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Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 161

Kayla occasionally pulling such a stunt was in fact proof of her love for Julian.

It was time to have a proper talk with Kayla. This was what Julian had in mind when he made his way to her room, only to find it empty. His heart skipped a beat, and it felt like someone had stabbed him with a knife. It was as hard to breathe as the day he learned that Kayla had disappeared three years ago. He was in such a state that he almost stumbled as he went downstairs.

"Where did Kayla go?!"

"She returned to the Winnington residence, sir," Mr. Carter replied with an oddly pale face, not daring to say more than needed.

Julian felt air enter his lungs when he heard that and heaved a sigh of relief, collapsing on the couch.

It was good she hadn't disappeared.

If something happened to Kayla because of him, he would be miserable the rest of his life.

As he cycled through his anxiety and relief, Diana watched coldly from the sidelines. She slowly crossed her arms, adopting a defensive pose as she spoke with faux calm, "Don't worry, I don't intend to remain in the Fulcher family any longer than necessary. As for Grandma... She did have a little misunderstanding about what went on between us, but I believe as long as you intentionally hide it from her, our...divorce will be a lot

easier."

After going around in circles for so long, Diana still wanted a divorce.

Julian was now somewhat convinced that Diana was serious about the divorce, even if just a little. She wasn't playing hard to get, it was really because...she didn't want to be involved with him any longer.

"Is it because of the baby I made you abort, or because of Oliver?"

Whenever Diana heard Julian mention the child, her heart would tighten in fear that he would pick up on something else and become angrier. Fortunately, she was smart and strong enough that she wouldn't waver, even if he stared unblinkingly at her.

Without allowing the panic she felt to show on her face, she replied, "Both."

Since he already misunderstood everything, it was simpler to continue keeping him in the dark.

Julian lowered his head, his mood plummeting deeper. He felt even more horrible than when he couldn't find Kayla a few moments ago. The air in the hall was terribly heavy, but he didn't lose his temper this time. He only gave Diana a disappointed look.

It was a look that made Diana doubt if this man did love her or not.

However, that was impossible.

Julian's disappointment in her should be because she had a face similar to Kayla's and tarnished her image.

in his heart.

That was all there was to it.

As a stand-in, she should know her place.

Luckily, Julian didn't insist on rebutting her words at this moment.

"Fine. I agree to the divorce."

It seemed despite Kayla's unacceptable actions, she was still more important to Julian than anything else. Just by saying that Kayla was having a difficult time and that she couldn't afford to wait, was enough to make him compromise.

They were childhood friends, and he yearned for Kayla endlessly. Even after he got married, he never forgot her. He even projected his feelings on Diana, who had the same face as Kayla, when his sweetheart suddenly disappeared.

He was such a loyal man.

Diana's eyes were damp, but it was only for a moment before she resumed her indifferent look. "Good."

Julian watched her half-lidded eyes, and she looked too obedient to be true. A pang of annoyance shot through his heart. "But you've overestimated my abilities when it comes to Grandma."

Diana was stunned. "What do you mean?"

"I learned everything I know from Grandpa and Grandma." Julian didn't understand why he had the patience to explain to Diana now that Kayla had left, but he continued, "Even though I made Fulcher Inc. into what it is today with my own power, Grandma... If there's anything major, it'd be difficult for me to keep them from her."

When all was said and done, Diana, living in the old mansion, shouldn't alert Madam Fulcher to anything.

"Move back into the villa," Julian suddenly said. "Didn't Grandma think you were faking your pregnancy?"

Diana nodded in confusion. What was going on? The two had clearly reached an agreement to get a divorce! So why, just a few seconds later, was Julian asking her to move back into the villa?

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Move back into the villa...

Wasn't that more dangerous than not getting a divorce?

Diana subconsciously touched her stomach, warning bells ringing furiously in her mind.

However, Julian argued his case. "We just need to tell her that we know we were wrong this whole time, and that we'll definitely aim to let her hold her great-grandson this year. If you coax her well enough, she'll definitely let you move back here. After a while, when she lets her guard down, that'll be the time to go through the formalities and get divorced."

Next time, there wouldn't be any more accidents.

"Don't worry," Julian said when he saw Diana frowning.

She was shooting him a suspicious look, clearly reluctant..

Pushing forward, he gave her another assurance. "I won't let Kayla wait too long."

Diana was the one who reminded him of this.

