

Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 1531

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Marcus and Nina had come, too.

The house they once found too remote before they lived in the far suburbs had now become their abode.

"In other words," Nina said, as shock grew in her heart, "Fanny didn't really die?!"

"She did. A spirit is living in this house," Marcus said.

Nina was stumped.

The car ground to a stop, and both of them stepped out of the car. Before they got out, the assistant gave Nina a set of men's clothes.

She felt rather embarrassed. "I don't need it. It'll be terrible if I dirty Mr. Jensen's clothes..."

"These clothes don't belong to Mr. Jensen," the assistant said, laughing. "Only his girlfriend has the right to wear his clothes!"

Nina's face flushed red. "I'm not..."

She didn't want to wear Marcus's clothes. She had never worn any man's jacket, aside from Vans's. Wearing clothes that didn't have his familiar scent felt strange for her.

"She's not my girlfriend," Marcus piped up. "Ms. Ashlee, I know you're taken."

It seemed this man had seen through their relationship when Vans chased after them just now.

There was irony in his eyes. He saw Nina lowered her head in a panic, as if she did something wrong.

After all, to many, she was a homewrecker. Even so, she was clearly the one who met Vans first.

The indignation she had been suppressing in her heart all along suddenly reared its ugly head. Nina looked down in embarrassment, not daring to look into Marcus's eyes.

"Watch out," he said, as he led her to the stairs.

The stairs here were very old, and one might bump his head at the last step.

Without warning, Marcus put his hand on Nina's head.

It felt fuzzy and warm. The sudden touch, and his unexpected thoughtfulness, made Nina's hair stand on end. She hurriedly stepped away, trying to keep her distance.

"I will, I will."

As she said that...

Bam!

Her head hit the corner of the staircase.

Marcus fell silent.

The assistant piped up, "The famous reporter Ms. Ashlee isn't an old woman, and she's also dorky and adorable...and even a little silly."

Nina was baffled. If she could, she would seal that assistant's mouth up with tape!

But all she did was chuckle and say, "These stairs aren't designed very well."

With that... Bam!

It happened again!

It was her second time bumping her head.

Fine.

“I might really be a little silly,” Nina confessed, on the verge of tears.

She had never been so embarrassed in her life. For some strange reason, she always felt a little exposed before Marcus.

She had this strange impression whenever this man looked at her.

One that...

Felt the same as when Vans looked at her.

That was how Vans looked at her when they first started dating. It was a passionate and amused look, yet filled with gentleness.

Marcus had the same look in his eyes when he touched her head just now.

However, Nina knew him to be the top actor in the industry, with insane popularity. Someone like him couldn't possibly be interested in her. He was just used to putting up an act. After all, he was used to playing devoted and loving male leads

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The two of them continued walking upstairs.

Nina paid extra care when walking, and managed to avoid bumping her head again.

The apartment Diana bought was on the fourth floor. When they reached that floor, the assistant swiftly pulled out the key to open the door.

Nina looked at him in shock. “You have the key to this apartment?”

The assistant nodded. ‘Yes, Ms. Smith gave it to me.’”

Fanny was in a very peculiar situation right now. Nina had no idea what exactly happened, but she paid close attention to the news and roughly knew that Oliver forced Fanny to pretend to be dead. He even confined her.

She was truly pitiful.

What’s more, she used to be Diana’s benefactor. The two had a good relationship.

Nina didn’t pursue the matter, but asked, ‘Where’s Fanny?’”

She wanted to see Fanny first.

“She’s not around now,” Marcus said. He entered the apartment first before letting Nina in. “If she doesn’t appear after one o’clock, I need your help to contact Diana Winnington to help us find her.”

So, that was Marcus’s true objective of reaching out to her today.

‘You know that I’m close to Diana?’” Nina asked.

‘Yes. Fanny told me that. Diana is Julian Fulcher’s wife, and he’s very protective of her. It was rather difficult for us to try to see her when we don’t know her.’”

It seemed Julian’s reputation of being a doting husband had spread far and wide.

Nina couldn’t help but feel happy for Diana. “Is Fanny safe right now?”

“I don’t know that myself,” Marcus said, looking a little down. All this while, his emotions were unreadable.

