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Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 1311

"Be careful with the babies," Diana said.

Even though this was her third pregnancy, she wasn't as cautious as she had been with the second. However, she was still carrying babies. She had only recently stabilized the pregnancy and had just started taking medication.

"The doctor advised caution," Julian replied.

The intensity of the moment and Julian's actions made Diana a bit muddled, and she was having trouble thinking clearly.

Both of them responded to each other with vague hums. Then, there was the rustling of clothes.

All Diana could do was remind him again, "Slow down." "I'll slow down once I'm inside," Julian assured her, his voice becoming gentler.

His tone led Diana to gradually become more emotional as things progressed.

"Are you still angry?" Julian suddenly asked.

Diana, who was enjoying the moment, replied, "Angry? Why would I be angry?" She hadn't been angry in the first place. She hugged him tightly, not allowing any space between them.

Julian chuckled, and teased her, "Don't want me to leave, do you?" Diana was too embarrassed to reply, but there was a playful glint in her eyes.

She moved to bring him even closer, pressing Julian's skin firmly against her own.

He took the opportunity and started moving.

Diana pulled him down a bit, and once again protected her belly. She pushed herself upwards to make it easier for him to move.

Seeing that she wasn't speaking, he thrust suddenly. The force wasn't great, but it was cleverly timed, causing Diana to shriek.

“Come on, tell me...” he lowered his head, a smile playing on his lips. “Is it that you don’t want me to leave?” Diana still didn’t want to respond, but he wouldn’t give up unless she did.

Finally, she nodded with a blush. “Yes, don’t leave.” With that, she held him even tighter. The force, as if wanting to merge the two into one, was like a small river flowing into the vast sea, creating a powerful and surging sensation.

Once they were done, Julian got up and helped her clean up. “Are you okay?” Both of their voices were hoarse. After such a long and finally having some intimate time together, Diana didn’t dare to look directly into his eyes.

Deliberately looking away, she responded, “I’m fine.” He had been very gentle!

The whole experience turned out to be much better than she had expected. The babies inside her belly were safe and stable.

“That’s good.” Julian smiled. “Is the feeling different when expecting a second time compared to the first?”

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She ignored him.

Julian didn’t bring up the matter again.

As long as she was happy, it was enough.

The next day, Diana went out, and Julian took care of the children.

Noel had been waiting in the private room at the restaurant for a while. He was only waiting for Diana and Fanny to create an opportunity for him to talk to Cecilia.

This was Cecilia’s first time meeting Fanny.

As the child of a wealthy family, she remained calm and polite, even when meeting a star she admired so much.

She presented a gift to Fanny and said, “Ms. Smith, I’ve admired you for a long time. It’s an honor to receive your invitation.” Fanny was also delighted.

She looked at the gift from Cecilia. It was a bottle of personally blended essential oil. Just smelling it at this moment made her feel relaxed and improved her appetite, which hadn't been great for the past few days.

"I'm also honored, Ms. Jarvis. Thank you for the gift," Fanny said with a smile. "I don't know why, but looking at this bottle of essential oil, I suddenly feel a bit hungry." Cecilia laughed heartily at this comment. "How is that possible? This is essential oil, not something to eat. How about we have a meal together after we finish shopping?" "Eating is a necessity," Fanny replied. "I've already reserved a private room, and we're just waiting to go after we're done shopping, but..." She looked a little embarrassed as she glanced at Cecilia. "I have a friend who wants to join us. I hope you don't mind." Cecilia shook her head. "Of course, I don't mind!" She was about to ask who the friend was, when she heard Diana's voice. "Ms.

Smith, Ms. Jarvis." Cecilia turned her head, seeming a bit puzzled.

"It's you...?" Then she thought about the chronology of events that had happened. Diana had called her before Fanny invited her out, but she had declined Diana's invitation.

So... Fanny was the middleman brought by Diana?

Cecilia sighed. "I had no idea you two knew each other, and it seems like you two are quite close?" "Ms. Smith is an investor in my studio." Diana mentioned the studio, but Cecilia's expression remained unchanged.

It was clear she had already set aside any concerns about the studio, and didn't care about it at all. That's why she didn't accept Diana's invitation.

It could only mean... She had reservations about Noel.

She genuinely didn't want to be with Noel.

Thinking about this, Diana suddenly felt a bit uncomfortable and couldn't help but worry about Noel.

