. I took a deep breath and knocked gently on the door. I didn't hear anything, but finally, a voice spoke.

"Come in!"

I twisted the doorknob and stepped into a warm, generous sized office. Honestly, I had expected the place to be a little 'run-down' but it was quite comfortable. The walls were painted an Alice blue colour, the room was carpeted and sitting behind a large maple desk was Mr Benally himself. By the twinkle in his eyes and the slight greying of his hair, my new boss seemed like a wise person, and judging by how he slightly rocked back in his black leather office chair, he seemed oddly relaxed.

"You must be Lainie Watson," he immediately said as he got up from his chair to shake my hand.

I nodded. "It's a pleasure to meet you, Mr Benally."

My boss gestured to one of the chairs sitting across from his table, telling me to sit down. "No need for formalities! Please, just call me Mike." He was allowing me to call him Mike? I must be doing well then! "Well, there's another hour until I meet my first client for the day, so in the meantime, I'll tell you about the life of an architect!"

## Fake Fiancee

Mike then launched into a description about his usual day at the office. He usually met with about two or three clients a day and how the meetings would run. He also liked to find new commissions or contracts and visit construction sites. At the moment, his biggest project was designing a new art gallery which was opening around Pennsylvania. After that, I looked through a few thick folders and pictures on the computer of his designs and I was quite awed. He liked to incorporate features from the Renaissance to design modern buildings with pops of colours. It was pretty interesting.

Mike also let me play around on a program that he had, where you could make your designs come to real life by making it 3D. It was pretty cool, but I realised I had *a lot* to learn before I became a real architect.

"That looks good Lainie," my boss commented when he came back in from talking to the receptionist I had met earlier. "You have a talent for designing, that's for sure."

I waved off his compliment awkwardly. "It's just a hobby â"

Surprise filled Mike's square face. "A hobby? And you can design a kitchen like *that*? Do you draw a lot?"

"Um yeah. I have a sketchbook." I blushed.

"Really? Do you think I can see it one day?"

I looked up at him to find that he was quite excited. Did he really think I was talented? "I have it in my bag right now if you want to see it?"

"Of course!"

I gave him a small smile and went to retrieve my smooth navy sketchbook from my tote. He eyed it with curiosity and opened up to the first page. I sat there for about ten minutes as he flicked through the book. Sometimes he would nod, as if he was impressed, and sometimes he would stop on a particular drawing and stare at it. All the while, I fidgeted with my fingers. What was he thinking? Did he like it? My question was answered as he looked up and beamed.

"Look Lainie, I'm going to a convention next Saturday to showcase some of my designs for that art gallery I'm working for." He paused and I held in my breath. Where was this going exactly? "I was wondering â do you think you would allow me to showcase some of your designs? This could really build up to a future, Lainie. I'd really love to help you out."

Holy moly. Did he just say that he would like to showcase my designs at a convention? Wow. I couldn't believe I was getting all these great opportunities and all before college too! Was this luck? Or is this all of God's plan?

"Not only are you smart, but you have a knack for the art of architecture. So what do you say?"

Of course, I said yes.

It was three o' clock when I was allowed to head home, but as my Corolla roared to life; I made a spontaneous decision to drive to the ice-cream parlour across town. Today had been a good day, so I was in the mood to celebrate.

After arriving at my destination and parking my car by the curb, I headed inside the parlour and smiled. It was exactly how I remembered it - the sea blue tiled floors, the ice-cream wallpaper, the small round tables with

## Fake Fiancee

yellow tablecloths and matching coloured chairs, and that large juke box in the corner of the room playing a jazz song.

I walked up to the counter and the girl serving already knew my usual order so I didn't really need to say anything except 'hi'. It was a long five minute wait for my order, but once the plate was placed on my table, a huge grin replaced my pout.

Chopped bananas and strawberries adorned my chocolate gelato ice cream and vanilla custard was drizzled lightly on top. I licked my lips and dug into what would be a beautiful dish.

My thoughts suddenly drifted to my father. He and my mother used to bring me here all the time and I couldn't help but feel a tiny bit guilty. I should have invited mom to come along, but then Weston would join us and I wasn't sure if that was the right thing to do. Bringing my new stepfather here, to place where I had spent a lot of time with my *real* parents, seemed like betrayal to dad. I'm sure he wouldn't mind because he had a good heart, but I was still coming to terms that I had a new father figure in my life.

