

Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 1521

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Upon learning that members of the training squad had also been consuming drugs, authorities quickly arrived. They retrieved Leonard's body and took it to the police station.

This sudden revelation led to the training squad's abrupt disbandment without prior notice. As for what would happen next, there was no news yet.

It was for this reason that Sean found himself released from confinement. He managed to get in touch with the people connected to the Fulchers, specifically Noel, who remained in Richburgh.

Upon hearing Sean's situation, Noel promptly went to fetch him.

Both Julian and Sean tactfully decided not to disclose these details to Diana.

They feared it would worry her, especially regarding Sean's experiences with the training squad.

However, Sean was resilient. Julian noticed a change in him when they spoke that afternoon. Sean seemed stronger and more independent than before, no longer feeling the need to rely on any organization to mature.

Julian thought that Sean would be disappointed after leaving the training squad.

However, Sean mentioned that he had already intended to leave before that.

He had tried to get in touch with them, but was suddenly informed that someone would take him away.

Despite this unexpected turn of events, Sean was genuinely thrilled at the prospect of returning home.

“I spoke to our son,” Julian began, “He told me that whether he returns to the training squad, it doesn’t matter. However, there are things he wishes to discuss with Oliver. He believes that the current training camp strays significantly from its original purpose established by our predecessors.”

“He’s grown so much,” Diana said, impressed with Sean’s maturity. “He never used to express himself this way.”

“He still doesn’t,” Julian admitted, “I had to pry it out of him and promised to arrange a meeting with Oliver.”

Diana harbored no resentment towards Julian for his delayed trip to Jacroaof, since it was caused by Sean. While she could be upset with Julian, she would never harbor any ill feelings towards Sean.

He was such a sensible child, and she felt blessed to have him as her son.

After hearing everything, Diana urged Julian to contact Oliver.

“You should call Oliver quickly and ask him how things have been lately. Also...”

Recalling the news she had seen this afternoon, she continued, “If you can’t reach him, just go to him in person.”

She wanted to confirm if Oliver had lied about Fanny’s death. After Julian left to make the call, Diana tried to contact Fanny.

As expected, Fanny’s number was unreachable. It looked like Diana had no choice but to wait for Julian to get in touch with Oliver.

For a while, there was no news.

The temperature in the bathtub was adjusted to be very comfortable for Diana.

There was even using an oxygen machine to ensure she had enough oxygen supply. She could operate the machine at any time to increase the oxygen concentration in the bathroom if she needed to.

Feeling at ease, she wanted to soak a little longer. She decided to call Nina to catch up.

Her journey to Jacroaof was initially intended to help Nina connect with someone new, hoping to deter the situation between Vans and Lina from another angle.

Diana wanted to help Nina regain what she rightfully deserved. However, things took a turn she hadn't anticipated.

"I nearly got myself into a mess," Diana confessed to Nina, her voice filled with both remorse and embarrassment.

"Nina," she hesitated for a moment before continuing, "While I was away, did you meet Vans? Is he still determined to marry Lina?"

"They're already looking at wedding dresses," Nina replied, with a calmness that belied the turbulent emotions she was feeling. "Honestly, if you're okay, that's already a relief for me."

Considering the tumultuous events of the past few days, it was astonishing how out of the loop Nina felt. This oversight highlighted how preoccupied Nina had been lately.

It was Nina who felt the most regret.

"Don't worry about me. I'll come over tomorrow to see you."

For now, they would put the topic of Vans on hold.

"Take care on your way," Diana said, concern evident in her voice.

After exchanging a few more words, they were still reluctant to end the call. As their conversation flowed, it inevitably shifted towards the topic of Fanny.

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Early the next morning, Nina decided to set aside her work. She left home promptly to check on Diana and her two children.

Lately, due to her involvement with Vans, Nina felt guilty. Not only had she caused the pregnant Diana undue stress, but she had also indirectly endangered her during the incident in Jacroaof.

And now, with Sean back home, Nina felt that she was becoming more incompetent as a godmother.

Compelled by her guilt, Nina didn't hold back while shopping for supplies. By the time she exited the supermarket, an hour had already slipped by.

With her hands full, she struggled to find a taxi driver willing to accommodate her and her purchases. Only after offering extra money did a driver finally agree to take her.

