

Babymoon Gone Wrong

For Robert Love

By TheSpiralledEye

Ethan suddenly finds himself in the body of his pregnant wife and vice versa when his psychotic ex, the world renowned brain surgeon, decides to try and get revenge for being left for a younger woman.

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Helena gripped the edge of her desk so hard it turned her knuckles white. Her blood was boiling in her veins as she looked over the status update for the sixth time today; each time she hoped it would be the last but her jealousy and rage always brought her back. She couldn't help herself, it was just so unfair!

Was it not enough that Ethan left her for a younger woman? A younger, less successful woman mind you; she had been sure he would come crawling back eventually. After all, she was a successful neurosurgeon, one of the best in the country if not the world and his new woman Clair was what, a business major? Oh sure she had a masters degree but anybody could get one of those nowerdays. It was hardly impressive, especially next to her own accomplishments.

Ethan was an alpha male, all muscles and breadwinner attitude; he was stubborn, yes, unable to accept that she had been right most of the time when they argued but she was sure she would have been able to smooth out the ingrained sexism that clearly fueled him. Now she would never get the chance because Claire had come along and stolen him from her.

Then, he married her. Helena had made a habit of stalking all of Ethan's social media, waiting for what she considered the inevitable change in status to single. Instead she saw, to her disgust, an engagement announcement, then his photo changed to him and his new waif of a wife on their wedding day. It made her sick to look at.

Claire was everything women strived to get away from nowerdays; petite, curvy and docile. Helena was sure that was what drew Ethan to her; she wouldn't look out of place in a 1950's Sears catalogue and considering the newest announcement on their page, that she was pregnant, she had the same values as those old magazines as well. She was probably barefoot and naked in the kitchen right now, rubbing her pregnant belly while she made her handsome husband pancakes or something equally as sarachine.

She had been patient for years waiting for Ethan to see the error of his ways but no more. If he was too stubborn to realise how wrong he was for spiting her, she was just going to have to get some old fashioned revenge. She'd teach that sexist pig a thing or two for trading her in for a younger, more traditionally feminine model.

The question was how.

She spent days in fevered planning, coming with ideas one after the other before dismissing them. Her revenge had to be perfect, poetic even. She couldn't let him have a single shred of dignity left and of course, she had to include Claire somehow, that little tart. Then, the

perfect opportunity presented itself. Ironically, it was Claire herself who delivered the news on one of the accounts Helena stalked.

'Baby moon is all booked! Six weeks of fun in the sun to celebrate the end of our life before parenthood! First up, Bahamas!'

Helena actually cackled; the little fool, she had posted their entire schedule! Every place they were visiting on their big trip and one of them just so happened to be near one of her many research facilities. It was too perfect. With a wide, sadistic smile on her face, Helena got to work.

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"Are you sure about this dear?" Claire asked as they drove up the winding path toward the research lab. "Helena seemed a little...unhinged when we first got together."

"She's just very driven, she always got her own way so when I threw a spanner in her works it got her a little bit...off kilter." Ethan sighed, "but that was years ago, I am sure she's long gotten over me."

Ethan had to admit, he was surprised when he got a message from Helena after all these years. Even more so when she invited both him and Claire to tour her latest research lab since it just so happened to be a short drive from their resort. He'd thought hard about it before accepting. The truth was, Helena had always scared him a little; she had always been controlling when they were together and when he'd finally gotten the courage to break things off and found somebody knew to say she'd taken it badly was an understatement.

The message she'd sent was cordial though, even a little casual, a simple offer to catch up a bit and show them what she'd been working on. He wasn't an idiot, he was sure Helena would spend most of the time rubbing her success and intelligence in their faces but still, it had taken almost a year to get her to leave him alone when he first got with Claire. He didn't want to give her any reason to start it up again.

They pulled up outside an impressive looking facility made of shiny white stone and gilded metal that looked like something out of a science fiction movie. It seemed oddly out of place in the middle of a jungle, especially when you could see the resort town at the base of the mountain not too far away.