Seeing that Julian had finally listened to her properly, Diana didn't know if she was more heartbroken or joyful to finally get her divorce. She didn't have time to sort through her feelings, so she simply nodded as she looked into his deep, dark eyes. "Alright."

Julian had used Kayla as a promise, so she knew he wouldn't lie to her.

After getting her agreement, Julian immediately ordered, "Mr. Carter, ready the car."

Mr. Carter didn't expect the discussion to turn in this direction. He had initially thought that Diana would

never return, but now....

After getting beaten up by Julian, Mr. Carter didn't dare say anything unnecessary. He grew a little worried. when he thought about Diana's belongings. Before, Julian had asked him to put them in storage...

Instead of doing that, Mr. Carter had thrown everything away. They had long since been taken away to the dumpster, and it would be impossible to retrieve them.

Since Diana was returning to the villa, Julian would definitely ask Mr. Carter to take everything out of the

storage.

What would he do?

Mr. Carter mulled over this problem for a while, but thought better of it and quickly called Noel. When he returned from his errand, cold sweat was visible on his forehead.

“Sir, the car is ready.”

Julian gave him an odd look, then shifted his gaze to Diana and said, “Let’s go.”

”

He even offered his arm like a gentleman as he had usually done when they went out in the past, but Diana ignored him and walked right past him and climbed into the car.

Julian didn’t mind, and calmly withdrew his arm before following behind her.

“If you want to get a divorce, you’d best go along with me when we arrive at the old mansion, even if you can’t forget Oliver or the child-”

Diana cut him off impatiently. “Can you stop bringing up the baby in front of me all the time?”

Even though the baby was still well and alive in her belly, she could still feel his ruthlessness when she recalled what had happened that day! It didn’t help that every second spent beside Julian was already a form

of torture.

But... She had to endure so that she could get a divorce before she started to show.

Julian could understand how important a baby was to a mother, and he also felt that he was too cruel every time he mentioned the baby. Yet, he couldn’t help but want to bring it up all the time he saw Diana, because he wanted her to get angry. It was only when he saw that she was suffering because of Oliver or their baby that he felt better.

This was the last bit of pride he had as Diana’s husband, albeit only on paper.

In the end, when he saw the unshed tears in Diana’s eyes, he shoved down the gloominess in his heart and agreed. “Alright.”

He wouldn't bring it up again.

He also hoped...that Diana wouldn't cry again.

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They soon arrived at the old mansion Grandma was all smiles when she heard that Diana was moving back to the villa. She turned and asked Julian, "Where's Kayla? Is she still living at the villa? I won't allow Diana to return there if that woman is still there!"

Diana felt her heart warm at Grandma's words. It was touching how the old woman was always looking out

for her.

It was obvious that Julian hadn't considered that. He had wanted to bring Kayla back to the villa the next day. but now that Grandma had brough

up this topic, he couldn't help but reconsider.

It was inconvenient for Kayla to stay at the villa before his divorce from Diana was finalized, and it would be bad for Kayla's reputation if word got out that she was staying with Diana in the same villa.

On top of that, Grandma would also be angry.

Now that Kayla's vocal cords were in a stable condition and it would be fine as long as she continued going to checkups in the hospital, there wasn't much need for her to be at the villa.

"I won't let her return," Julian replied. He would let her stay at the apartment he had given her before. It was close to the town center, and it would be easier for her to go to the hospital for her checkups.

Since he and Diana needed to put up an act for his grandmother, he had to make sure it was realistic so the older woman would soon drop her guard. When she did, he would have the chance to finalize his divorce with Diana quietly.

Diana was stunned by his answer. She didn't come back to her senses until she returned to the villa, only to find the servants busy redecorating her bedroom. Even then, she was still confused.

What on earth was going on?

How did she return to the villa in a trance?

"Are you sure Kayla won't be angry with you now that I've returned to the villa?" Diana asked, turning to look at Julian, who was standing to the side.

"You seem very concerned about my relationship with Kayla," Julian said, sounding unhappy, but Diana was already used to his tone by now.

Sometimes, it was hard to be certain whether the warm, doting man she knew in her past three years of marriage before Kayla appeared was an illusion.

"I'm not," she said, looking away guiltily. She was afraid that Julian would see through her thoughts.

She only hoped they would be fine for as long as they could be, and give her baby plenty of time to grow.