Seeing him like that, Nina instinctively tried to comfort him. ” That’s alright.

Diana and I wanted to find Fanny after we meet up. She'd go and look for Fanny, even without you asking."

Now, they had a clear goal in mind.

"She went looking for Oliver, didn't she?" Nina prodded.

Marcus nodded. "Diana went to the Channings to find Fanny."

Even a celebrity of his status was nothing but an amusing entertainer in the eyes of the wealthy and the powerful. He wasn't fit to rival Oliver, especially given his status.

And so, Diana had to intervene in this matter.

"Looks like Oliver really did something to let Fanny down," Nina said helplessly, as she thought of what had happened. "He used to dote on her so much in the past!"

Nina would always remember how Oliver gave her hush money after she took incriminating photos of them, all so she wouldn't affect Fanny's career.

He said that Fanny loved her job, and that she had worked very hard for her achievements. He wanted to protect that for her.

Yet now, the man who had so eagerly protected her in the past, was the same man who destroyed her career and even her entire life.

Suddenly, Nina recalled Vans.

Perhaps men were all like that!

Nina felt conflicted in her heart, and she even started feeling bitter toward Marcus.

Marcus wasn't pleased with the way she was looking at him. "How are you intending to deal with what's happening online?"

Deleting posts and shielding from malicious comments were impossible.

Everyone had the right to express their opinions, and everyone was their own media outlet. The more they try to hide things, the more it would backfire on them.

“I have no idea,” Nina said, rubbing her temples. ‘You’re more affected by this.

How do you want to deal with it?”

“Our studio will release a statement,” Marcus said.

“Will the netizens believe it?”

“It’s enough as long as people who like me believe it.” Marcus was very clear about things. ‘Those who don’t believe it will never believe it, no matter what I do.”

Marcus had given up gaining such people’s favor. What he wanted to protect were the fans who stayed with him despite everything that had happened, as well as his potential fans.

Nina was very supportive. “Let me know how I can help.”

She was the cause of all that happened, after all. She couldn’t evade responsibility.

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“The best thing you can do to help me is to pretend to be dead,” Marcus said plainly, ignorant as to how piercing his words were.

As they waited for news of Fanny, the assistant set up the equipment.

Marcus was intending to make his statement through a video.

The assistant was professional and worked efficiently, swiftly setting up a white background behind Marcus. He looked used to carrying these things around.

When he opened his luggage, Nina could see that it was filled with all sorts of filming equipment.

Her occupational hazard set in. Facing a superstar like Marcus, especially in such proximity, she itched for the chance to take some photos.

Click!

She pressed the shutter, and immediately saw the dark look on Marcus' face.

“Nina Ashlee!” he growled through gritted teeth.

The assistant was stunned. Marcus Jensen rarely showed such emotion, but he was behaving so abnormally today before Ms. Ashlee. He had never seen such life on Marcus's face, where signs of laughter and even anger finally graced it.

Something was wrong!

Motivated by his spirit of professionalism, the assistant asked, “Mr. Jensen, you seem to be displaying signs of falling in love with Ms. Ashlee. You must...”

Before he was done speaking, Marcus glared at him like he was an idiot. “Can't you see that she's taking photos?”

The assistant said, “I can...”

They were in the same room. As long as Nina stayed here, there was no way she could publish the photos and cause trouble for him.

Marcus clearly thought of that. He wasn't usually so muddle-headed, yet today, his assistant had to remind him of that.

His face turned dark with displeasure, and it remained so even during the video filming.

“Cut!” The assistant had to retake many times before getting a good shot.

However, the feedback they received after uploading the video wasn’t positive.

Some even commented that Marcus was in a relationship, but was denying it.

Things escalated to the point of accusing him of not taking responsibility for a woman. It was starting to get out of hand.

Once gender started getting involved, everyone wanted to have a say. It was the current buzzword for views, and many influencers hopped on the bandwagon in discussing the topic.

In an instant, Marcus’s and Nina’s names became viral on the internet. A cult rooting for them to get together emerged around an hour later.

“The internet’s filled with strange people,” Nina sighed, feeling rather awkward about the turn of events. “Mr.

Jensen, I’m sorry for getting you involved.”

“It’s fine,” Marcus said, looking at the woman before him. With a half-smile, he added, “As long as you take responsibility for the trouble you caused.”