Helena was waiting for them and she looked almost identical to when he'd last spoken to her years ago; athletic and tall with pale skin and cold eyes. Claire held tight to his arm and he patted it a little. Even as Helena smiled warmly he found himself a little unnerved, she was almost as tall as him and Ethan was sure if she wanted to she could punch his lights right out.

"Ethan, Claire, welcome!" She smiled, taking them each by the hand warmly, "so glad you could make it, it's not often we get visitors here so when I saw you were coming I was eager to reach out."

Ethan felt his nerves dissipate somewhat, she seemed...normal. Perhaps the last few years had mellowed her out a little.

“It’s good to see you doing well for yourself.” He smiled.

“My research into neuroscience is on the bleeding edge, I have to beat off investors with a stick.” She laughed, failing to sound at all humble. “It does come with the perk of being able to build my labs wherever I like, so why not in paradise?”

“Thank you for inviting us, I am excited to see it.” Claire said quietly and for a moment, Ethan was sure Helena’s expression soured, only to immediately change back to bright and welcoming.

“Well come on in, both of you! I’ll show you my latest laboratory and then perhaps we can have some lunch out on the deck, the local fruit is to die for.”

She waved them inside, showing them down the hall past several rooms of expensive looking equipment. Ethan’s brow furrowed; for a tour they sure were skipping a lot. He had been certain Helena would want to show off all her toys; perhaps she really had matured and he was the one misjudging her. She opened a door and waved them inside.

“What are you researching now?” Claire asked politely and Helena smiled, her white teeth reminded Ethan of a shark and a sudden chill went down his spine as they stepped into the room.

“Oh, you’ll see.” Helena smiled, “very soon in fact.”

And with that the door slammed closed and Ethan realised they were trapped. A hissing sound came from what he had assumed was a light fitting in the ceiling and a strange, sweet smell began to fill the room. He didn’t even have a chance to curse Helena out before he was growing too dizzy to stand; he felt himself tip and was unconscious before he could hit the ground.

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Claire’s head was killing her and her thoughts felt like they were flowing through molasse. Did she and Ethan go too hard on the mai tais last night? Actually, she realised she couldn’t remember last night at all. With a groan she squeezed her eyes and slowly blinked them open only to be met with bright surgical style lights that made her headache all the worse.

After a moment or two Claire realised something else, a creeping numbness was leaving her limbs and she could now feel cold shackles around her ankles and wrists. Her eyes flew open once more and she looked down at her body and saw she was strapped to a surgical table.

Normally, that would be the most concerning thing but unbelievably, there was something far stranger for her to focus on. Her body was...wrong. Her chest was flat, her arms thick and she could feel something between her legs that had most definitely not been there before. A door at the side of the room opened and Helena slunk in; grinning like the Cheshire cat.

“Hello Claire, how are you feeling?” She purred, not sounding like she cared in the slightest.

“What have you done to me!?” She cried and then squeaked in shock, that wasn't her voice! It was Ethan's!

“Oh, just switched things around a little.” Helena smiled, nodding to something to Claire's left.

She turned and cried out in shock, laying on an identical table not far from her, was...herself. A bandage was wrapped around her head and Claire could feel one around her own brow as well.

“I switched your brains.” Helena explained with a cruel bark of laughter, “and altered a few things here and there.”

“You...you **what!?**”

“This is my final revenge on you two.” Helena hissed, “now big strong, alpha male Ethan will be forced to live as his ideal woman, all feminine and submissive and you, my dear, get to experience all the stress of being a breadwinner.”

This was insane, Helena was totally insane.

“I can't wait to watch you two suffer through the rest of your life this way.” She cackled. “Oh, and don't get any ideas about being switched back, I am the only one who knows the technique, and I've added a little instrument of my own creation to your minds as well so that you will be rewarded for acting 'correctly'.”

Claire was silent; she was terrified! What was she supposed to do? She was totally at Helena's mercy so her only option was to just play along until she and Ethan could get to safety.

“Are you going to keep us here?” She asked, voice quivering and Helena laughed once more.

“Not for long, you two can go back to your lovely lives together, after all. I am a busy woman, I don't have time to deal with a crying baby. You can go back home once they are born and I am convinced you both know how to play your roles.”