Just yesterday, when we had attended a barbecue that Weston's parents had thrown, his distant cousin had asked, "and who is this lovely young lady?" I had nearly snorted at the use of the word 'lovely' but Weston had slung an arm around me and replied (enthusiastically I might add), "Lainie here is my new daughter!"

Daughter? I cringed in my seat as that word replayed over and over in my head. I had wanted to scream out that I was only the daughter of Teddy and Hazel Watson. Sure, I also thought Steve and Arianne as parental figures, but Weston? It was all too new and weird for me.

When I finally realised that I was thinking too much, I shook my head to get rid of the conflicting thoughts and concentrated on scooping up some ice cream and strawberries. Two figures caught my eye and I internally groaned at the annoying voice of someone who I didn't really want to meet at the moment. Or ever.

She looked me up and down with disgust as she made her way over to my table. High school had ended and she still hadn't changed. I guessed that wasn't a surprise.

Blonde haired, supermodel-like Michelle hadn't been the most popular girl in school, but close. She had always come second best compared to the petite brunette beside her. Aubrey was probably more admired than her because she wasn't the cliché 'ice queen' who didn't care for anyone but herself.

"Loco-Lainie," Michelle sung in a smug tone.

I raised any eyebrow as she advanced forward like a prowling cat. "What the hell is that?"

Barbie girl clucked her tongue. "Everyone knows, Lainie. Henry Parker has *got* to be loco if he proposed to *you* out of all people." Oh great, another Henry Parker girl fan. The last time I had met one, I had been egged. "We all know you played whore to become Henry's fiancée. You disgust me. You disgust everyone in fact and that's why you came running back here."

How dare her! She didn't know how much Henry and I had hated each other when we first met. She didn't know that I was the type of girl who didn't just throw herself at a wanted person like Henry. She didn't know that we truly fell in love. She didn't know that my so-called best friend had betrayed me. She didn't know the heartache both of us went through. She didn't know *anything*!

All I saw was red.

## Fake Fiancee

"It's a good thing that he's finally moved on from you," she scoffed.

And just like that, my fury stopped. My hand (which had been itching to slap her) dropped. I didn't dare believe what I had just heard. "What did you just say?"

Aubrey gave me a pitying look which I didn't want, so I forced my eyes to meet her cruel best friend. "You weren't good enough for him Lainie. Face it. A girl like you doesn't belong with *Henry Parker*."

She was crushing my confident facade slowly and I hated it. The cracks were appearing because what she said was true. Henry *was* too good for me. I didn't deserve him, after hurting him the way I did. He had done so many romantic things for me and what I had done for him?

Nothing.

And that was what I was. Nothing. A nobody.

I pushed myself away from the table and was about to run out of the parlour when Michelle added, "You might want to see this."

A glossy magazine was flashed in front of my face and I fought the urge to vomit. On the front cover of '*Famous*', was a picture of Henry and a familiar blonde sitting on the sand at the beach. '*Does Henry Parker Heart Natasha?!*' read the caption.

Oh god. Had she really sunk her claws into Henry? Was he really falling for her charm? Had he serenaded her on the beach too?!

I nearly smacked my head. I should have told him about Natasha and Mr Parker's plan! I was officially the biggest idiot in the world. Although I would still be hurt, I would allow Henry to date any girl, but not *Natasha*!

I couldn't believe this was happening. I had been replaced too, in such a short amount of time. Had I really meant nothing to him? Did he really forget about me? I felt dizzy with all the questions running through my mind.

Ignoring Michelle's cackling laughter and how Aubrey quietly reprimanded her; I stumbled my way out of the ice-cream parlour and quickly got into my car. I gripped the steering wheel and did what I had seen countless times in the movies - I banged my head on it repeatedly, telling myself that I was the worst person in the whole world. I didn't care whether I reduced my brain size or if I ended up with a bruise.

I felt the urge to protect Henry from Natasha and I felt the urge to cry. Something then dawned on me. What if they genuinely liked each other? Shouldn't I be happy for them?

Due to the tears, I half-blindly made my way home. I honestly had no idea how I didn't end up in an accident - the crying really wouldn't stop.

Once I reached my driveway, I leaned sideways to pluck a few Kleenex tissues from my bag (which was sitting on the passenger seat) and blew my nose. Ugh. I was getting all wound up over Henry again, and hadn't I promised to myself that I would never cry for him again? What was this? I should be walking on sunshine, not mourning for what I had lost!