Julian narrowed his eyes and looked at her intensely when he heard her reply. When she noticed this, Diana realized that she would never satisfy the man before her, no matter what she did or said, simply because she

was not Kayla

Besides, it was also because of her that his sweetheart had been forced out of the mansion.

Diana considered this, and then told the servants to stop what they were doing. "I don't want to stay in this room."

Kayla had lived in this room, making her feel uneasy about moving back here.

Julian was quick to disagree with her. "Why?"

After all, this was originally her room.

“Once we divorce and Kayla returns, she won’t be happy to see that the room’s filled with my things again,” Diana said in a placating tone. “Oh, Julian. If you want to keep her, I suggest you listen to my advice more.”

Diana was so considerate of him. She was his wife, yet she was doing something that no ordinary person could tolerate: helping him defend and maintain his relationship with another woman.

How ridiculous!

Julian avoided her gaze and said, “Just stay here. There are no other rooms.”

There were so many other rooms in the villa. How was his statement possible?

Diana wanted to argue, but seeing how dark his face had gone, she didn’t object and sighed. “These aren’t even my things, and it’s not like I’m the same person I was. We’re just putting up the act for Grandma, so why does it matter where I stay?”

It had been less than a month. Though some things remained the same, people had changed.

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Julian paused. Then, he said, “I already told you that we have to put up a realistic act. You need to move back into the villa and your room.”

With that said, he watched the servants setting things up in the bedroom silently before heading downstairs.

“Mr. Carter.”

Mr. Carter was in the kitchen, speaking with the chef about the next day’s dishes. When he heard Julian calling him, cold sweat broke out on his head.

“S–Sir...”

“Come with me to my study.”

“I’ll go with you, sir,” Noel said.

Usually, Noel only stayed in the villa if he had something to do. However, he hadn't left today. Julian studied the father-son pair and instantly understood.

"Alright."

When the door to the study closed behind them, Noel knelt before Julian. Mr. Carter followed quietly and stood in the doorway, placing his ear to the door to listen to what was happening inside.

"Mr. Carter is hostile toward Diana," Julian said, his eyes fixed on the heavy wooden door of his study. He turned to sit on the couch and looked coldly at Noel.

Julian didn't tell Noel to get up, but his tone became more frigid. "This disobedience has happened twice!"

Noel clearly knew which incidents Julian was referring to. When Julian had gone to the old mansion, Carter had called Noel and explained everything.

"My father was wrong," Noel replied, not arguing. "Please do as you see fit, sir."

Mr.

Julian raised an eyebrow, his tone melting into something unreadable. "Then what are you doing, kneeling to me?"

"I'm kneeling because I know my father was wrong. As his son and the highly paid assistant and child raised by your family, I was also at fault because I didn't stop him in time."

Noel was apologizing in his own way.

Julian nodded. Not hearing any nonsense defense from Noel put him in a slightly better mood.

However...

"I won't allow anyone like that to be by my side," Julian said, glancing at Noel. "There's a whip on the bookshelves. Whip yourself ten times. Treat this as a warning and punishment. I won't pursue the matter with Mr. Carter, but if there's a repeat of this, I won't forgive it so easily!"

With that said, he stood abruptly, swiftly headed for the door, and opened it.

Mr. Carter, on the other side, flushed at the sudden motion and tumbled into the room. Julian easily sidestepped the old man, clearly having no intention of helping him.

It took a lot of effort before Mr. Carter could right himself and avoid losing his dignity before Julian.

“Not bad for a Fulcher family butler. But you still have too much on your mind,” Julian threw out his parting words before he left without glancing backward.

Soon, the sounds of whipping could be heard. Noel didn't go easy on himself, let alone before Mr. Carter. He understood that Julian had been extremely generous by not punishing Mr. Carter, and was instead punishing him to ruthlessly remind the older man of what it meant to be a Fulcher family butler.

However, this scene only pained Mr. Carter. He knew the Fulcher family rules like the back of his hand, and that Julian had an extreme personality because of his upbringing. He was also aware that he had broken the rules this time, so he didn't hate Julian for treating his son this way.

Instead, his hate went to Diana Winnington.

He hated how she indirectly complained to Julian. Did she think he was stupid when she mentioned how things were different and that people had changed? She was simply expressing her displeasure about the fact that he had thrown away her things!

It was no wonder that Julian didn't love her. Kayla's understanding and compassion were so much better than hers!