The baby! Claire felt awful that they hadn't even crossed her mind, she, or rather now Ethan, was only three months along now. It was a delicate balance. She looked over at her former body, focusing in on the small, yet noticeable bump on her stomach forlornly. She'd never even gotten a chance to feel them kick. In that moment, pure hatred for the other woman before her filled her every vein. It was a good thing she was strapped down otherwise she would have been tempted to throttle her.

“Now, let's get you up and dressed, shall we?” Helena smiled, “I think it's time I woke Ethan up but I want to have a little fun with him before you two reunite.”

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The first thing Ethan noticed was that there was something bracing his head, preventing him from turning it. He wiggled left and right, or at least tried to but then realised his limbs were tied down as well. Instantly awake his eyes flew open and met stark white. He struggled but no matter how hard he tried, he couldn't move. He felt oddly weaker than usual, even if he couldn't break metal restraints before he felt as though he were putting up less of a fight than usual. Perhaps whatever drug Helena had used to knock them out was still in his system. Panic flooded him as the memories came surging back; Claire!

He tried to call out to her but found his voice muffled by a gag and somewhere else in the room, outside his field of vision, Ethan heard a familiar, cruel laugh.

“Awake are we?”

He snarled, wanting nothing more than to cuss her out.

“Don't worry about your precious wife, she's safe and sound.” Helena told him, her voice echoed around the room, making it impossible to pinpoint exactly where she was in relation to him.

She was playing a game of cat and mouse and Ethan hated her for it.

“How are you feeling?” She asked, “any strange sensations?”

Ethan tried to push the gag from his mouth using his tongue but it was no use, he could only try and talk, each muffled sound caused Helena to laugh all the more. She was hinting at something though and slowly Ethan began to realise what it was; his body *did* feel odd. Even his tongue where it pressed against the inside of his lips didn't feel quite right. The skin there was too smooth, to...full.

There was a weight on his chest, not a heavy one, but a weight nonetheless and paired with the strange absence between his legs he was starting to suspect that perhaps Helena had done more than drug and tie him up. Her face appeared above him, eyes gleeful and sadistic as she hit a button and his head brace loosened enough for him to raise his neck a little and look down at himself.

Breasts, a slightly round belly, a familiar set of long legs; no it couldn't be! Helena was cackling madly now.

“Welcome to your new life, wifey.”

His wrist restraints opened and he sat up as quickly as he could swinging a fist at Helena only to miss. This body was far weaker than the one he was used to, slower too and immediately after swinging once he felt an odd sense of discomfort flood through him.

“Ah ah ah!” Helena wagged a finger back and forth, “violence is very unladylike. Women solve their problems with words, not fists.”

“I am not a woman!”

“Oh, you are now, and if you needed another reason not to fight me, you have that little bundle of joy in your stomach to worry about.”

His palm went to the slight bulge on his stomach; the baby. Somehow, he and Claire had been swapped into one another's bodies and that meant he was, incredibly, pregnant. His already fragile form suddenly felt as though it were made of glass.

“Now that you're nice and calm, why don't we go see your husband, eh?”

Ethan removed the gag, wincing as he felt the cracks in the corner of his now delicate mouth.

“What have you done to Claire? If you've hurt her-”

“Temper temper, a lady never loses her grip now.” Helena smiled, “Come, let's go.”

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Ethan hated to admit it, but he almost respected just how diabolical Helena was. It quickly became apparent that wherever she had put into their switched brains punished them when they didn't act the way they were 'supposed' to and rewarded them when they did. So when Ethan tried to put on a pair of jeans he was instantly hit with a wave of sadness which was only fixed when he instead put on the offered dress and was rewarded with a hit of dopamine.

Even if he was in a woman's body, it still felt wrong dressing up each day. Helena had set up a little suite for them to stay in, complete with all the jewellery, make up and outfits a woman could dream of. Most of them patronisingly old fashioned and the few that weren't were downright indecent. One outfit was barely more than lingerie and he'd quickly stuffed it right to the back of the cupboard to avoid wearing it.