As she pondered her recent experiences, Nina considered it might be time for her to purchase a car.

She had been working for many years and had a bit of a career. She had no plans to leave Richburgh, and she was alone in the city.

In the future...

She didn't know how long she'd be stuck with Vans in this situation.

The dream she once held of settling down with someone she loved, marrying early, and leading a simple life seemed increasingly distant.

She didn't know why she was so insistent on being involved with Vans.

When Vans had asked her if she'd be willing to wait for him, even knowing he was about to marry someone else, she agreed. She realized that by consenting, she was agreeing to be his secret lover-a role she never thought she'd assume.

But still, she...

She chose a path that she would have despised in the past, and became a person she hated the most.

Such thoughts weighed heavily on her heart, making her despondent. Her smiles had become increasingly scarce lately. The sympathetic taxi driver, noticing the tears streaming down her face, kindly offered her some tissues.

“Do my eyes look especially swollen, sir?” she asked.

It wasn't just this morning, but she had been crying a lot lately. It was also the reason she hadn't met up with Diana all this time.

Nina feared showing up in her distressed state would only worry Diana more.

The driver nodded. “Yes.”

Nina handed the driver an additional fifty dollars. “Could you please pull over for about ten minutes?”

She needed a moment to collect herself.

She couldn't let Vans consume her thoughts any longer.

Rummaging through her makeup bag, Nina applied some cosmetics to freshen up her appearance, hoping to disguise the signs of her distress.

Above all, she didn't want Diana to see her in this state.

The driver complied, and Nina stepped out of the taxi. Although it was a bit warm outside, the air felt refreshing. Nina finally felt some relief. She wiped away her tears and cleared her nose, taking a moment to observe her surroundings.

The spot where the driver had parked was in a bustling district. Richburgh's youth often flocked to this area for shopping. Directly across

from where she stood was a building housing high-end brands, while across the street was a wholesale market offering more affordable goods.

Richburgh had always been inclusive, providing a place for everyone, regardless of background, to find their niche.

Having worked here for many years, Nina had developed a deep affection for the city.

Standing there now, her emotions surged. She remembered arriving in Richburgh as a naive girl from a small town, wide-eyed and inexperienced.

Through dedication and hard work, she had managed to establish herself in this bustling city.

She had once believed that with diligence and effort, she would carve out a comfortable life for herself, free from the troubles of her hometown.

Yet, she never anticipated the mess she would get herself into with Vans.

A whirlwind of emotions overcame her.

As she looked around, she observed the youthful faces, the enamored couples walking hand in hand, and...

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The unmarried couples standing together, appearing as a perfect match.

Not far from Nina, about a hundred meters away, right in front of an upscale bridal store with clear glass windows, she could see Vans accompanying Lina as the latter tried on wedding gowns.

Vans stood there, seemingly casual, but his gaze was fixated solely on Lina.

From his expression, it seemed like he was smiling, possibly praising Lina's beauty.

At that moment, Nina couldn't help but wonder who Vans truly loved deep down.

He had always claimed that his relationship with Lina was just an act, a facade for the Stanley family's peace of mind and to ensure his mother's better treatment within the family.

But... Did he genuinely feel nothing for Lina?

Ignoring Lina's whimsical nature, she was now, after all, the heiress of the Jennings family.

With her brother's protection and immense wealth, her demeanor quickly refined overtime. Given recent events surrounding the Jennings family, Lina had indeed changed significantly.

At least towards Vans, she seemed much gentler than before.

Lina was smiling back at Vans—a shy, affectionate smile, her face radiant with that unique glow of love.

It stung Nina's eyes and heart, almost causing her tears to flow once again.

Trying to hold back her emotions, Nina tilted her head upwards, hoping to suppress her tears. But just as she did, her eyes met Lina's. Her expression instantly soured.

Lina's expression fell instantly, and she said something to Vans.

Vans quickly descended the stairs. "Nina, why are you here?"

They hadn't seen each other for almost half a month, and his first words upon seeing her were questioning her presence?

"Yes, I shouldn't have come," Nina retorted sarcastically. "Clearly, I'm interrupting your bridal gown fitting session."