## Fake Fiancee

I attempted to smile, but it didn't work and I ended up sniffing into my tissue again. When I looked up into the mirror, I groaned. My nose was pink, my cheeks were flushed slightly and my eyes were red and puffy. I looked horrible, so I tried to at least make myself decent. If mom or Weston was home already, they'd definitely ask me what was wrong.

I straightened out my hair and used one of my facial wipes to refresh my face. My eyes were still a little puffy and angry-looking, but I decided it was the best I could do.

After grabbing my bag, I hopped out of the car and made my way towards the front porch. As I bounced onto the first step, I looked up and a gasp escaped from my lips. My heart was pounding and I felt alive again, as I stared at the person who had caused my misery just a few minutes ago.

*No, it's a dream!* I screamed at myself. *Wake up!*

I pinched myself in the arm numerous times but it didn't work. He didn't still go away. He was still there, standing by my front door looking glorious in a simple black shirt and nice fitting jeans. I realised that he was also holding something silver in his hand.

The locket.

My throat was dry as I whispered the name which I had been avoiding for the past few weeks. "Henry?" I didn't dare move in case my legs failed me, but Henry on the hand, walked towards me with self-assurance. "W-What are you doing here?"

His eyes twinkled with amusement as he watched me get all flustered. "You want to know reason?"

I nodded and didn't say anything because I didn't trust myself to speak. How was he really here in front of me? I felt faint.

"I don't give a damn about Hollywood, but I do give a damn about you," he murmured, before pulling me into his arms for what would be a long-lasting kiss.

## Chapter 36: Epilogue

### EPILOGUE

When I saw the clock strike six o' clock, my heart rate increased dramatically. How had time flown by so fast?! My head itched to turn but I knew if I moved, I'd get in trouble.

"April!" I complained as she continued to blow dry my hair carefully. "I won't have enough time to get dressed if you keep this up!"

I heard her sigh. "Well it's your fault! You didn't ask for an early leave!"

"I'm not going to ask for an early leave just because it's me and my boyfriend's fifth year anniversary," I replied with a roll of my eyes. Although my boss would probably let me go (she was a romantic type of person), I didn't want to do that. It felt weird asking for an early leave for something like that and also, I wanted to get my work done.

It wasn't easy trying to meet deadlines. After my designs had been showcased by Mike, (I was forever grateful) a TV show producer had offered me a very good job, but I had thought that the workload would be too much while I was in college, so she decided to give the job to someone else as a contract. She had told me that she would give the job to me after I graduated from college.

The TV show was about renovating run-down houses, where the owners had a really heart-touching story. For example, last year, we had renovated a house that belonged to a woman with cancer and her four kids. That had been one of my favourite projects to do.

Also, I still couldn't believe that this day, five years ago, Henry had been waiting for me on my doorstep to claim me as his again. After our kiss on the front porch, he had helped me clasp the locket back onto my neck and I suggested for him to come inside. Weston and mom hadn't been home so yes, we had taken advantage of that and ended up exploring each other's lips on the couch. Nothing more than that though.

While we cuddled, I had asked why it had taken him about three weeks to come after me. "I'm sorry about that. After a few days of uhh â moping around, I realised that I wanted that life you were talking about - where you could just live peacefully with your friends and family around you." A small smile had appeared on his face. "So I was going to come to you, but there were a few more scenes to shoot and I decided to stay to finish the whole movie off. It was like â I was saying goodbye to my career."

I had been so incredibly guilty that I ended up telling him that if he wanted to act then I shouldn't be holding him back, but he told me that he had grown out of his Hollywood acting career. Keith had also commented that Henry already had enough money to last a lifetime anyway.

Speaking of Keith, Henry and I met up with him whenever he had time, because he was quite busy now, making a name for himself in Hollywood. I was so happy for him and really appreciated it when he'd deny statements such as '*Everyone suspects you know what's happened to Henry Parker!*' from the media. Basically to Hollywood, he's just disappeared off the face of the earth.

It was quite funny actually. Sometimes there would be people in town who would recognise him, but our small neighbourhood was made up of such lovely people that they wouldn't dare dream of ruining our happiness and pass the information onto the media.