At first, he and Claire had tried to figure out a mode of escape. Surprisingly, Helena had allowed them their phones and internet access, telling them to go right ahead and contact whomever they please. Of course, she had added the note that even if they told anybody, authorities, family, friends; none of them would believe it. Of course she was right; it would be a one way trip to the looney bin where they would have even less freedom than in Helena's compound.

Even if they escaped, Ethan was sure she would find a way to track them down. No, their best and safest bet was to go along with things for now. Play their 'roles' and swallow their pride until Helena decided to let them go. Then they could find the next best brain surgeon in the world and somehow scrounge up the money needed to reverse the procedure. Ethan just prayed Helena was lying about being the only one who could perform it.

Several weeks had passed since the initial switch when he woke one morning to the sound of cursing. Rubbing his eyes he sat up in bed and found Claire, in his body of course, trying in vain to get the door to the bathroom open.

“Are you alright?”

She went bright red in the face and cleared her throat awkwardly, eyes darting down. Ethan followed her gaze to a distinctive bulge in the front of her boxers and understanding washed over him.

“It’s just morning wood, dear.” he said, “happens to all guys, regardless of the mind in the body, it seems. Don’t be embarrassed.”

“It’s been happening...a lot.” Claire shifted awkwardly, “I...I feel horny all the time.”

“And you’ve been sneaking into the bathroom to take care of it?” Ethan blinked.

He was glad to be a woman in that moment, the idea of his wife touching herself but in his body was strangely arousing. One good thing about being in a female body is there was no outward sign of getting turned on, at least not one anybody could see through his panties and the blankets.

“Yes.” Claire admitted, “I’m sorry, I know it’s super inappropriate considering the situation.”

“But not surprising!” Came a voice from the intercom.

Helena.

“I’ve been adding a few little extras into your food delivery to help urge you along. A good wife needs to submit to her husband’s carnal desires after all, and Ethan has not been very diligent in his wifely duties.”

“Are you serious!?” Ethan felt his blood boiling. “And what, you’ll just watch.”

“Maybe...you’ll never know.”

There was a slight static sound as the loudspeaker turned off and Claire turned back to him with a face so red Ethan felt himself getting second hand embarrassment. It was just weird to see that demure, humiliated expression on his own face. A man pouting like that was so...odd.

“Maybe a workout will help?” He suggested, as a distraction for himself and Claire. “I am assuming Helena has locked the bathroom.”

“Yes,” Claire pouted and then flinched, pouting was clearly not considered ‘manly’ according to her implant. “And if she’s locked that door, I am betting the main door is locked as well.”

She moved over and jiggled their bedroom handle, nodding with a bitter smile.

“So we are locked in here till we bo-ouch...uh, make love?”

Endorphins flooded his system as he used the less crude term. It was something he'd learned over the last few weeks, apparently crude or rude language wasn't considered ladylike, which was unfortunate because he often felt like swearing these days. Swimming in the pleasure of his endorphins though Ethan sighed happily and laid back in bed.

"We could just...do it." Claire suggested, "I'm...a little curious."

A soft moan followed her words, a reward from her implant.

"Y-yeah, let's do it, please?" She begged, "I know it's weird but the last few weeks watching your belly grow has been...really hot."

"It's your belly technically." Ethan blushed, pressing a hand to his small bump.

He understood the sentiment though, the moment Claire had told him she was pregnant a primal, protective, almost territorial instinct had blossomed within him. The knowledge that soon her belly would be swelling and the whole world would know she was his, impregnated by him, owned by him; it was a powerful feeling and an aphrodisiac almost. He'd been so preoccupied with his own changing body he hadn't considered that feeling might have transferred to Claire in his body; or how it would affect her.

She was looking at him now with blown pupils; he could see her pulse thrumming at the side of her thick neck. She was still just in boxers; she had been enjoying the freedom of sleeping with just underwear. So he could see her broad chest; he tried to remind himself that it was actually his chest and that getting turned on by it was a bit weird but it didn't work. His heart began to race as his big, strong husband stepped toward the bed, each stride made him feel hotter and hotter between the legs till he was moist and ready.