Diana was just a shady villain and some hillbilly from the countryside!

Mr. Carter watched as his son whipped himself, his face pale from the pain, and silently made a note in his heart.

He vowed to get revenge on Diana, sooner or later!

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By the time everything was cleaned up and settled, it was already ten at night.

Diana's appetite had gotten better as her nausea and retching had decreased recently. She would crave something spicy and sour if she wasn't sleeping at this hour, such as sour and spicy noodles or soup...

If the dish had more chili and vinegar, it would be delicious for her and dispel the urge to throw up. However, these kinds of food were merely junk food to Madam Fulcher and Julian. From the beginning of the marriage, she wouldn't get to eat any of those dishes unless she went out with Nina.

Julian thought the food wasn't hygienic. Plus, as Mrs. Fulcher, Diana needed to be mindful of her image.. Others were bound to make a big deal if she ate such cheap food.

Madam Fulcher would retire early for the night when Diana lived at the old mansion. When her craving was particularly intense, she would order takeaway in secret. It was easy to do so back then, and she wouldn't be caught. Yet, here....

Looking at the brightly lit study, Diana somewhat regretted moving back in.

She thought about ignoring her cravings at first, but the more she thought about it, the more she wanted it. She could almost taste the spicy and sourness on her tongue. If she didn't eat it tonight, her stomach would churn uncomfortably!

Oh, what a heartbreaking craving!

"Ugh!" Diana rolled under the covers and gave in, calling for takeaway in secret. When placing her order, she included a note for the delivery person to contact her directly and not to alert anyone else in the villa.

Thirty minutes after she placed her order, she finally received a call and rushed down the stairs. She completely overlooked Julian, standing at the side of the stairs.

Julian was speechless at how Diana had acted. What was she up to? Did she rush downstairs because Oliver was here?

Narrowing his eyes, he slowly followed her.

Sure enough, Diana made her way sneakily to the door and cheerfully spoke to whoever was on the other side after opening it. The look on her face was....

Something he used to see when they were still in a happy relationship.

Thinking of the child Diana had, which was proof of her betrayal, a spark of irritation burst through him. He marched toward them. He didn't expect Diana not to return the same way she had come, and instead took another path back to her room.

She was clearly excited about something!

Had they reached the point where they couldn't even put up a simple act? Was Diana so impatient because she was lonely?

Julian glanced at Diana, and noted she clutched something to her chest like it was precious to her heart before disappearing around the corner. Anger still coursing through his veins, he called the guard at the door. to detain the man about to leave.

"Oliver!" Julian snapped, pulling the cap off the man's head. "I'm warning you-"

Julian abruptly cut himself off and froze when the man's face came into view. "...Who are you?"

The delivery boy was confused at the turn of events, and he trembled at the intimidating man before him as he stuttered, "I-1...!"

The poor boy could barely string words together and finally felt silent at Julian's deathly glare. The guard studied the man and finally took pity on him and replied, "Sir, he's a delivery boy for food."

Julian had never ordered ordinary takeaways, and he assumed that all delivery people drove sportscars and wore black suits and white gloves. He had a hard time wrapping his head around the revelation.

Glancing darkly at the boy, he confirmed the boy's appearance before telling the guard to release him. "What did you deliver to that woman just now?"

It would be equally unacceptable if Oliver sent this delivery boy to give something to Diana!

"N-N-Noodles, a-and..."

“A love letter?”

It would be something a scumbag like Oliver, who wouldn't admit his relationship with Diana and not even. protect his own child, would do!.

The delivery boy was astounded. For a moment, he thought it was a joke and was waiting for a punchline. When it didn't come, he gradually calmed down and replied properly, “I delivered some noodles and spicy soup, sir.”

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This was bliss!

That was the only thought in Diana's mind as she picked up her utensils and took a bite of her hot noodles and a sip of her spicy soup. Popping a piece of meat in her mouth, she savored the flavor on her tongue as

her toes curled in satisfaction.

Oh, it was just so delicious!

As she ate, she added more vinegar to the dish. The more she ate, the more hungry she got. She managed to finish two servings in a single sitting.

Whoa, she really broke the record this time! She had thought it would be impossible for her to finish both dishes.

She hadn't expected her appetite to be so good. It must've been because it had been a stressful day trying to hide and endure everything Julian threw at her today. Now that most of the things had been resolved, she was binge eating!

After a satisfying meal, she couldn't resist the urge to rest.