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It also turned out that the photos of him and Natasha at the beach wasn't a date, but just a talk. Natasha had confessed all about how she had teamed up with Mr Parker and tried to destroy our relationship. Henry had been furious, but he had told me, "I couldn't shout at her. She was crying and I didn't know what to do, so I just walked away."

I guess it wasn't a surprise - she *had* burst into tears when I had found out too. Maybe she had been really regretful of her foolish actions â

But why was I supposed to care? I didn't want to meet her again, because I didn't want any more huge dramas in my life â or anymore pain.

I had been so happy that Henry and Natasha hadn't gotten together. I hadn't said it aloud, but it *was* kind of obvious by the way I had been smiling goofily at Henry.

"Well you should have," April said, making me blink and force my thoughts away. "By the way, where do you think Henry's taking you?"

As soon as she asked that question, my heart fluttered. I had no idea really. The guy was full of surprises and they always had a meaning to it, which was the thing I liked best. Maybe he would take me to enjoy a ride on an air balloon? *Nah*. I mentally dismissed that idea because that was definitely too much.

"I'm not sure actually, but I know we'll be having dinner."

April giggled. "Of course you will! Henry would *never* leave you starved!"

"Trust me, I'd kill him if he did," I joked.

After another minute or so, April declared that she was finished, so I looked into the gleaming bathroom mirror and grinned. My hair looked perfectly effortless, my eyes were bright from excitement and my lips were glossy and plump.

April then left the room so I could into the dress that I had picked for tonight. It was a dark navy colour made of chiffon and had a simple A-line skirt, which swished around when I twirled. The neckline came to a V point on my chest and on the base of my throat sat Henry's locket, which I rarely took off. I slipped into a pair of black wedged pumps and headed downstairs quickly, to find April drinking a cup of juice in the kitchen. She looked guilty as I spotted her and quickly blurted, "I'm going, I'm going, I swear!"

I laughed. Did she think I expected her to be out of the house by the time I came downstairs? "I'm not angry," I assured her.

She then gave me a wink and came to hug me. "I hope you'll enjoy the surprise Henry has for you."

I frowned. Why did she wink? Unless â "You know what Henry's planning!"

April gave me a mischievous grin as backed towards the front door. "Yes, but I'm not telling you!"

I rolled my eyes and decided to leave it alone. As we both waved to each other before she hopped into her car, Henry's McLaren smoothly pulled into driveway. I decided to shut the door for fun and waited impatiently for him to knock. After a few seconds, he did, and I laughed loudly. It felt so weird because this house belonged to both Henry and I. So really, he was knocking on his own door!

## Fake Fiancee

"I can hear you laughing, you pancake!" Henry scolded playfully. "Now open up!"

I shook my head and grinned wickedly, even though he couldn't see it. "Now that's no way to treat your girlfriend!"

There was a pause from the other side. "Just open the door before I smash it!"

"Alright superman," I muttered as I walked over to unlock the door.

When I came face-to-face with my boyfriend, I was blown away as always. Why was I so lucky? I was just Lainie and here Henry was, looking all Greek God like. Then there was his personality: he still enjoyed teasing me, but I was his number one priority and if anyone gave me a hard time, he'd struggle to remain calm. He was the best boyfriend ever - charming, righteous, sweet & ;

"Now that you've opened the door & ; get in the car," he playfully ordered.

So much for 'sweet'. I poked my tongue as I walked past him and slid into the passenger seat. Although I was pretending to be mad at him, I couldn't wait to see what he had in store for me tonight.

\* \* \*

The car suddenly turned away from the motorway and into the neighbourhood nearby, where the winding roads led up and down hills full of lovely houses. I looked out of the window and watched as the sun was slowly setting. Where were we going?

Henry then parked the car by a children's playground, making me turn to him with a baffled expression.

"Are we going on the swings?" I asked.

A smirk appeared on his face. "Maybe another day, but for now & ;" I watched curiously as he leaned over and fished out something from the glove compartment. "You're going to have to wear this."

My eyes widened at the small dark cloth in his hand. A blindfold? I looked at him, completely horrified, while he sat there grinning at my reaction. Then, he slid out of the driver's seat and jogged over to my side to open the door.

"What do you think you're doing?" I growled as he pulled open the passenger door.

He chuckled. "Tsk tsk pancake, don't go around growling like that at your boyfriend."

"And why the hell not?!"