If the outcome today was still a breakup... Would Noel be able to handle it?

Would he suffer another blow to his heart?

But if Diana didn't let him meet, based on what Julian said, Noel might even sink into depression.

Just like Julian had said, they should deal with their own issues.

She and Julian could only serve as bridges to help them communicate, not as decision-makers in their relationship.

Cecilia didn't expect the connection between Diana and Fanny. However, she was quite thoughtful about it.

"You're still investing after retiring from the entertainment industry, Ms. Smith?" "I would invest in good projects," Fanny replied.

"What about me?" Cecilia seized the opportunity and started to pitch herself. "To be frank, the essential oil in your hand is one I formulated myself. I enjoy creating scents, and have always wanted to start my own business. However, my mother isn't very supportive of me." Becoming a high-level perfumer had always been her dream, but Cecilia didn't dare to mention it to Sue.

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In the Jarvis family, Cecilia could only be a good girl.

Seeing Diana and Fanny's shocked looks, Cecilia was not the least bit uncomfortable, nor did she purposely avoid Diana.

"After going through a failed relationship, this idea became even stronger. A woman can only rely on herself, apart from her family." And sometimes, even the family couldn't be relied upon. The most dependable was her own self.

"I want to seize some control for myself, so that in my next relationship, I won't come across as so naive and won't attract any more undesirable trash." Diana was surprised by what she heard.

Undesirable trash? Was she referring to Noel?

She had no idea Cecilia and Noel had reached this point.

"What has Noel done to hurt you?" After much consideration, Diana decided to ask. She didn't want Noel to have done something that was beyond their expectations, causing trouble for Cecilia.

If that were the case, she might not even act as a bridge anymore, and she might have to help Cecilia deal with Noel instead.

Cecilia smiled. "You don't know?" Diana shook her head. "I don't know. I just know you two broke up." "I actually want to see him one more time." When Cecilia said this, a hint of resentment flashed in her eyes.

Diana hadn't processed that emotion before Cecilia changed her tone and continued, "If you can help me, that would be even better, Ms. Winnington." So, Cecilia also wanted to see Noel!

Diana, who had the intention of acting as the bridge for them since the start, hesitated for a moment and then quickly responded, "I'll definitely help when the opportunity arises." In just a little while, she would be able to meet Noel. Diana guessed that both Cecilia and Noel wanted to see each other, and there must be some unfinished business between them.

Diana decided not to tell Cecilia that Noel was waiting for her in the private room. She wanted to keep them in anticipation, believing the meeting would be more effective afterward.

With Cecilia's desire to see Noel confirmed, Diana passed the message to Julian, [Tell Noel to dress up and buck up! Cecilia herself said she wanted to see him! Maybe after tonight's meeting, they can quickly reconcile, and Noel won't have to cry anymore!] Julian was also thrilled.

He quickly relayed the message to Noel, who had been waiting in the private room, feeling dejected.

He thought that even if they met tonight, there wouldn't be any changes. Upon hearing Julian's words, he was filled with hope once again.

Noel quickly left the room, bought a new set of clothes, and returned. He hoped to meet Cecilia in the best state, clear up misunderstandings, and make things right again.

As they strolled through the streets, all three women went on a shopping spree.

The entire shopping mall's staff eagerly awaited their entry, and to make it easier, Fanny and Diana called their respective drivers to carry their purchases behind them.

Even then, they couldn't buy enough.

Cecilia was still not satisfied, and ordered a brand-new bag from the Hermès store with a familiar salesperson.

"One bag costs over three million." After signing the payment receipt, she laughed and said, "Give me two more." She looked at the salesperson and then at Diana and Fanny. "I'm giving these to you, one for each. Don't refuse, or I'll never go shopping with you again." Afterward, she handed her bank card, and in a matter of seconds... "Ten million, all gone." This much was her little indulgence when she was happy.

And yet, Noel paid less to sell their relationship!

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Diana couldn't help but feel that Cecilia's mood today was a bit off.

It seemed like she was hiding something.

Diana thought about asking a few more questions, but decided to hold back.

She believed that once Cecilia met Noel, they could discuss their issues.

For now, she was content to accept the gift as a gesture of sisterhood while they were out shopping. She planned to reciprocate in the future, although she still needed to figure out what to give.

As they reached the end of their shopping spree, Diana was indeed getting tired, and her lower abdomen felt tight.

