

# **Friday Night Brides**

**Samantha Chase**

## Prologue

*Ten years ago...*

“I totally felt like a princess tonight.”

“Me too!”

“Is it wrong that I didn’t want to put my street clothes back on?”

Hailey James shook her head and laughed. She still couldn’t understand what the big deal was. Or maybe she could. The first time in a wedding gown is always a big deal. Well...at least that’s what she’d learned after going to work with her mom every weekend at her bridal boutique, Enchanted Bridal, since she was five years old. Maybe she had just become desensitized to it all.

Nah.

Sitting at a table with her three best friends at their favorite café at eleven on a Friday night was the perfect way to cap off the night. Hailey shook her head and smiled as her friends continued to gush about how exciting the night had been.

Every Friday night, Enchanted Bridal held a fashion show—sometimes they were big events at convention centers or hotels, and other times they were scaled back and small and held at the boutique itself. Tonight’s was at the boutique and it was the first time in the thirteen years Hailey and her friends had been modeling in the show that her mother let them be brides. They’d started out as flower girl models when they were five so maybe she just figured it was time.

Maybe it was a big deal, she thought. After all, modeling wedding gowns rather than bridesmaid dresses made them the focus of the entire show. As much as Hailey hated to admit it, it had been kind of cool. Even though she’d been playing dress-up in some of those wedding gowns for years, it was completely different when you walked out onto a stage—with a super-hot guy pretending to be your groom—and having everyone’s eyes on you.

Okay, yeah, it was exciting.

Hailey sighed. Every weekend she helped brides pick out their dresses and listened to them talk about how happy and in love they were and how wonderful their futures were going to be. It wasn’t that she doubted the sentiment, but personally, she had never experienced those overwhelming feelings. And while putting on a dress that made you feel beautiful—like a princess—was great, what Hailey really wanted was to meet a guy who would make her feel like that.

And if it could possibly be one of the many hot models her mother always seemed to find each season, even better. Seriously, her mother had a knack for finding the most amazing

looking men. Tonight Hailey had walked with Terrance Adams. He was twenty-three and completely hot. He'd been very nice to her but she got the impression that he looked at her like she was just a kid. So while he was nice to look at, he wasn't going to be her Prince Charming.

But she had no doubt these Friday night shows were going to be the key to finding a hot groom of her own and her ultimate happily ever after.

Resting her cheek in her hand, she laughed as Angie bragged about how great her boobs had looked in her dress tonight. Hailey would never consider talking about her boobs in public, but Angie had no filter. The four of them around this table were as different as night and day and yet...they clicked. It had been that way ever since the first day of kindergarten.

Angie was the loud one.

Becca was the shy one.

Ella was the sweet one.

And Hailey? Well, she was the sensible one. And sensible, she realized, was really just another word for boring or uptight.

Either way, it worked for them.

"You know what I think?" Becca asked them. "I think this is the start of something big for all of us. I think tonight marks our own journey toward getting to wear one of those gowns for real."

"Ugh..." Angie moaned. "We're only eighteen. Do we need to start thinking about our own weddings? Can't we just get through prom? That's causing me enough grief."

"Stop being so cynical. There's nothing wrong with thinking about or just pretending that we know what our future is going to be like," Becca admonished. "So...who's going to go first? Where do you see yourself in say...ten years?"

Even though she thought it was ridiculous, Hailey was the first to play along.

"Me," she said. "In ten years, I imagine myself being madly in love with one of those hot male models Mom always has in the show. They're perfect—and look great in a tux!"

They all laughed. "Way to be superficial," Angie teased.

Hailey shrugged. "I can't help it if I want a man who looks good."

"Me next!" Ella said excitedly. "In ten years I know I'm going to be married to Dylan. We're going to have the perfect, small and intimate wedding I've always wanted with just you guys and a handful of family with us." She sighed happily. "I can't wait!"

"Ten years?" Becca said with disbelief. "You've been dating for years already. Why wait that long?"

Ella shrugged. “Well, hopefully we’ll be married by then but we really want to be financially set before we get married.”

“So practical,” Angie sighed. “What about you, Becs?”

“All I want is to have my own little café and be married to a man who treats me like a princess,” she said dreamily. “I’ve heard there are guys out there who do that—treat girls like that. I just wish I could find one.”

“Yikes. You’re only eighteen, you know. Give it some time,” Angie said. “You all are acting like you need a man to make you happy! You don’t!”

“Really? So where do you see yourself in ten years?” Ella challenged.

“I’m going to grab the world by the balls and do whatever it is I want to do because I don’t need a man to define me,” she challenged.

Everyone went silent.

“Until some guy comes and sweeps you off your feet when you least expect it,” Ella said and then giggled. “It’s going to be the most fun to prove that you’re no different than the rest of us.”

“Bring it, bitches,” Angie said with a grin.