Our eyes met and the way his eyes darkened me made shiver slightly. "It kind of turns me on."

I gawked at him.

"Now don't give me a hard time," Henry muttered as he gently covered my eyes with the blindfold and tied it. I was still thinking about that comment he had made earlier. Who the heck just says something like that and brushes it off by another statement?!

## Fake Fiancee

Here I was shocked over his comment, while Henry was slowly guiding me out of the car and promising that he wouldn't let me fall.

"Good." I snorted. "If you do, this relationship is over, peanut."

"Ouch." I could imagine Henry having that little amused smile on his face as he said that, and that fake offended look. Being robbed of my sight bothered me. I wanted to see my surroundings, not completely lean on Henry. My hand then found his and I could feel the rope of the handmade bracelet I had made for him about nine years ago. That calmed me down a bit. "That *really* hurt my ego."

I laughed as he pulled me aside while we walked. I had probably nearly walked into a pole or something. "Your ego *needs* to be hurt sometimes."

"Oh yeah?" he questioned in a tone I didn't like. I could imagine him grinning wickedly and I desperately wanted to know what he was planning to say or do. Then in a louder voice, he added, "replaying your moans in my head makes me feel better about myself."

My jaw dropped. Moan?! Why in the world did he decide to say that?! I had only done that a few times, and that was when Henry intensely devoured my lips or started to kiss his way down my throat. He made it sound as if we had done more than just that! In the next second, I figured out why.

"Teenagers," what sounded like an old woman scoffed as she passed by. "All they care about is doing the nasty!"

Blood rushed all the way to my cheeks as Henry roared with laughter. So *that* was why he decided to say that! Now we looked like some hormonal not-so-innocent couple! I also couldn't believe that she had called us teenagers. Did we really look that young? I was twenty five and in a few months, Henry would be turning twenty-seven. It was all so weird, because he still looked the same and he acted like his twenty-one year old self. Nothing had changed.

Take just then for example. About a month after being together, he reverted back to his jack-ass self, the same guy who liked to make little innuendos just to piss me off when I had just arrived in LA. To be honest, under the angry exterior, I was mentally laughing. I liked all the sides of Henry, because it's what made him, *him*.

"You should have been the woman's face!" Henry exclaimed as we stopped on the footpath. "She was giving us the dirty look!"

I whacked him in the arm. "You know, you can be a real jerk sometimes."

I was suddenly pulled into his embrace and I felt his breath fanning my face. "Yeah, but that's why you love me."

Going on my tip-toes, I leaned forward and pecked his lips. "I know."

He chuckled and then cleared his throat. "Ok, so are you ready to take this blindfold off?"

"Hell yeah!"

I quickly ripped the piece of cloth off my eyes and gasped at what was in front of me. A very familiar looking cottage sat in front of me. It was absolutely lovely. The lights inside were on, giving the light grey house a gleaming affect in the twilight. Beautifully trimmed green hedges and small gardens complimented the house

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and on the porch sat a few large pot plants and wooden chairs.

"You weren't supposed to take it off," Henry complained. "I was supposed to do that!"

I ignored his comment and threw my arms around him. "Thank you for bringing me here Henry."

I felt him smile and kiss the top of my head. "You're welcome."

"Whose house is it?" Whoever lived there were lucky, but I couldn't help but think that I had seen it before. Where though?

"I believe this house belongs to Henry Parker and Lainie Watson," Henry replied carefully as he watched my face.

My eyes bugged out of my head. This was our house? This cottage was *ours*?! As in we owned it? Did he mean that I could waltz through this beautiful cottage every day, cook in it, and sleep in it? I knew Henry liked surprises, but I would never *dream* that he would go this far!

"I actually found this design in your sketchbook and I photocopied it, so it could be built," Henry admitted, as he slung an arm around me and admired the cottage. "It took pretty long. They started building last year."

My face broke into a wide grin as I studied the man next to me. How did I ever get so lucky? "I love you so much."

His mouth twitched as I said those words. "I love you too."

We then walked inside and immediately, I was greeted with a large plasma screen on the far wall. I laughed. That was definitely Henry's doing. There wasn't a lot of furniture yet, but on the porch in the backyard was a small table with aromatic food and rosemary candles. See? I *knew* we were having dinner.

"Mmm, it smells great Henry."

He winked. "I know."