She placed her hand on her belly, gently rubbing it up and down, and decided not to walk any further.

She found a bench to sit on, and urged Fanny and Cecilia to go to the restaurant without her.

"I'll rest for a while," she said, as she tried to wave them off.

Fanny refused, saying, "You should have someone with you in case something happens. We don't need to rush to the restaurant; we can wait a bit." Cecilia agreed with her. They bought two cups of milk tea and shared

them, considering that Diana had expended more energy and needed to recover.

Diana also wanted to have some light snacks, so they had some snacks brought from the VIP lounge in the mall.

“This chestnut flavor is unexpectedly delicious,” Diana said after taking a few bites, becoming somewhat addicted. “I never thought the mall would have such delicious things.” Fanny nodded in agreement. “It’s really good, but I prefer the plum pastries.

Next time we come, I’ll get some to take home.” “Those are quite sour,” Diana commented. With three experiences of pregnancy, as soon as she heard Fanny’s words, alarm bells sounded in her mind. “Fanny, you’re not pregnant, are you?” This remark caused Fanny to choke on her food, which got stuck in her throat.

Cecilia quickly handed her a glass of water and patted her on the back. Fanny had to drink the water to relieve her coughing fit.

Diana felt a bit embarrassed. “Did I startle you? My words were rather impolite, weren’t they?” She was so used to being pregnant that whenever she saw someone craving sour foods, she thought of pregnant women.

After Fanny stopped coughing, she shook her head and looked at Diana with a shocked expression. Gradually, a glint of understanding appeared in her eyes.

“Apart from craving sour foods, do you also suddenly have a strong desire for something specific? Feeling restless if you can’t have it, as if there are worms crawling all over you, and your taste preferences have changed? Vegetables you used to love now disgust you, but you strangely want to eat green peppers, which you used to hate, and you’re addicted to dishes like green pepper stir-fry...” Fanny was still explaining various symptoms when Diana interrupted her, “Why do you need to think anymore?! You’re pregnant! Your symptoms are identical to what I experienced during my pregnancy!” Diana held Fanny’s hand, genuinely happy for her. “Have you done it yet?” Fanny was bewildered. “Done what?” Diana clarified, “A pregnancy test. One line means not pregnant, and two lines means you are. How are you?” “No, I haven’t done it.” Fanny shook her head. Gradually, a sense of resistance emerged in her eyes. “I can’t be pregnant.” Suddenly, she seemed to have found the reason for her symptoms.

“Our company’s currently filming a highly anticipated drama. Although I’m not the lead, I’ve memorized all the lines for every actor to ensure the best performance. I’m also very familiar with the plot, and the female lead in the story is pregnant. It’s possible that I’m experiencing these pregnancy symptoms because of that.” Fanny remembered a term she had come across before. “There’s a saying called false pregnancy, isn’t there?” That was indeed a possibility.

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“There is indeed such a thing, but I still recommend you to check it thoroughly,” Diana said. “Does Oliver know about this?” If two people really have a child, their relationship will definitely get increasingly better.

By then, Oliver’s secret might truly remain hidden for a lifetime. Being happy together was always better than being miserable together.

“For now, don’t tell him,” Fanny said. She still believed she might not be pregnant. “I’m most likely experiencing a false pregnancy. I’ve been so engrossed in reading scripts lately that I might have gone overboard. After I buy a pregnancy test kit and check, I’ll tell him.” As Fanny chatted with Diana, she became even less convinced that she was actually pregnant.

“A few days ago, I spontaneously acted out a scene where I was pregnant to Oliver, and he almost believed it.” Fanny thought back to that time. She felt proud of her acting skills, despite having left the entertainment industry for a long time.

With just one move, she made Oliver believe it was true.

Now, thinking about it, she was even prouder.

“How is it possible that I just finished acting a scene where I was pregnant, and now I’m really pregnant?” Fanny said. “Such a coincidence is unlikely.” Diana was silent. She was initially somewhat convinced by Fanny’s words, thinking it might be a false pregnancy.

However, when she heard Fanny say it couldn’t be so coincidental, Diana began to have doubts again. She once more believed that Fanny was indeed pregnant.

In this world, coincidences could happen.

Looking at Fanny's confident gaze, Diana couldn't say much more and could only advise her. "Buy a pregnancy test kit and check, okay?" Fanny nodded. "Alright." Pregnancy was a big deal.