Vans gazed at her earnestly, promising, "Soon, I'll see you in a wedding gown.

As for Lina and me, you know it's just a show."

If he acted otherwise, the Stanley family would suspect his ambitions, putting his mother in a more challenging position.

She yearned for her husband's affection and care. Over the years, it was this hope that kept her going. Because she felt that her husband valued her, it gave her the strength to move on from past traumas.

It was a classic case of Stockholm Syndrome. A woman, hurt by a man, might convince herself she's fallen in love with him to lessen the pain.

Nina pondered this, thinking that perhaps it wasn't just Vans' mother who was in a pitiful situation.

She found herself feeling similarly about Vans, even though he was clearly causing her pain. Yet, when he spoke, making promises that she knew were unlikely to come true, she couldn't help but soften and say, "Okay."

Following Vans upstairs, Nina explained herself to Lina.

"I just happened to be passing by," she said, looking disheveled in contrast to Lina's radiant and refined appearance. "I didn't intend to disrupt anything. Vans and I have long since broken up. Rest assured, Ms. Jennings, he won't do anything to hurt you."

Now, Nina was complicit in Vans's deception.

She pitied herself, but she also pitied Lina. Feeling a sudden urge to reveal the truth, Nina hesitated, but Lina beat her to it.

"Really?" Lina asked.

Deep down, Lina knew Nina was lying. If Nina truly had nothing to do with Vans, she wouldn't have willingly come upstairs to meet her.

However, the Jennings family's influence had waned significantly due to recent events involving the Hughes family in Jacroaf.

If it weren't for the pharmaceutical industry being so popular in recent years, and the Jennings family's business was in Richburgh, things might have been worse for them.

He mentioned that he could have gone to jail because of the incident with Anna, and the Jennings may fall again.

Enzo had struggled to salvage what he could, and any misstep could lead to their downfall. With this precarious situation in mind, he cautioned Lina to not act too arrogantly.

Lina remembered Enzo's words. She had become more covert in her actions and dealings, especially with men

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Lina wasn't about to let go of Vans.

In front of Nina, she clung to Vans, wrapping her arms around his shoulders.

The two stood together, making a wonderful picture. Lina was in an exquisite, handcrafted wedding gown, and Vans was in a finely tailored black suit. They appeared like a match made in heaven.

For the first time, Nina noticed just how good Vans looked with another woman.

A pang of unease washed over her, prompting her to avert her gaze.

Lina wasn't about to let Nina off the hook so easily. She was determined to make Nina back off, and saw this as the perfect opportunity to rid herself of this threat.

"I've heard so much about you from Vans," Lina said, playfully leaning against Vans. "Ms. Ashlee, as Vans's closest female friend, will you be attending our wedding?"

His closest female friend? So that was how he introduced her.

Before Nina could respond, Lina threw another curveball." Vans mentioned you've been seeing someone. Is that true?"

While Nina was indeed involved with someone, that someone was Vans. Yet, with Lina's persistent questioning and Vans's silent complicity, Nina found herself unable to speak.

Her heart ached with an inexplicable pain.

"It's true," Vans said after Nina stayed silent.

He was weary from facing Lina daily, and pressured by his mother's insistence on staying connected with the Stanley family. Because of that, he had no choice but to keep up his facade with Lina.

The Jennings family's influence had waned recently. Lionel's current wife was pleased to see this situation unfold. Vans's marriage would not only benefit the Stanley family, but also ruin him.

This would ensure he could never be with his true love, and would never attain the woman he genuinely desired!

In essence, if Vans were to break things off with Lina, he'd have to be prepared for his mother to face dire consequences of the Stanley family's wrath.

How could he bear it?

His mother had suffered so much already.

He had seen her hurt herself, and had seen how she seemed to have found a newfound purpose in life when Lionel smiled at her.

Over the years, she had become somewhat unhinged and couldn't afford to get worked up.

Vans took a deep breath, locking eyes with Nina.

He had made promises to Nina, and he believed that by answering on her behalf now, she wouldn't mind.

After all, she loved him. She would be willing to compromise.

"I'm sure we'll hear good news from Nina soon," Vans said calmly.

Nina's heart skipped a beat, looking at Vans in shock.

What was he implying?