A bad feeling rose in Nina’s chest. However, it was true that she couldn’t shirk responsibility. She bit the bullet, and asked, “How do I do that?”

“Just don’t make me look like a player.”

He had a reputation to keep, no matter how excellent his acting chops were.

Even his usual supporters were showing signs of wavering. He had to correct his image, pronto.

“Nina Ashlee, go out with me.”

He was being serious.

Nina laughed out loud. “Mr. Jensen, that’s funny.”

Between the two of them, one was a reporter disliked by everyone in the entertainment industry, while the other was a top A-lister. How could they possibly get together?!

What’s more...

“I have a boyfriend.”

“I don’t mean for real,” Marcus retorted with disdain. “Now that things have come to this point, the only way to combat the comments online is to announce that we are together.”

That would make it easier for his studio to release an announcement to dispel the rumors accusing him of being a player, and help him gain public favor once more.

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Nina thought it was a bad idea.

“It’s true that I was the cause of all that happened, but we can’t just cover up the mistake like this,” she said, analyzing the situation for him.

“Mr. Jensen, I haven’t clarified my end of the story. If you announced that we’re together, it won’t undo the damage on your reputation. In fact, it might even worsen things.”

“It won’t,” the assistant said seriously, unlike his usual lighthearted demeanor.

He had his glasses on, and began explaining meticulously to Nina.

“Ms. Ashlee, take a look at this document.”

It was an Excel sheet detailing the persona of every single celebrity in the industry. Marcus’s line described him as a gutsy yet tragic main lead persona.

“We’ve discussed and decided that since public opinion is raging at this moment, why don’t we ride the waves and shift Mr. Jensen’s persona?”

Competition was getting increasingly intense in the entertainment industry.

Although Marcus was awarded the Best Actor award once, many producers have recently begun favoring celebrities with tragic main lead personas.

Celebrities who were popular and boasted huge fan bases were, in turn, not as greatly favored.

Marcus was very outstanding, but it wasn’t enough for him to rely merely on that one award he won. His handsome looks made people doubt that he had won the award with his merit alone.

The mere mention of that upset his assistant.

“Over the past two years, we’ve been finding the perfect opportunity to switch Mr. Jensen’s persona. To think that the best chance has come amidst this crisis.”

He raised the example of a previous superstar.

“That senior was a top A-lister, a male celebrity on a global level. But after he made an official announcement that he was taken, he was lambasted on social media. Despite that, time proved that he made the right decision. His persona shifted from a popular young celebrity to a man with guts and resolve. He had his hands full with taking on roles in many mainstream drama series.”

The assistant’s eyes lit up with admiration. Then, he turned to look at Nina pleadingly.

If she remembered it right, the assistant had looked at her in disdain just a few moments ago. What a sharp and astute person he was!

Nina looked away in embarrassment. Her face was turning red under his stare.

Marcus was a good judge of character; over the years, he had earned the reputation of being a prestigious actor in the industry.

Many young ladies in showbiz had expressed their interest in him. Some bolder ones even knocked on his door.

Everyone was so bold and unrestrained in their desires. With time, he started thinking that all women were like that, and found them dull.

However, Nina was different. She had a pure and innocent aura usually seen in youths fresh off campus. It was hard to imagine her as an editor-in-chief capable of exposing many in the industry.

She made one think of a gentle and harmless deer or rabbit, so furry and cute that one can't help but pinch her cheeks.

"Your boyfriend won't mind it," Marcus said almost seductively.

Nina felt embarrassed; she looked down and clenched the hem of her shirt. "He will."

Yet, her resistance sounded so weak. Perhaps she was just trying to lie to herself.

Everyone could tell that Vans was completely invested in Lina. Nina was deathly afraid that the facade between them might turn into reality.

Marcus could sense the hesitation in her. He leaned in close, a stark contrast with his arrogant and cold demeanor earlier. His fair, dewy skin was akin to a pure white piece of paper, searing right through her eyes.

His features were sharp as he said in a mesmerizing tone, as if showing her concern, "It's a good thing if he minds it, isn't it? Don't you want him to care about you?"

Of course Nina wanted that! But she wasn't that daring.