Fanny said, "Regardless of whether we decide to keep the child or not, we still need to confirm if I'm pregnant." Saying this, Diana almost thought that if Fanny were pregnant, she might not want the child.

"Do you still want to continue acting?" "I'll continue to work behind the scenes if I don't act," Fanny said, unconsciously placing her hand on her abdomen while speaking.

At that moment, it felt as though something was moving in her belly. It was as if she were truly pregnant, nurturing a little baby inside her.

A touch of tenderness flashed in her eyes.

It was... The unique expression of a mother.

Pregnancy could make a person's features soften.

Diana was intimately familiar with this expression on Fanny's face. She was increasingly certain that Fanny was pregnant.

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Diana didn't disturb Fanny.

She was still concerned about Noel's situation. After taking a bite of chestnut cake, she could stand up and walk again as if she had regained her strength.

"Shall we go to the restaurant?" Diana suggested.

If they waited too long, Noel might become impatient over there. It wouldn't be conducive for him to have a good conversation with Cecilia in that case.

This time, Diana genuinely wanted to play matchmaker for them.

"Is your stomach okay now?" Cecilia and Fanny asked Diana together.

Diana nodded. "It's fine." She stood between the two, holding one of their arms with her hand. The three of them walked side by side, like sisters, creating a lovely scene in the shopping mall.

In the restaurant, Noel had been waiting for a while. It was a Japanese restaurant with great privacy. Noel was seated in a corner of a private room.

From the outside, he couldn't be seen from outside as long as someone didn't fully enter.

Cecilia was the first to enter.

Her attention was still on Diana, and she thoughtfully added an extra cushion to her seat, hoping Diana would be comfortable.

"Come on in," Cecilia called out to her.

Diana felt a bit embarrassed. She leaned her head in, but didn't fully enter the room.

"Cecilia..." Cecilia's attention was entirely on Diana, and she didn't even glance in Noel's direction. Seeing that Diana wasn't coming in, she thought she might have entered the wrong private room and was about to leave with her bag.

Diana quickly stopped her. "Cecilia, look in the right corner." Noel was sitting there.

His clothes still emitted a fresh scent, and even his hairstyle had been meticulously groomed, with no detail out of place.

It seemed he attached great importance to this meeting.

Diana was relieved, and gestured to Cecilia. "You two can talk slowly." The moment Cecilia saw Noel, her entire body seemed to freeze. She felt as though her whole body had been filled with ice, as if she had fallen into ice water.

Seeing his meticulous appearance, it was clear he had been doing well since their breakup!

The only one who felt sad was herself!

No one knew how many tears she had shed alone in her bed over these past few days!

But Noel... Look at him!

His hair seemed to have been styled with hair wax, and from her perspective, even the tips of his hair were neatly arranged.

In contrast, she hadn't even bothered to apply her protective oils recently, making their appearances seem like night and day.

Cecilia clenched her fists, suppressing all the anger and grief deep within her heart; especially the tears that threatened to fill her eyes—she forced them back.

"Noel," she called out to him, motioning for him to follow her.

"It seems Diana did us a favor by arranging this meeting," she said, "we can't have the person helping us go hungry, especially when she's pregnant." Cecilia might be a wealthy young lady, but she had a strong sense of etiquette and was very considerate of others. Her previous conflict with Diana was solely because of Julian. Now that she no longer had feelings for him, she genuinely considered Diana a friend.

If it weren't for Noel... She might have gotten even closer to Diana.

"Let's go outside to talk," she said, skillfully pulling a lighter out of her bag.

The flame ignited, and she placed the cigarette in between her red lips.

"I've been holding it in while shopping with Diana." She took a deep drag, and looked disdainfully at Noel.

With each inhale, the smoke entered her lungs.

She refused to cry!

She refused to feel sad. She wanted to be the coolest person, to accept the breakup with more joy and composure than him.

She would be the coolest person in the room.

Noel stared in astonishment, taking a step forward and forcibly removing the cigarette from her lips.

“When did you start smoking?” Cecilia turned her head, not allowing Noel to take the cigarette from her lips.

When did she start?

It was after the breakup.

She had been so distraught, she needed something to distract herself.

Eventually, she took up smoking.

The brief cigarette flame was just like her fleeting emotions.

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With each drag, her heart would ache.