Even so, she still forced her tired body to collect the takeaway containers and head downstairs to throw them in the rubbish bin that the servants used. That way, Julian wouldn't find out about this... Right?

But when she snuck back into her bedroom, she suddenly realized there was someone else in her bed.

“Diana.”

Julian narrowed his eyes as he sniffed the air that was heavy with the smell of vinegar. “Your taste seems to change frequently, and you’ve been eating a lot lately.”

Was it because the Fulcher family kitchen wasn’t providing enough food for her? To the point she needed to call for takeaway in secret?

Never mind that she had ordered takeaway, but eating junk food was bad for her health! She just had a miscarriage. Shouldn’t she be more concerned about her body?

A wave of anger washed through Julian when he thought about her not caring about her health.

Diana’s legs turned weak when she saw the man before her. She didn’t know why Julian was in her room. Even though she called it her bedroom, essentially, this was the room they both shared. While Kayla had lived here, he hadn’t entered it.

So, Diana didn’t think they would be in this situation now, and that Julian would be on her bed.

Wait! Did he mean that her eating spicy and sour food was abnormal? He couldn’t have figured out that she still had the baby, right?

D*mn!

Diana became increasingly worried as thousands of thoughts ran through her mind. She hurriedly ran to the window to open it and air the room, hoping it would elevate Julian’s suspicion.

“I’ve had...strange tastes lately, making me want to eat different things.”

Tears instantly welled up in her eyes. She tried to recall how Kayla would play the role of a pitiful victim, and mimicked the latter’s pitiful tone. “These are all symptoms of pregnancy... I don’t know why I still have them. I don’t have the baby anymore, but the symptoms aren’t going away.”

The question of the baby’s father aside, Diana was still ultimately the baby’s mother, and Julian had denied her the right to be one.

In fact, he had denied her that right for the past three years.

The guilt Julian had shoved ruthlessly to the bottom of his heart came rushing back with a vengeance, and he didn't pursue the matter. He simply frowned and said, "You should take care of your health and not eat so much junk food."

Diana didn't think her tactic of acting pitiful and shedding some tears would work so well in dispelling Julian's suspicion, but she easily rolled with it and said, "Okay."

Julian hadn't seen such vulnerability in Diana for a long time, and he sighed somewhat helplessly. "If you suddenly have any cravings, just let me know next time. I'll get someone to buy it for you. You don't have to sneak around and order takeaway like this again."

Diana's eyes widened in surprise when she heard that.

He would...buy it for her?

It wasn't like they were back to their intimate relationship, right?

Julian obviously picked up her question by the look on her face, so he added uncomfortably, "Grandma will think I'm making it up to you when she finds out. She'll be happy to know that I'm treating you better, and it will make her lower her guard sooner."

His words washed away any confusion she had, and she immediately understood. It wasn't like Julian cared about her anyway, right? It was impossible he was concerned and wanted to buy her food whenever she had cravings. He simply wanted to put on a realistic act for the sake of getting a divorce.

But... Wasn't he putting a little too much effort into this?

Diana glanced at the man lying on the bed, his collarbone inadvertently revealed when he shifted. She blushed at the sight of his exposed skin.

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Diana had to admit, Julian's features were attractive no matter where he was. Even though she didn't think too much about it, she felt uncomfortable when Julian's deep eyes were fixed on her.

His presence in this room was simply too overwhelming.

Clearing her throat, Diana waited for the man to leave. When it was clear he had no intention of doing so, asked seriously, "It's already late. Why aren't you leaving?"

Julian seemed more surprised than her when she voiced her question as if she had said something

pathetically stupid. "We're not divorced yet."

she

The man was more serious than her as he explained, "If we stay in different rooms right after reconciling,

how would it look to Grandma?"

Grandma would instantly know that they had lied. Julian's words did make sense...in a way.

Still, something was still weird. Plus, Diana didn't want to sleep on the same bed that Kayla had slept in. She quickly said, "I'll sleep on the couch."

The couch could be pulled out to be a small single bed. Though it wasn't big, it was comfortable enough for one person. Diana quickly thought about it and knew it would work, so she turned around to get a quilt from the cupboard.

Snap!

The room suddenly went dark.

"It's late," Julian's low voice came through the darkness. "Hurry up and sleep."

Diana was speechless. Sure, he could sleep since he was already in bed, but what about her?! She hadn't even

had time to make her bed!