"Are you afraid he'll get angry?" This man! How was he able to keep guessing what she was thinking?!

"I find something rather strange," Marcus went on.

This was his first time seeing Nina in person. If it weren't for Fanny, he would never have had the chance to meet the much-hated editor-in-chief in his entire life.

For the first time, he was glad that he came to see Fanny today.

"How does someone like you hide in the grass to take photos and spread rumors of people like us?"

The mention of her profession made Nina suddenly feel that bit more confident.

She pushed her black-rimmed glasses up her nose.

"What do you mean, someone like me? Can't someone like me take on a job like this?" She loved being an entertainment reporter

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Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 1536-Although Diana paid little attention to entertainment news, she started reading news regarding Fanny out of worry since she heard about what happened to Fanny.

One of the news articles she read mentioned Fanny's good friend in the entertainment circle, Marcus Jensen. After going around in circles, things have come back to Nina once more.

"They probably aren't really together," Diana said, despite not fully knowing what was going on.

She snuck a glance at Julian. She thought about the indignation in Nina's tone when they spoke over the phone yesterday.

"...But they might really be together now."

She wasn't very pleased with Julian because of Vans.

Although it wasn't fair to punish Julian over something that was Vans's fault, she couldn't help herself. Her heart ached so badly for Nina, who waited for Vans for so long.

Yet, he kept her waiting so hopelessly. He even refused to let her go, even after getting married. He was a player through and through!

"Don't call Vans. He's not worthy of your comfort!"

Julian saw the Diana's cold expression, and immediately rejected an incoming call.

"Coincidentally, Vans called me and I rejected it."

"Good," Diana said, finally satisfied. "Leave him be! Ignore him."

"How's things over at Oliver's end?"

"I can't contact him," Julian said, "He refuses to take my calls. Perhaps we should just do as you suggested and go to the Channings' residence to find them if there's no news by one o'clock."

If Fanny was there, Diana was sure her and Julian's presence might be of help.

She wanted to know what exactly was going on between them. No matter how big a fight they were having, Oliver shouldn't have confined Fanny and tricked all of them by claiming that Fanny had died.

"To think so much has happened right after we returned," Diana lamented as she slumped on the couch.

“These things already happened a few days ago. We were too occupied with our own affairs to care about theirs,” Julian said, finally finding a chance to point out Diana’s mistake. “Also, you shouldn’t have brought Betty to Jacroaof all by yourself.”

Diana felt guilty to hear it. She was thinking about what she should say to appease his anger, when he took the initiative to hug her.

“Don’t ever leave my sight in the future.”

His voice carried a hint of warning, but it disappeared very soon, replaced by sweet words of confession.

“Forget it. I just can’t be fierce to you.”

His hand landed on her swollen belly, and she felt its warmth emanating. She burst out laughing.

“Come to think of it, I was quite the bastard in the past.

There were many occasions I could have clarified myself, yet I didn’t. I was a really difficult person to deal with, but my love for you has never changed,”

Julian said.

Diana was pregnant, and her memory had been getting worse as of late.

However, she was no fool. Her face changed in an instant.

“Are you trying to speak up for Vans?”

Julian was shocked, and immediately refuted, “No!”

Diana didn’t believe him.

He clung onto her, and kissed her face repeatedly.

“I’m not, I’m really not! No matter who Nina ends up with and whether she really is taken, Vans is the one at fault! He let Nina down! Completely and utterly!”

Diana nodded in satisfaction.

It was the only response she could manage, as her heart began racing. She even began panting due to Julian’s touch.

Seeing Diana finally giving up on pursuing the matter, Julian stopped fooling around. He was worried about affecting the babies.

“Honey, look to your right.”

Diana’s arms were still wrapped around his neck. She was too immersed in the moment to even turn her head.

That was when she heard a clear, crisp voice.

“Mommy.”

Diana felt as embarrassed as a school girl caught sleeping in class by her teacher. She immediately buried her face in Julian’s chest, and smoothed out her ruffled hair.

“Why didn’t you say earlier that Sean was here?!” Her shy face brought a smile to Julian’s eyes.

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“Honey, I’m innocent! I only just saw Sean!” Julian said.

It wasn’t good for them to be all over each other in front of the kids.