Was he hinting at a possible reunion with her?

The hope that had dimmed suddenly flickered back to life in Nina's heart. She looked at Vans with a hint of anticipation.

However, Vans avoided her gaze, refusing to meet her eyes.

Keenly observing Nina's reaction, Lina recalled how Vans had once defended Nina from some tabloid reporters-even going as far as to slap them in the dark.

With a teasing and mocking tone, she probed, "Really? Ms. Ashlee, who are you dating now? Are you also preparing for marriage?"

Nina refused to answer. Lina persisted, eventually confronting her directly, "Or could it be that you've set your sights back on my dear Vans?"

To match the wedding dress she was trying on, Lina had just painted her nails a soft shade of pink. Against Vans's dark suit, they stood out prominently.

She continued to tap and drag her fingers over the area of his chest.

Under those clothes, Vans had an impressive chest. Nina had once touched it with her hands, even complimenting his well-defined abdominal lines.

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Now, the hands that remained there have changed owners.

Nina couldn't express the mockery and bitterness deep within her heart.

After casting a glance at Vans, she said, "Ms. Jennings, you've misunderstood. I have a boyfriend."

As she uttered these words, her gaze never left him. Vans, however, didn't avert his eyes either. The two of them stood there staring at each other.

Seeing this, Lina turned red with anger, "Dear!"

Her hand trailed up Vans's chest. Without hesitation, she grabbed the back of his head, planting a kiss on his lips.

Vans wanted to pull away, but found no opportunity.

Lina held on too tightly. Given the weight of her wedding gown, if he were to push her away forcefully, she would undoubtedly fall.

If she did fall, it would be even more troublesome for Nina.

Vans didn't want to cause any more trouble for Nina, so he let Lina proceed.

However, to Nina, this passionate scene wasn't what it seemed.

She had thought that Vans and Lina were merely putting on an act. But now, it appeared there might be genuine feelings involved.

For the first time, she began to doubt her judgment.

“Mr. Stanley, Ms. Jennings, I’ll take my leave.”

Nina couldn’t bear to stay any longer.

Seeing her distress, Vans finally managed to find a chance to push Lina away.

He wanted to go after Nina, but was once again stopped by Lina.

The anger in her eyes was almost uncontrollable. Yet, Vans couldn’t care less.

“I’ll see her off.”

“No need.”

Sensing his dilemma, and perhaps softening a bit, Nina took out her phone. She flashed a bright smile as she waved it and said, “I’m meeting up with my boyfriend. He’s waiting downstairs for me.”

Lina’s interest was piqued. “Downstairs?”

She had assumed Nina and Vans hadn’t genuinely broken up, but now she realized she had misunderstood.

Lina refused to let Nina go. She wanted answers.

The staff members blocked Nina’s path.

Vans was on the brink of losing his patience.

Yet, unexpectedly, Nina spoke up again, “Yes.”

She approached the window, seemingly indifferent to Lina’s attempts to corner her. “He’s waiting downstairs.”

At this moment, there was indeed a luxurious black SUV parked below the bridal store. With a license plate full of sixes, it clearly didn't belong to an ordinary person.

"I'll head down first."

This time, Lina didn't stop Nina.

Downstairs, the taxi driver from earlier was growing impatient. Seeing Nina emerge, he demanded extra money for the delay.

"It's my fault for taking too long," Nina said generously, handing the driver a hundred-dollar bill. "Please put my purchases into that black SUV over there."

At that moment, Marcus Jensen was sitting inside the black SUV.

He had been filming all night yesterday. Early this morning, he discovered that photos of him and a female co-star from a few days ago during their rehearsal had been leaked.

They were even given misleading captions suggesting inappropriate activities in the room.

Despite the studio's clarifications, his fans wouldn't listen, believing that he was engaging in inappropriate relationships on set.

The damage to Marcus's image was severe.

Normally, he wouldn't bother addressing such matters himself. If fans abandoned him, it merely indicated they weren't loyal.

Furthermore, even if he lost all his fans, he remained unfazed. After all, he relied on his acting skills. Sooner or later, he'd gain new fans.

However, the journalist who leaked the photos had some connections with Fanny.