In the midst of trying to pull the cigarette from Cecilia’s lips, some ash from the cigarette fell onto Noel’s hand.

The sudden burn made him reflexively shake the ash off, causing his facial features to scrunch up in discomfort.

“You’re so ugly,” Cecilia remarked bluntly, “I have no idea how I ever fell for someone like you.” She even managed to blow smoke rings, causing Noel to cough once again.

A waiter approached them in the hallway, reminding Cecilia that smoking wasn’t allowed in this area.

Cecilia apologized, and changed direction towards the restroom. There was a window over there, but the corridor was narrow.

When Cecilia stood there, Noel had no space to stand. He had to press himself against the wall to look at her.

Cecilia smiled. “I can’t stand the sight of you, no matter how I look at you now.” She didn’t give Noel a chance to speak.

Instead, she preemptively said, “Whether you’re standing, sitting, or doing anything else right now, I feel uncomfortable looking at you. So, can you please not invite me to meet up in the future?” Every time she met him, it reminded her of the times when Noel was good to her. And that one day when she said he was so cold, and he only cared about hurrying her back home.

Noel had a side of him that was cute. He loved her at times.

But that affection, in the face of money, became trivial.

Cecilia felt a deep discomfort every time she thought about the 1.5 million her mother had given to Noel.

All their emotions had turned to dust because of that money!

Noel had already accepted the Jarvises’ money, so what right did he have to ask Diana to create opportunities for them to meet?

Even Fanny... Had been dragged into this mess.

“Don’t pretend to love me deeply after we’ve broken up. If our love were deep, we wouldn’t be at this point now.” The smoke dissipated, and she threw away the cigarette.

Finally, Noel could see her face clearly.

Vaguely, one could catch a fleeting expression of sadness on her face. Noel chose to ignore the harsh words Cecilia had said earlier, always keeping in mind the purpose of meeting her today—to have a good talk.

He looked at her and cautiously asked, “You didn’t want to break up, did you?”

Was it because of Mrs. Jarvis you? She’s not happy with my background, so she...” Hah!

“Don’t act like you’re innocent with me!” Listening to his words, it seemed Noel hadn’t wanted to break up at all.

But what right did he have to portray himself as innocent?

Cecilia was so angry that her fingers trembled. She pulled a wad of money from her bag and asked Noel mockingly, “Is this enough?” With no more

smoke, the scorn and disdain in her eyes were crystal clear, like a knife piercing Noel's heart.

Noel remained silent.

He didn't understand what Cecilia meant.

Her meeting with him wasn't what he had expected. She seemed so condescending, looking down on him from a superior position.

Even... Her tone was similar to Sue's when she talked to him.

Sue's attitude couldn't hurt him.

Only Cecilia could.

Every one of her actions would create a huge storm in his heart.

Noel furrowed his brows, thinking about Julian's previous instructions. He wanted to reach out and hold Cecilia.

However, she slapped him in the face.

The banknotes had sharp edges, and easily scratched him. Cecilia, however, acted as if she hadn't seen it and forcefully pushed his hand away.

"Do you know about the 1.5 million?" she asked him.

"1.5 million?" Noel was stunned. "The 1.5 million your mom gave me?" "That's enough!" Since he had acknowledged the existence of that money, Cecilia didn't care about preserving his pride anymore. She unleashed her inner pain into anger right there in public.

Swish!

Bills flew one after another, striking Noel's cheeks

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Noel was dumbfounded.

He wanted to speak several times, but Cecilia kept throwing money at him, preventing him from opening his mouth.

His head was spinning, completely bewildered.

Noel reached out to remove the bills that had been thrown at his face.

But Cecilia had thrown too many, and he couldn't catch up.

He felt a series of impacts on his face, and the edges of the coins kept scraping against his skin, leaving a small trail of lines.

"Cecilia!" Noel was starting to get angry. Even with the best manners, one couldn't withstand this barrage of coins hitting their face.

"What are you doing?!" Sue's humiliation was one thing, but the way Cecilia treated him... It was as if she wasn't sincere in wanting to meet him to talk!

"What am I doing?" Cecilia raised an eyebrow and mockingly smiled. "I'm doing what I want to do!" She looked at Noel, all the while continuing to toss more money.

The entire corridor looked like it was raining pink petals as the paper notes flew around Noel.

In the eyes of others, this scene was shocking.

But to Noel, it was incomprehensible.