Diana left Julian’s embrace after tidying herself up, and waved to Sean. “Sean, you didn’t go up and rest?”

“I’m not tired,” Sean said with a cheeky look, “but Daddy, Mommy, if you need some space to yourselves, I can go back upstairs again.”

Just listen to him! Why did he bear such a striking resemblance with Julian’s wicked side?

Diana mumbled under her breath, then smiled at Sean. “We don’t need space to ourselves. Do you need something?”

“Nothing,” Sean said. “I just want to tell you that I like this new godfather. He’s a responsible man.”

He passed Diana his tablet. “Look.”

Marcus’s social media account saw a ten-fold increase in the number of comments, which were for a post he just uploaded.

“We’re together now, accepting each other for who we are. But she’s not from showbiz, so please don’t attack her.”

That post successfully defended his reputation as a protective boyfriend.

Unfortunately, Nina’s reputation in showbiz was too poor, and Marcus’s post was lambasted by many.

He went on to upload a video. In it, he shared about how he and Nina got to know each other.

“At the start, I went looking for her because she reported falsities about me. But after we met, she admitted her mistake and explained that it was because she was misled by her ex-boyfriend, which resulted in her negligence at work. She apologized sincerely to me, and even recorded an apology video before I even sought her out.

“If I hadn’t fallen in love with her at first sight, she would have published the apology video. But I fell in love with her- with her independence and professionalism in her work.”

Marcus’s eyes were filled with love and devotion as he spoke.

Diana couldn't help but glance at Julian. "Are they really an item?"

Julian knew less about Nina than Diana did. However, he could always keep calm and remain level-headed. "Don't forget that Marcus is an actor."

That was true.

Diana nodded, and continued playing the video.

"I, like everyone else, hated entertainment reporters. But I saw how serious she was with her work, glowing whenever she was at her computer doing work. I asked her, "Do you really enjoy this job? What good is this job?""

Marcus paused for a moment.

It wasn't because he was at a loss for words, but because he was so overcome with emotions. The happiness and love in his eyes were clear.

"Guess what she said?"

His voice felt as pleasant as a spring breeze. Coupled with his handsome face, he was truly enchanting to watch. Diana couldn't help but click on his next video.

It was a continuation of the previous video.

"She said that what she really loved was the money."

This video was very short, with just that sentence Marcus spoke, but Diana could see the overwhelming response from the public.

Everyone understood how difficult it was to earn money, and that sentence bridged the barrier between Nina as an entertainment reporter and Marcus's fans in an instant.

Aside from this smokescreen, many comments were about the love in Marcus's eyes, which was clear for all to see.

Diana couldn't help but leave a comment herself. She put her hand over her chest, saying, "Why am I getting affected too? My heart is beating so fast..."

She lamented, "Marcus is simply too convincing. His PR team is amazing, too."

This script... Why does it seem as though he wrote the script himself?"

She slowly came back to her senses, and looked at Julian in excitement.

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"I think Marcus is really in love with Nina!" Diana looked at Julian with hope in her eyes, looking as if she were Nina's mother.

Julian said indifferently, "Maybe." He folded Diana in his arms, pensive. In reality, he felt anxious for Vans.

Meanwhile, Vans was also reading through the news, which kept coming.

He initially thought that Nina might be playing along with Marcus to sensationalize matters, but afterward, he watched Marcus's video and started feeling antsy. He had the same thoughts as Diana.

Rage contorted his usually-calm face, but no matter how many times he tried to call Nina, no one picked up.

Left with no choice, he turned his attention to Diana and Julian, who didn't pick up his calls either. It was fine if Nina didn't answer his calls, but even Julian was avoiding him now. Vans knew whose idea it was.

This time, Nina was truly done with him.

At this moment, Lina was no longer in the mood to try her last gown.

She gripped her phone tight, looking coldly at Vans. He was in vehement denial at the start, but was now clearly emotionally unstable. He slowly cracked under the emotional pressure.

She glared at him. “Vans Stanley! You two haven’t broken up, have you? You still love her, don’t you?”

Vans was good-natured, but that was provided that he wanted to be nice to the other party. Now, he was clearly at his limits in tolerating Lina’s behavior.