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Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 1526-The black SUV was entirely covered in dark-tinted windows, offering excellent privacy. One couldn't see inside from the outside, but from within, the outside was clear as day.

Watching Nina instruct the driver to place items at the back of their vehicle, Marcus's assistant was baffled. "Mr.

Jensen...' Marcus knew what he was about to say. His exquisite eyes revealed a hint of amusement as he glanced toward the woman outside the window.

She was a well-known entertainment journalist whom many celebrities despised.

Without exaggeration, her instincts were as sharp as a dog's nose. Though occasionally making mistakes like with him this time, most of her reports had been spot-on since she began her career.

Each revelation sent shockwaves through the entertainment world.

While everyone despised and relied on her simultaneously, Marcus was different. He neither revered nor detested her. He acted purely based on his mood.

Giving a subtle nod to his assistant, who had been by his side for years, the assistant instantly understood.

Reluctantly, he rolled down the window.

Just as Nina was about to knock on the window, she caught a glimpse of Marcus. Surprise flashing in her eyes.

This man...seemed like he knew what she was up to.

"I'll admit my mistake in leaking that information. Please don't take it to heart, Mr. Jensen,' Nina said.

“If you recognize your mistake, you should correct it,” Marcus said, feigning sleep, his beautiful eyes still closed.

Yet, Nina sensed his teasing undertone—he spoke to her like she was a child.

But she wasn’t that young anymore.

She just appeared...a bit youthful.

Involuntarily, Nina straightened up, attempting to appear taller. However, her petite stature combined with the oversized hoodie made her seem even more undersized.

Her ponytail swayed with every movement she made, giving her a youthful vibrancy. It made her look like a recent college graduate.

Even Marcus’s assistant was momentarily stunned by the scene. His expression softened a bit, mainly because he hadn’t expected Nina Ashlee, the person everyone in the entertainment industry was wary of, to appear so diminutive.

Unintentionally, Nina’s appearance had garnered some favor in her favor. She gestured towards the assistant. “Is this alright with you?”

Then, her gaze returned to Marcus. “Mr. Jensen?”

She had explained earlier that she intended to give a gift to a friend. Now, for some reason, she wanted to put the gift in his car.

In return, she would retract her false accusations against him and also offer an apology. This was undoubtedly a gamble, showcasing genuine sincerity.

For anyone else, this would be an easy decision.

However, Marcus was no ordinary person.

In a calm tone, he replied, “I don’t care.”

Why would he be here beside her if he didn't care? Was it not for that news?

While Nina's heart raced with these thoughts, she realized that Lina was watching from above, and Vans might soon join them.

At least for today, she wanted no trouble.

Witnessing Vans and Lina so close, dressed in wedding attire, would only make her feel humiliated.

"Why did you make the mistake?" Marcus suddenly asked, surprising Nina.

She had thought answering this would allow her to leave the gifts in his car. It would craft the illusion that she had a boyfriend waiting for her, as witnessed by the two from the second floor.

She responded honestly, "I've been distracted lately, always thinking about a man."

He pressed further. "Thinking about which man?"

Nina hesitated before replying, "My boyfriend."

So, she did have a boyfriend.

Opening his eyes, Marcus examined her once more. His gaze traveled down her figure, and he said, "Impressive."

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This man!

Marcus's casual and sarcastic demeanor infuriated Nina to no end.

Was he implying that having a boyfriend despite her modest figure was a worthy achievement?

"Come in," he finally said.

With Marcus's approval, his assistant immediately became more attentive. He stepped out of the car, and proactively helped Nina place the gifts into the vehicle.

Meanwhile, Vans had just descended the stairs from where Lina was located.

He knew Nina had lied, so he was worried.

Her complexion had looked bad, so he was worried something would happen to her...

Before reaching the car, from a distance, he spotted Nina laughing and chatting with a chubby young man.

Both of them were addressing a man named Mr. Jensen. The chubby young man then gestured for Nina to board the vehicle first.

Inside, he saw Marcus, the current top male star of the entertainment industry, who had recently been in the limelight due to Nina's article. It seemed they had some work-related discussions.

Seeing Nina seemingly fine with Marcus, Vans felt reassured.

Without approaching or showing any signs of distress, he decided to return upstairs.