"You like money, so I'm just throwing money at you!" Cecilia asked him. "What?"

You're willing to accept my mom's money, but not mine? Or do you think the amount I'm tossing at you is too little, and you want me to throw more?" As soon as she finished speaking... Bang!

Another thick bundle of bills rushed toward Noel. If he hadn't closed his eyes quickly, his eyes might have been poked out by them!

But now, he had regained his composure.

He might as well not have reacted; now, he just felt a profound sense of desolation.

Noel looked at the girl he had first fallen in love with—at Cecilia, who was now looking down on him from above.

He found the current scene rather amusing.

“Did your mom tell you that I took that money?” 1.5 million... Fulcher Inc. had been doing well in recent years, and Julian had been generous to him. Although his salary was just a typical executive’s salary, Julian had given him shares, and the annual dividends from Fulcher Inc. were far more than that amount.

Taking that 1.5 million from Sue was practically meaningless to him.

Even if it had meaning, he had no reason to accept that money.

Noel’s eyes briefly showed a hint of hurt. “Cecilia, do you think I have no dignity?” Cecilia was momentarily puzzled.

She didn’t understand what Noel meant by his words. “Dignity?” Was he really talking about dignity after taking the money?!

She smirked and retorted, “Are you saying you didn’t take the money?” How dare he talk about dignity after taking the money!

When she went out shopping today, Sue had given her some money. She thought it would cheer Cecilia up if she bought something nice.

Back then, Cecilia had even called Sue old-fashioned.

In this day and age, Sue was still handing her cash. It was heavy in her purse, making it tiring to carry.

Sue had said with authority, “You’re the daughter of the Jarvises. It’s okay if you don’t spend the money. If someone makes you unhappy, just throw money at them!” At the time, Cecilia had laughed. “Look at you, acting all lavish! It’s so different from your usual reserved self.” Why would she throw money at someone?

Originally, she brought it along in her bag to put her mom’s mind at ease, so her mom wouldn’t worry about her.

However, she hadn’t expected Sue’s words to be so accurate.

Just as her mother said, if someone made her unhappy, just throw money at them!

Right now, she couldn't stand Noel.

Not only did she want to use the money, but she also wanted to take her platinum bag and smack him on the head with it, leaving him battered and bruised.

However, she still had her decorum. Doing something like throwing money at someone in front of everyone was already pushing Cecilia to her limit.

Still, it felt satisfying.

She looked at Noel's expression.

It turned out he had his pride too; he knew what it meant to be embarrassed!

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Unfortunately, she had thrown all the money in her bag.

She wanted to continue pelting Noel, but there was nothing left to throw.

In Cecilia's eyes, there was a profound lack of trust.

At this point, whatever Noel said was useless—Cecilia simply didn't trust him.

In fact, it felt like she had never trusted him!

At this point, Noel didn't say anything further.

He simply crouched down, quietly picking up the scattered bills from the ground slowly. He lost count of how many bills he'd collected when he couldn't pick up the next one.

It was because Cecilia's foot had landed on his hand as he was trying to pick up the bill. She pressed down slowly, almost breaking his hand.

Seeing the conflicted and pained expression on Noel's face, Cecilia felt a surge of satisfaction in her heart. It was as if the pent-up frustration of these days had finally found an outlet.

"Does it hurt?" she asked him.

Noel replied truthfully, "Yes, it hurts." "That's good!" Why should she be the only one crying in her bed?

Why should she be the only one with no time to think about dressing up, while Noel got to enjoy the money from the Jarvises?

Men who only saw petty gains right in front of them weren't worthy of her!

"You should endure the pain," Cecilia told Noel. "Who told you to be so anxious to pick up the money from the ground just because you can't stand to see money disappear? Don't worry, this money is all yours. I don't want it." She wanted to use this money to buy his suffering!

She applied more force with her foot, and Noel's hands were subjected to what seemed like torture.

His forehead soon glistened with sweat.

Passersby thought something had happened here, and someone yelled for the manager to come and handle the situation.

Realizing it was Cecilia, the manager immediately called out, "Ms. Jarvis." Cecilia's spine straightened further. See, this was the influence of the Jarvis family! No matter where she was, there was always someone who could recognize her at first sight!

And what about Noel?