One of those strong hands reached out and cupped his face and Ethan shivered; he felt so vulnerable, yet safe at the same time. Claire's grip increased, pulling his face into a strong kiss and Ethan yielded almost immediately; something that was rewarded by his implant. Yes, submission was good, a good woman submitted to her husband's urges...

He flopped back on the mattress and allowed Claire to climb atop him. She'd never been so dominant in bed before, no doubt her own implant was rewarding her for the behaviour. It was so wrong, Helena was probably watching, but he couldn't bring himself to care, he was so damn horny and the rewards were only making him more so.

There was something so lovely about the way Claire was pinning his wrists down above his head, she only needed to use one hand to do it. She was so strong now. The only one lowered her boxers so that her cock brushed against his inner thigh; Ethan was shocked by just how badly he wanted it.

His hips moved upwards, pressing the tip to his hole and that was all his former wife needed. She plunged into him, thrusting hard and fast, groaning with satisfaction. He could hear her desperation, the weeks of lonely hand jobs had made her desperate and rough, she couldn't hold back and that only turned him on more.

He could feel her slamming against...something, deep inside him. It felt wonderful and he couldn't help but gasp and moan, being rewarded for each one in turn and pushing the pleasure ever higher. All of a sudden, he felt his eyes rolling back as the purest, most overwhelming pleasure he'd ever felt washed over him. He was cumming, hard and Claire was humping and thrusting ever harder as she too fell over the edge, one hand still pinning his wrists to the bed, the other resting on his pregnant belly.

They both shuddered, spending a few moments catching their breath before Claire pulled back. She had a strange expression on her face, one Ethan was sure mirrored his own. Neither wanted to say it aloud but they both knew deep down that was the best sex they'd ever had. All thanks to Helena.

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At first, Ethan had been determined not to fall into the trap of his hormones again. After all, he was sure his ex was watching and he didn't want to give her the satisfaction of seeing him become a horny, wonton woman; all too eager to submit to her big, burly husband. But then second trimester hormones kicked in and all was lost. He was horny all the time, despite his bump making things harder, they found new positions to try that took the pleasure even further.

Eventually, he stopped worrying about it. In fact, they both did. Claire was getting used to acting the part of the alpha male and had actually started to enjoy working out at the facilities gym and being more dominant.

In the reverse, Ethan found himself enjoying his role as mother. He loved lounging in the sun of their little courtyard in a frilly sundress, rubbing his belly as she sipped at rose flavoured tea. Being a woman wasn't all that bad really, especially when you had a strong husband to look after you. For once it wasn't him wrestling with stubborn jars and having to fix the barbeque when it broke.

The best part was that it was infuriating Helena; she wanted them miserable, forced to perform their roles out of spite. Instead, they were enjoying themselves, the extra rewards for their behaviour was just gravy on top.

Ethan even found himself enjoying his pregnancy for the most part. The first time he felt the baby kick something stirred within him. A strange new, maternal instinct he couldn't quite put into words. There was a connection he'd only ever heard women talk about forming between him and his unborn child and suddenly the idea of being separated from them, back in his old body didn't seem too appealing.

"Seeing you like this is...really hot." Claire admitted, resting her head against his belly to feel the baby kick.

"Territorial?" Ethan teased and Claire laughed.

"A little, knowing I did this to you...well, sort of. You know what I mean."

Ethan giggled girlishly and kissed Claire's forehead before dragging her up for a proper kiss. He was actually enjoying playing the role of seducer now. It felt fun, watching Claire get all primal and horny just from seeing his pregnant belly bounce while he was riding her cock. He was all set to do it again when a sudden pain caused his belly to spasm and he sucked in a pained breath.

"What's the matter?" Helena's voice taunted over the loudspeaker. "Getting sick of being a pregnant lady, Ethan?"

He actually smiled; her voice was cruel but also desperate. She so badly wanted him to be miserable, watching he and Clare not just adapt but thrive in these new bodies had been eating her alive. Ethan chose to ignore her.

“I think it’s time.” He said to Clair and her eyes went wide.

“Oh shit. Uh...Uhhhh, water? We need water right, they always get water and towels in the TV shows.”