Throughout the ordeal, he maintained his composure, never approaching Nina or showing any sign of heartbreak.

This indifference pained Nina deeply.

While she knew Lina was upstairs, and logically, it would be right for Vans not to approach her, she felt an overwhelming urge to cry.

She yearned for a moment where Vans would disregard everything for her sake.

Yet, he didn't.

Vans quickly headed back upstairs. Perhaps they would soon be celebrating, embracing each other—and for Lina's happiness, he might even kiss her.

Nina couldn't dwell on these thoughts any longer. If she did, she might impulsively step out of the car and confess everything to Lina.

"Ms. Ashlee is quite resourceful," Lina commented after seeing Vans return swiftly, a hint of amusement in her eyes." Marcus isn't bad, either. He's handsome and wealthy. Ms. Ashlee made a good catch. When she gets married, we must prepare a generous gift for her!"

Vans offered a faint smile in response, not engaging with Lina's comment but urging the makeup artist to work faster. Once they finalized the attire selection, he needed to return to the hospital for a scheduled surgery.

Observing Vans's distracted demeanor since meeting Nina, resentment flashed in Lina's eyes.

Slyly, she took out her phone and glanced at its screen. The scene from earlier where the assistant had helped Nina load items into the car was displayed prominently.

Even Marcus's license plate number was clearly captured.

Regardless of the nature of Nina and Vans's relationship, Lina was determined not to let them proceed any further.

If they couldn't let go of each other, she would force them apart!

Lina quickly reached out to a trusted individual. Using a different identity, she uploaded the video online with a headline that read:

[Marcus's girlfriend is someone else! It's none other than the universally disliked entertainment journalist, Nina Ashlee!] It was a ruthless move.

Given Nina's already controversial presence in the entertainment industry, her past exposure articles had earned her numerous detractors.

This piece of news not only went viral instantly, but also led to a massive uproar online. Fans of Marcus were in shock, with some even fainting upon viewing the video.

Meanwhile, Nina found herself subjected to intense online scrutiny. Netizens attempted to identify and locate her based on the video.

The situation escalated rapidly.

Before Lina could even change into her second wedding attire, she observed a slew of derogatory comments and memes targeting Nina.

Lina smirked as she scrolled through her phone.

Hah...!

If ensuring Nina and Vans's separation was proving difficult, she'd resort to destroying Nina directly!

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After destroying Nina, Vans couldn't possibly have any relations with her.

Lina was earnestly looking at her phone, and she didn't even attempt to hide her smile.

“Lina!”

Suddenly, she heard a stern shout-it was Vans. He had caught sight of her phone screen, and wasn’t blind to the smirk on her face.

“What did you do to Nina? Was it you who released that video?” he demanded.

“I’m sorry.”

Lina’s demeanor shifted instantly, tears streaming down her face.

“Vans, I just wanted to help Ms. Ashlee. I thought she’d want to go public with Marcus, given what a catch he is... If she’s with him, she’d surely be happy! Did I do something wrong?”

She clutched his hand, pressing it to her face.

“If you think I’m wrong, you can hit me! Really, you can!”

She closed her eyes, seemingly prepared for a rebuke.

Vans knew she was putting on an act. But if she wasn’t causing a scene, he struggled to pinpoint an argumentative angle against her.

After all, the story about Nina dating Marcus had originated from Nina herself.

To divert attention from them, she had falsely claimed her boyfriend was waiting downstairs, conveniently with Marcus’s car parked right there.

Meanwhile, Nina and Marcus remained oblivious.

With the renowned entertainment journalist Nina, Marcus’s assistant felt relieved, thinking he didn’t have to guard against any potential scandals.

The assistant, unable to resist, struck up a conversation with Nina. “Ms. Ashlee, how did you recognize our car?”

“It’s not just cars. I remember what your family members look like,” Nina replied with a smirk. “It’s part of my job.”

She tapped her nose playfully. “Sharper than a dog’s, remember?”

Amused, the assistant chuckled, wanting to continue their chat. But seeing Marcus’s displeasure, he quickly retreated to the back seat.

Left with no other distractions, Nina instinctively turned her gaze towards Marcus. “Thank you for today.”

“No need for thanks,” Marcus retorted without missing a beat. “You should thank yourself.”