He glared coldly at her, a mocking look in his eyes. He didn’t know if he was mocking her or himself, but he retorted, “That goes without saying.”

With that, he grabbed his jacket, making a move to leave the boutique. They were surrounded by many people, including the make-up artist and the service staff, who witnessed their fight.

Lina felt utterly humiliated. She had never been this embarrassed her entire life!

She clenched her fists, and yelled at him, “Vans Stanley! If you dare step out of this place, I’ll call off this wedding immediately!”

That was precisely what he wanted!

Vans didn’t feel threatened one bit. He was already being very kind to Lina, but she repeatedly caused harm upon Nina. He was thoroughly disgusted with her.

“Whatever you want!”

With that, he headed downstairs without looking back.

Lina was left stunned on the spot. Her face turned pale, and her fingernails dug into the flesh of her palm.

A service staff stammered, “Ms. Jennings... Do you still want to try on the gown...?”

“Try on the dress?!” Lina glared at her, and slapped her face. “So that all of you can laugh at me?!”

Her nails were so sharp, they left scratch marks on the staff’s face.

Lina ignored it and continued yelling at her, finally stopping only when the service staff began sobbing uncontrollably.

Vans was on the first floor. Upon hearing what happened upstairs, he rushed out of the boutique without hesitation.

He wanted to find Nina.

In the face of a woman as vicious as Lina, he had to remain firm. That was the only way to deter her from making a move on Nina!

As for their engagement...

If she called for an annulment, he would thank her instead!

It was nearly one o’clock.

There had been no news of Fanny.

Marcus looked grimmer as time went by. “Looks like she might really be in trouble. We have to go find Diana Winnington right away.” Nina was shocked. “You want to find Diana too?”

It was technically enough for her to just tell Diana about such things. In fact, one phone was enough for her to explain things. There was no need for Marcus to go to the Fulchers’ with her, and risk getting photographed.

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“We’ve officially announced that we’re together. It’s only appropriate for me to meet your friend,” Marcus said with an arched brow.

He gave his assistant some instructions; very soon, a gift hamper was delivered to their doorstep.

“This is for Ms. Winngington. It’s packed full of items suitable for babies and pregnant ladies.”

Marcus said, “Don’t worry. Things will be different now that we’re officially together. Even if someone takes a photo of us, you don’t need to be scared of that.”

He added seriously, “TH always be standing right in front of you.”

He was an actor, but at that moment, Nina almost forgot he was one. She was completely lost in the tender look in his eyes.

Thankfully, she came back to her senses just in time.

She looked away awkwardly, and said, “But the official announcement was only because we had a deal with each other. When you can shift your persona and the public stops throwing shade at me, we’ll break up. You really don’t need to be so concerned about my friends, my godson, and my goddaughter.”

“Ms. Ashlee, you’ve been in the workforce for so many years,” Marcus said with a charming smile.

The sensation was like a warm spring breeze on one’s face. When he drew close to Nina, her mind immediately went blank. She stood stunned for a moment before avoiding his gaze.

“I’ve been in the workforce for many years. Mr. Jensen. What are you trying to say?”

“What I want to say is that you’re no newbie to the workforce, and you probably understand how relationships work. How can you not know who I’m actually showing concern to?”

He was a handsome man with a magnetic voice. His words made her heart race.

Nina wasn't a newbie in the workforce and was a good judge of character herself, but she couldn't see through Marcus.

From his surprise appearance at the first floor of the wedding boutique, to unwittingly being rumored to be together with him and getting lambasted online, from signing an agreement with him to be officially announced as a couple, and finally the video he filmed in all seriousness of his heartfelt confession...

Through all these things, he didn't say much yet managed to hasten the progress of their relationship from strangers to a couple in name.

"You must have had many ex-girlfriends, Mr. Jensen," Nina said, deliberately drawing the line between them amidst the ambiguous atmosphere.

"You're wrong about that. You're my only one."

Nina was perplexed for a moment, before she managed to wrap her mind around what he said. "You've never been in a relationship before?"

"That's right." Marcus nodded. "Is that hard to believe?"

He went on with an arched brow, "Seems like my girlfriend doesn't know enough about me. That's alright. We have all the time in the world to get to know each other better."

Nina shook her head, and reminded Marcus, "Mr. Jensen, we're dating only by contract. I hope that we can remain as strangers in our daily lives."