Ethan couldn't help it, he threw back his head and laughed; in just a few months she really had become a man. Another contraction hit and he winced; show time.

“There are doctors on the way.” Came Helena’s voice, it was soaked in irritation, “they’ll take you to the local hospital to have your little baby.”

There was a pause before her voice returned, smug as ever.

“Then we’ll see how much you enjoy being a woman.”

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Ethan felt like he’d just woken from a dream; the entire birth was a blur. The rush to the hospital, the pain, the drugs and then almost as if by magic, a doctor was handing him a tiny bundle with a pink, crying face in it. His daughter; their daughter.

He was sweaty, sore and exhausted and yet he’d never felt more alive. He curled his arms around the child and gently lifted her to his breast to feed like it was the most natural thing in the world. Claire wrapped an arm around him, snuggling close and gently stroking a finger down the baby’s cheek.

“Wow.”

“Yeah...”

“You know what, I am sort of glad I didn’t have to go through all that myself.” Claire admitted sheepishly.

“It wasn't so bad.”

“Liar.”

“Okay, but it was worth it.”

They stayed like that for a moment, letting their daughter settle to sleep before Ethan realised.

“Hey, we are free.”

“We can finally go home...man, I am going to have to work so many extra hours now to earn back all the leave Helena made me use.”

“And there will be a layer of dust on everything.” Ethan pouted, “I’ll be cleaning for a week straight with a newborn.”

“Such is the burden of a housewife.”

The two of them laughed; Ethan couldn’t believe it. His first thought while being free was how he was going to balance new motherhood with cleaning the house? A reward from his implant cemented the action as good and he sighed; the conditioning really was setting in. He couldn’t bring himself to feel bad about it though. Especially not with this tiny bundle of joy in his arms.

“We’ll find somebody to change us back.” Claire said, not sounding remotely confident or driven, Ethan just nodded.

Unsure if that was even what he wanted anymore.

~

Several Years Later...

“Honey, I’m home!”

Ethan smiled, the tiny bundle of blankets in his arm stirred at the sound of their father’s voice but stayed sleeping. Jane was a heavy sleeper, unlike her big sister Lilly who’d woken at the drop of a hat.

“Daddy!”

Speaking of; Lilly rushed from her place on the mat at Ethan’s feet and ran to Clair who opened her arms wide and hugged her daughter.

“Ew, daddy stinky!” Lilly scrunched up her nose and Clair laughed.

“Sorry hun, I went a bit hard at the gym after work.” She popped the toddler down and placed a kiss at Ethan’s forehead.

“How’s my sexy pregnant wife today?”

“Claire.” He chuckled, “You can’t say that sort of thing in front of the girls.”

“Oh they’re too young to know.” She dismissed, “Lilly is already back to her colouring.”

Ethan smiled down at his eldest, humming away to herself as she scribbled all over the colouring book.

“And how’s number three cooking?” Claire asked, placing a hand on the small bump already forming on Ethan’s stomach.

“You know I can’t feel her yet.”

“Her?”

“I just know. I’m a girl factory, these two are proof.”

“We’ll see, I wouldn’t mind at least one boy.” Claire shrugged, “but if I end up as one of those dads who has to fend off his daughters’ suitors with a stick or a shotgun I will.”

Ethan giggled. It was so surreal; that this was their new normal. He got so used to it sometimes he could go weeks without thinking about his old life, back when he was a man. He was even used to being called Claire in public now. At first Helena had checked on them, but slowly, when it became obvious they were not only enjoying themselves but not actively searching to be changed back, she stopped calling.

Finding all the cameras and microphones she’d hidden in the house to spy on them had taken months but eventually, they had their peace. Ethan sometimes wondered what happened to her; if she still spied on them from time to time but honestly, he didn’t care.

He had a beautiful family, a loving husband and all the happiness in the world. Helena was probably still as bitter and alone as she had been when she switched them. She deserved her misery but not his time or thoughts.

“Well, I am going to have a shower and then we,” Claire gave him a peck on the nose, “are going to have our date night, Lilly, that means you and your sister get to go to grandmas.”