After all, it was Nina who had released photos of him with other actresses, forcing this unavoidable confrontation.

Caught off guard, Nina hurriedly pulled out her phone, eager to clarify things with Marcus.

While Nina cared deeply about click rates and the exposure level of her entertainment news, she had never made such a grave mistake in all her years.

Vans had certainly thrown her off balance.

Every time she thought of him, it felt as though her heart had torn out of her chest. However, this emotional turmoil was quickly overshadowed by urgency.

Trembling hands held her phone, and her gaze shifted between the screen’s glaring notification and Marcus, her lips quivering with regret.

She had ruined him today!

Diana had arranged to meet Nina at her home.

With Sean just returning home and in a rush to see Nina, Diana decided to delay sending the children to kindergarten to give them more time with Nina.

The good friends had some catching up to do.

However, as time ticked on, there was no sign of Nina.

Growing impatient, Diana finally opted to call Nina.

However, every attempt was met with the same message:” The number you are trying to reach is currently busy.”

While Nina rarely received calls aside from salespeople, so it was unusual for this to happen.

Diana tried repeatedly, only to be met with a busy tone each time.

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Something was seriously amiss.

Just as Diana was about to contact Vans to see if he knew what was going on, Sean approached her with a grave expression, holding a laptop in his hand.

“Mommy, Aunt’s in trouble.”

He recounted the situation online to Diana, and showed her the video.
“Should I step in now to clear her name online?”

Nina was publicly being shamed on the internet because of this news.

Diana’s heart sank as she saw the blatant sharing of Nina’s real address and various manipulated photos.

“Sean, I’m counting on you!” she pleaded.

Apart from shielding Nina from these harmful online messages, Diana was concerned about Nina's safety. After numerous attempts, she finally managed to get through to Nina.

"Diana, I won't be able to come see you today," Nina said.

"It's okay," Diana replied, "I've seen what's going on online. Just take care of yourself, and don't go home for now."

Diana was worried about Nina's safety. "Does Vans know about this? Has he contacted you?"

Little did she know, Vans was at the heart of the issue.

Nina didn't even have the mood to talk about Vans at this moment. She sighed. ' Don't worry about it. I can always go back to the office if needed."

Diana could sense that Nina couldn't rely on Vans. She had once hoped to give both Vans and Nina a chance, but now, she felt deeply sympathetic toward Nina.

"Come to my place." Her tone was firm. "I'll inform security to upgrade all the facilities. You'll be safe with me."

Diana wanted to protect Nina, just as Nina wanted to protect her.

"No," Nina replied. "In this digital age, even if those people can't get to you, once they know I'm with you, Sean and Betty will be at risk. They're still so young. I can't let them get involved."

Just as Diana was about to continue persuading Nina, Sean interrupted, looking visibly distressed.

"What's wrong?" Diana asked.

"Mommy." Sean's face was creased with worry-a rare sight. "I've managed to delete all the information about Aunt that was leaked online, but..."

He paused, his face unusually serious.

“It’s not just fans now. Even ordinary netizens are joining in the backlash.

They’re saying that there are people behind Aunt Nina, daring to delete comments, and they’re determined to expose everything!”

Diana was taken aback by this turn of events. She was momentarily stunned, but Nina was quick to respond.

“Sean!”

Her voice was as clear as ever, reassuring Diana.

“It’s been a while! I’ve missed you! Thank you, Sean, for helping clean up online for me, but this is something for the adults to handle. Trust me to take care of it, okay?”

Ultimately, there were three main groups currently targeting Nina.

One group consisted of Marcus’s fans. They felt that Marcus shouldn’t be associating with Nina, a controversial entertainment reporter. They viewed it as a bad omen. They were determined to vilify her relentlessly, attempting to create distance between Marcus and her.

Another faction consisted of fans whom Nina had offended in the past with her exposure articles. They saw this as their golden opportunity to unleash their pent-up hate against her, and wouldn’t let it slip by. They also feared Nina would get too close to their beloved idol, so they intensified their attacks.

The harshest comments—accusations of Nina being shameless and blackmailing Marcus into being with her- and various curses and doctored images primarily originated from this group.

Lastly, there were general netizens outside these fandoms who, due to Sean’s efforts in cleaning up the online content, began to harbor resentment against Nina.