She gave a slight smile, a nod of acknowledgment to the manager, and then raised an eyebrow, pointing at Noel as she asked him, "I am Ms. Jarvis. Do you know who he is?" Noel lifted his head, revealing a handsome face. But because Cecilia was pressing down on his fingers, his facial features twisted, and there was a layer of sweat on his face.

When the manager saw his appearance, he froze.

This... This man, whom Ms. Jarvis was stepping on...!

Wasn't he the boss of this restaurant?!

Although Noel hadn't visited this Japanese restaurant since it opened, he had personally interviewed the manager during the hiring process.

The manager rubbed his eyes, and confirmed that he wasn't mistaken. Their boss was young and generous, treating their employees well and not hesitating to spend money on top-quality ingredients.

This was what had allowed the restaurant to establish itself quickly in the capital city's dining scene.

But now... Noel was in the restaurant he owned, being stepped on like this!

He was looking at the manager in agony!

The manager dared not say much, nor did he linger. After meeting Noel's eyes and claiming not to recognize him, he immediately retreated.

Simultaneously, he had a yellow warning sign placed at the entrance to this corridor, preventing anyone else from entering.

Seeing how efficiently this was handled, Cecilia's smile deepened.

"Noel, did you hear that? I can randomly pick out someone, and they will only recognize me, not you! They even went so far as to set up a warning sign to make it easier for me to step on your hand." Cecilia's tone was drawn out and laced with a particular kind of mockery.

"Noel, a princess and a pauper should never have gotten together in the first place." With that, she withdrew her foot, leaving behind a mess and a wounded Noel on the ground.

She exited the corridor, leaving him all alone as he crouched down and picked up those crimson bills slowly.

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Drip.

Noel was in tears.

After going through the ups and downs of a romance, the final words he received were, "A princess and a pauper should never have started in the first place." A princess? A pauper?

A painful smile played on Noel's lips as he picked up the money and rose to his feet, returning to the private room where he had been moments ago.

Upon seeing Cecilia's return, Diana thought that everything had been resolved between them.

Without even getting a chance to ask, she heard Cecilia say, "Do they have thick-cut salmon? I'd also like some drunken prawns." She seemed to be in a good mood.

It must have been settled.

Diana's lingering concerns were finally put to rest.

As long as they were on good terms again, she had no intention of prying into their privacy. She called the waiter over, and ordered, "Bring us some drunken prawns, with the top-grade tiger prawns." The waiter glanced at the room's number plate and said, "I'm sorry, but this room has been marked as off-limits in the system. You can't place any orders now." Diana was taken aback. "Off-limits? Why can't we order?" Fanny chimed in, equally puzzled, "Are you no longer accepting customers? Out of ingredients?" The manager entered the room with a smile at that moment and explained, "You are all friends of our boss, so every signature dish in the restaurant will be served without your having to order. There's no charge for it. It's a complimentary service." Upon hearing the manager's explanation, not just Cecilia, but Diana and Fanny were also left in astonishment.

The three of them exchanged glances. "Do you know the owner of this restaurant?" All three of them shook their heads, giving the same answer. "No, we don't..." This Japanese restaurant had only recently opened, and it hadn't gained much attention in Richburgh.

It had become a popular spot for hosting gatherings recently, but over this period, they hadn't heard the owner's name or had any inkling of who among them might know the owner.

Cecilia was the youngest among the three of them, and often the quickest to speak and the least thoughtful one.

She took a sip of water and asked the manager, "Who is your boss?" The manager smiled, but didn't provide a name. Instead, he turned around, took a bundle of money from the tray held by the server behind him, and placed it on

the table. "This is for you, Ms. Jarvis. Our boss wanted to return these to you."
Who owed her money?

Cecilia couldn't react for a moment.

"Your boss owed me money?" Why did she have no recollection of this?

"It's not that he owes you money. It's the money you just gave to our boss."
Cecilia was even more confused.

Money she had given?

When had she given money to someone?

Seeing that she had no clue, the manager smiled apologetically. "Our boss also has a message for Ms. Jarvis." Cecilia's curiosity piqued. "What is it?"
"The pauper truly isn't worthy of the princess." As soon as Cecilia heard this, the color drained from her face, and she turned pale.

She ventured, "Is your boss...Mr. Carter?" The manager kept a superficial smile on his face, and didn't answer directly.

Instead, he seemed to be intent on leaving as he turned and said, "Please enjoy your meal. If you need anything, I'll be here to assist." The manager didn't confirm it.

But he didn't deny it, either.