“Yay! Ice cream!”

“Your mum spoils them too much.” Ethan sighed, “It takes me days to get her eating healthy cereal again.”

He placed Jane down in her bassinet and then flung open the closet with glee. Ever since they returned and began their new lives he’d been pregnant or breast feeding, and while he loved it, these date nights were the one time he got to wear something that couldn’t be easily pulled down by a hungry baby.

His implant hummed with endorphins as he happily selected a slinky, dark pink dress for his date night; it was one of his favourites, patterned with florals that matched his pearl earrings and necklace. While Claire now enjoyed the simplicity of dressing up, having to just pick a nice button up and pants, maybe a fancy belt buckle and some cuff links if they were going all out, Ethan was the opposite.

Women just had so many options to mix and match when it came to clothing and he loved it; not only that but he got the fun of matching jewellery and make up as well. No wonder it took so long to get ready. Even as a busy mother he always took a little time out of

each day to beautify himself; a smattering of lipstick, a nice necklace, something. Not just for his own pleasure but Claire's.

He loved the way his husband looked at him when he came home from a long day at work. The expression of utter joy and love that formed on Claire's face when she was greeted by a sexy wife taking a hot meal out of the oven was unlike anything else. It made Ethan feel so good about himself.

"We're going to miss our reservation!" Claire called from downstairs, "remember we still have to drop the girls off."

"Oh! Coming!"

He'd gotten caught up again. Ethan took one last look at his reflection with a happy smile; he looked radiant if he did say so himself. It had been worth splurging to get the more expensive, long stay lip gloss. As he stood he felt a distinctive push against his lower stomach and smiled, rubbing his palm along the curve.

"Hello there sweetheart." He whispered, "I can't wait to meet you."

~

He'd promised himself he wouldn't cry; yet here he was, the procession had barely started and his mascara was probably already ruined. Ethan watched as each of his daughters slowly walked down the aisle; each in a matching satin dress with a small bouquet. Then, Claire and their youngest, Danielle, turned the corner and his breath caught in his throat.

Danielle looked radiant in her white wedding dress and as Ethan glanced back at her husband to be, he could see the utter love in his eyes. His daughter was in good hands, he was sure.

He'd cried at all his daughters' weddings, what mother wouldn't? They had all grown up into such fine young ladies but there was something about Danielle, his last baby, finally getting married that made things feel almost bitter sweet.

He and Claire were going to be empty nesters now, all four of their daughters now moved out with their partners and Lilly even had her own bundle of joy on the way, the bump tactfully hidden under the flowing material of her bridesmaid dress.

Claire was beaming with pride as she led their daughter down the aisle; smiling sadly as she finally let go and handed her over. She sat heavily in the seat and Ethan took her hand, squeezing it tight throughout the ceremony. When the bride and groom finally kissed they both clapped and rushed forward to hug them.

"Congratulations sweetheart." Ethan wiped a happy tear from his eyes.

"Thanks mom."

"You treat her right, you hear?" Claire teased her husband, slapping him on the back and they all laughed; everybody knew the man wouldn't have gotten this far without Claire's approval, she was the absolute definition of an overprotective father.

The two of them stepped back to let other well wishers by and Ethan wrapped his arms around his husband.

“Crazy to think, isn't it, that we've been like this for so long.”

Claire hummed, placing a kiss to Ethan's head.

“I almost wish I could thank her sometimes, how crazy is that?”

“I know. I wonder what happened to her, where she is now.”

“I don't.” Claire replied coolly, “Whatever she's doing, I hope she's as miserable as the day we met. Anyway, let's not talk about her. Let's talk about those beautiful girls right there.”

“We made them.” Ethan said, his voice thick with emotion. “Almost makes you want to do it all over.”

“Have another baby now?” Claire laughed, “we're not even empty nesters yet!”

“But what will I do with myself without somebody to baby?” Ethan pouted and Claire kissed him deeply.

“You'll have plenty of grandbabies soon enough I am sure.”

“Oh I hope so.”

“Mom! Dad! It's time for photos!” Danielle called.

The two of them kiss one final time before going to join their family.