Sean could deduce the difficulties of the situation.

Despite Nina's attempts to comfort him, he felt guilty. Sensing Sean's conflicted emotions, Nina cleverly remarked, "Well, I deserve all of this, you know?"

Nina's voice held a teasing tone. "Because I'm truly with Marcus now. Sean, you're getting a godfather!"

Marcus was silent as he listened to Nina.

Was this woman out of her mind?

Even if he lost his sanity, he would never entertain the idea of being associated with such a clingy individual!

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Marcus glanced at her. "Nina Ashlee."

His tone was not heavy, but it carried a chilling undertone that made one's hair stand on end.

Nina realized she had misspoken, and had angered Marcus.

She quickly told Sean, "I need to do something with your godfather, so I'll hang up now!" Without waiting for Diana's response, she promptly ended the call.

"Do something?" Marcus leaned in so close that he was almost nose-to-nose with her.

The assistant's eyes widened in alarm.

He wanted to shout a warning, “Mr. Jensen, stay calm! You can’t kiss her!” But he didn’t.

With an eerie tone, Marcus asked, “Do what?”

His hand gripped her chin tightly, almost as if he intended to crush it, and he leaned in closer.

Nina could practically see every detail of his smooth skin and the subtle tremble of his thin lips.

Nina’s heart skipped a beat-not out of romantic feelings, but because the man before her was undeniably captivating.

Unlike Vans and Julian, Marcus exuded a chilling allure. Yet, his eyes were deeply passionate.

No wonder he consistently topped the entertainment charts as the most handsome man, according to public polls!

“N-Nothing...” Nina tried to avert her gaze to avoid his penetrating stare, but Marcus’s grip only tightened.

“If I hear you speak like that again, it won’t be as simple as that.”

His words were ambiguous, yet his chilling tone made Nina think otherwise.

“I’m sorry,” she quickly tried to explain, “my godson was worried about me, and to reassure him and his mother, I just w Marcus wasn’t interested in her explanations. He interrupted her, “Do you know Fanny Smith?”

Fanny!

Nina’s full attention was instantly captured. “Yes! I know her!”

She had discussed Fanny with Diana during their phone call yesterday, and now, Fanny’s name was making headlines.

Diana had sounded deeply concerned about it.

“Mr. Jensen, do you know Ms. Smith?” Nina asked.

Marcus hummed in response before saying, “You can’t go home today.”

He glanced at the back of the car. “Neither can I.”

Whether it was Nina or his home, both were likely surrounded by the media, waiting to capture a photo of them together, confirming their relationship.

Nina understood the gravity of the situation.

“You absolutely cannot have any relationship with me.”

Forming a connection with her would be even worse than getting involved with the female celebrity Nina had photographed. At least that wouldn’t completely tarnish his reputation!

“It seems you’re quite self-aware, Ms. Ashlee.”

Nina felt the man’s words carried a mocking tone, yet his expression remained serious, making it hard to pinpoint any flaws.

She pretended not to catch the sarcasm, and said earnestly, “Today’s incident started because of me. If anything happens in the future, I’ll definitely help you.”

“There’s something right now.”

Marcus seemed like a wolf, ready to ensnare her from the moment he laid eyes on Nina. He instructed his driver, “Go to the location I gave you earlier.”

It appeared his visit wasn’t solely related to the false reports about him.

Nina’s heart started pounding. “Are you here today because of Fanny?”

Marcus nodded. “She’s my benefactor.”

Now that Fanny was in trouble, he couldn't remain uninvolved.

The car sped away skillfully, and thanks to the driver's expertise, they managed to lose the trailing media vehicles after a series of turns.

Then...

The more Nina observed her surroundings, the more familiar they seemed.

Soon, she exclaimed in surprise, "Isn't this the house Diana bought before?"

"Diana..." Clearly, Marcus recognized the name and didn't avoid it. "Fanny currently resides here."

Fanny found herself cornered and dared not roam the streets aimlessly, fearing Oliver's people might capture her. After thinking it through, she could only seek refuge in this house where Diana once lived.

She knew Oliver had sold this house to Diana. Oliver probably never anticipated she'd seek shelter here.