I started on the sirloin steak he had cooked and for a while, we chatted about Henry's upcoming gig. He already had enough money to last a lifetime, but he still wanted to do something other than sit at home, so he liked to do a few gigs at bars. He's written a few songs, but doesn't plan on becoming famous - he uses a pseudonym, just for fun and privacy matters. Our conversation then turned quiet because we were both eating. Suddenly, as I lifted the fork to my mouth, I heard a song playing softly and I frowned. Where was that coming from? Was that the neighbours?

"Henry?"

"Yep," he replied, popping the 'P'.

"Do you hear that?"

"As a matter of a fact, I do." He then proceeded stand up and walked slowly towards me, making me fidget with my fingers. What was he doing? "Lainie, will you dance with me?"

I blinked. He planned for the music to play? "But we're still eating â"'

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"Don't worry, we can eat later," Henry replied chuckling.

Hesitantly, I put my hand in his and he sharply pulled me to him. I let out a surprised gasp and before I knew it, he was waltzing me around while 'Hero' by Enrique Iglesias was playing in the background. I rested my head on Henry's shoulder, contented, while he whispered the lyrics in my ear.

*"I can be your hero baby â I can kiss away your pain â I will stand by you forever â you can take my breath away â!"*

I smiled like an eleven year old girl as he sung the heartfelt lyrics of the song to me. Had he chosen the song for a particular reason?

With my arms locked around his neck and his arms resting on my waist, we danced like this through the whole song. Our bodies moved slowly and swayed perfectly to the beat. The only blunder was when I accidentally stepped on Henry's shoe, and we had awkwardly stumbled to the side. When I could tell it was slowly coming to an end, I sighed. Dancing with Henry was quite calming, especially with my eyes closed and his husky voice singing to me.

*"You can take my breath away â you can take my breath away â Lainie, will you marry me â!"*

I jumped. Had I heard that right? Had he just really sung that line?

Henry chuckled and my heart pounded faster as I watched him struggle to take something out of his pocket. Since he had sung to me if I would marry him, it would quite obvious what he would take out, but I didn't dare dream â!

A smooth, silver band with three stones made my eyes widen. The middle stone was a beautiful amethyst sparkling in the moonlight and two smaller diamonds sat beside it.

This was real. This was happening. This *wasn't* a dream.

"I want to do this right," I heard Henry mutter as he sank down on one knee. I felt so â so feminine standing there in the summer night's air, staring into those pair of gorgeous eyes.

"Lainie, from the first time I met you I knew you were different, and - hey! Don't make that face." He laughed as I scrunched up my nose. "Before I met you, I wasn't perfect. Heck, I still ain't perfect, but you make me strive hard to be perfect â for you. Trust me on this, I promise you that I'll treat you the way you deserve to be treated and I promise I will love you forever. Yes, I'm talking about after I die as well."

A small smile grew on my face as I felt his small speech tug at my heartstrings. "I promise I'll love you too," I whispered.

"Hey, I'm supposed to be making the promises here," Henry joked. I giggled and felt heat rise in my cheeks. Then in a softer tone, he continued. "The last time I proposed to you, it wasn't a proper one. So now I'm going to ask you â will you marry me Lainie? Will you be my *real* pancake wife?"

I laughed as I remembered he had asked the same thing when he had '*proposed*' at the Wilshire restaurant in Los Angeles, but instead he had said, '*fake* pancake wife'.

"Of course, Henry!"

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With that, he slipped the ring ever so carefully on my fourth finger and placed a light kiss on it. I then drew him in for a hug and I couldn't help but think that once upon a time, I had just been a part of Steve and Henry's plan for fame - his fake fiancÃ©e. And now?

Well, I was finally his *real* fiancÃ©e.

### THE COTTAGE

### THE RING

And these two :P

**ENDING NOTE: I loved writing this novel. Loved it. And I love each and every one of you who have supported me through the whole process. YOU ROCK! :) I can't believe I've finally finished my first ever novel!! Hehe. Anyway, tell me your thoughts on the epilogue? It'd be greatly appreciated! Thank you SO much for reading! You guys have all been my inspiration to keep writing :)**

**ALSO, I'm starting a new novel and I would love to hear your thoughts on a new novel I'm starting. Here's the link:**

**<http://www.booksie.com/romance/article/vanessaxoxo/when-lightning-strikes-character-pictures-&-summary>**

*Lots of love, Vanessa xoxo*

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