"Sure."

Marcus, his assistant, and Nina walked out as they talked. The three of them got into the car.

Marcus looked straight ahead, and warned with a half-smile, "I hope you won't regret it, Ms. Ashlee."

The smile didn't reach his eyes, and carried careless irony. His eyes were unreadable.

Nina followed his line of sight, and saw a huge black car stopping right in front of them. It was Vans's car.

They had picked out his car plate number together. He didn't drive this car out to keep a low profile in front of the Stanleys.

Yet today, he chose to drive it for Marcus to see.

Nina was glad to see that Vans did care about her after all. She instinctively wanted to open the door and run to him.

However, she thought of how he treated her and Lina today at the wedding boutique. Her hand pause midair.

Click.

The door was locked shut.

It was Marcus.

He sat where he was with a smile, but it felt cold. Nina instinctively knew this was his true colors.

A cold and uncaring Marcus Jensen.

In that instant, Nina concluded that he couldn't possibly like her.

He was just deliberately provoking and flirting with her.

He was like a wolf lurking in the darkness, treating her like a prey that he could pounce on anytime. She felt assured being in such a relationship with him.

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She stared at Marcus, who looked back at her. "You want to go see him?"

Nina nodded. "Yes, I do."

He would never force anyone to do anything.

Click.

The door was unlocked.

Nina stepped out of the car. She then turned to Marcus, and asked, "Aren't you coming out too?"

Marcus was stunned. The amused mockery in his eyes faded, but he went along with her without a word.

Nina held his arm, and walked toward Vans.

Vans's face was dark with displeasure. "Nina."

Whenever they were at the peak of passion, Nina had a penchant for biting him, and he would grunt like that. It sounded like sandpaper and waves crashing against a hard rock at the same time.

It sounded so deafening to Nina, her heart shook. She instinctively wanted to let go of Marcus.

Marcus sensed her intention, and grabbed her hand. "Mr. Stanley."

He placed Nina's hand back on his arm, and stretched out his other free hand.

"I'm Marcus Jensen, Ms. Ashlee's current boyfriend."

He said it with a tone of provocation.

Vans wasn't about to back down. "Is that so? What a coincidence. I'm her boyfriend, too."

Marcus said with feigned shock, “Mr. Stanley, did you break up with Ms. Jennings? I heard that Jennings Pharmaceutical Co. has an alliance marriage arranged with the Stanleys, and it involved the two of you.”

The mention of Lina immediately weakened Vans’s threatening posture.

However, he was frequently by Julian’s side. He was adept at playing dumb to take advantage of someone.

He wasn’t naturally of a gentle and mild demeanor. At this moment, Marcus’s words simply blunted his edge slightly.

“That’s none of your business, Mr. Jensen.” With that, he reached out to Nina.

“Come with me.”

He didn’t want outsiders around when they resolved issues between them.

Nina looked at him, and then back at Marcus.

Then, the scene she witnessed of Vans and Lina looking like a match made in heaven just this morning at the wedding boutique flashed past her mind.

Vans didn’t show her any favor at that point. He didn’t defend her or stand up for her at all.

On the contrary, she did so much for him.

Her heart clenched with pain.

“No.”

Her hand remained firmly on Marcus’s arm, with no intention of moving toward Vans.

Vans's face darkened even further, and he growled, as if trying to suppress the raging storm in his heart. "Nina Ashlee!"

Nina had made up her mind. She held onto Marcus's arm, and said, "Mr. Stanley, if there's nothing else, we'll be off."

Vans's brow arched as he saw Nina turn to leave. "If there really is nothing, why did you come out of the car to see me? Was it just so you could inform me that you have a boyfriend? Nina Ashlee."

Vans added with absolute certainty, "Seems like you care a lot about me."

With that, he drove off before Nina made it to the car.

"Forget about a man like that," Marcus said upon seeing her tears roll down her cheeks uncontrollably. He glanced at her and entered the car first to wait for her, giving her time to herself.

Nina stood unmoving in the same spot for five full minutes.

She had no idea what went wrong between her and Vans, but she knew for sure that the chasm between them was getting wider by the minute.

He cared less and less for her by the day.

Even today...