Having been plunged into darkness so abruptly, Diana couldn't get her eyes to adjust so quickly and didn't dare move for fear of tripping over something. She stood stiffly in place as she waited for her eyes to adjust.

Snap!

The small night light beside the bed lit up.

"You're so annoying," Julian said, his brows wrinkled in displeasure. He glared half-heartedly at her and quickly stood and dressed. "Hurry up and come to bed!"

Looking at his movements, Diana deduced that he was asking Diana to sleep on the bed, and he would take the couch. Seeing how Diana was standing unmoving in place, he even reached out as if he was going to carry

her to bed.

This was too much!

Diana couldn't help but shrink back at Julian's furrowed brows.

"Don't touch me!" Her sharp voice echoed through the dimly lit room.

Later when she thought about it, she did feel that her reaction was excessive. But at this moment, she could

only recall the same look on Julian's face when he forced her into the operation theater.

Back then, he had carried her in. From then on, his arms and embrace became a nightmare for her.

She thought she could maintain a superficial peace with Julian and put on a strong front, but it turned out that there was a deeply rooted fear inside her that she was unable to hide.

There was no denying it. She resented his touch.

Julian's eyes turned cold, and a snort followed. It was soft enough that Diana thought she had misheard it, but she didn't have time to think about it as she heard Julian throw himself on the couch bed, and he let out a soft hiss.

He had bumped the wound on his back when he landed on the couch. It was still a little bruised from where Diana had pushed him at the hospital, and he had hit the lock. Throwing himself on the couch was unwise as he hit the corner of it...

Ugh. It hurt.

However, Diana didn't even come over to check on him.

"Tsk. Good intentions are always misunderstood, aren't they?" Julian grumbled under his breath.

Anger flared

up when he recalled how Diana had taken a step back at his outstretched hands. He rolled over on the couch with the intention to sleep facing inward.

However, the two buttons of his pajamas were still unbuttoned.

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Diana was afraid Julian would catch a cold. That would be troublesome, so she went to get a quilt and laid it over him before climbing into bed. Once she lay down, however, thoughts of how Kayla had used this bed made her feel uncomfortable. She couldn't settle down. However, Julian was already occupying the couch. Though he didn't explicitly say it, she knew he didn't want her sleeping there.

Diana couldn't understand what was going on in Julian's mind, so she simply accepted this and tossed and turned all night. The following morning, she woke up with dark circles under her eyes as she didn't sleep well.

By then, Kayla was already sitting downstairs.

Kayla regretted returning to the Winnington residence last night, especially since she received a tongue-lashing from Lucy and understood her position

better. Julian was already showing signs of being moved by Diana, and Kayla shouldn't have fallen for Diana's tricks and caused a scene.

Sure enough, when she returned early in the morning to put up a pitiful act for Julian, Mr. Carter informed her that Diana had moved back into the villa last night.

That stupid b*tch! She really knew how to exploit a situation!

So now, Kayla sat at the dining table, her gaze fixed on Diana. The scathing look she directed at Diana made it seem like Kayla wished looks could kill.

However, the angrier Kayla was, the more Diana could ignore the fact that Kayla had stolen her design. Diana knew that if she didn't openly admit she was D&J, she couldn't do anything about Kayla at this stage. No one would go against Fulcher Inc. for her, as they wouldn't believe her.

Her main priority for now was to make Kayla unhappy, and her purpose had been achieved. In fact, Diana now felt a little glad that she moved back in last night, as it served to fuel Kayla's bad mood.

Either way, Diana wouldn't hold back when dealing with Kayla after this plagiarism incident. After all, holding back would only encourage such people to go rampant.

"You're here," Diana said as she walked downstairs slowly, looking tired on purpose. "I'm a little tired from last night. Sorry to have kept you waiting."

Wasn't Kayla a two-faced b*tch? Well, Diana could also use the same methods to deal with her,

As expected, Kayla couldn't take the jab. Her face turned bitter. "Julian..."

Kayla trailed off, seemingly choking on her words before continuing, "Did Julian sleep with you last night?"

"We're a married couple, so of course he did. Did you expect him to sleep with you at the Winnington residence instead?" Diana replied with a chuckle as she rubbed her sore back.

If Kayla's eyes could spit fire from how angry she was, Diana was certain she would be dead.

Diana still couldn't figure out why Julian wouldn't even touch Kayla up till now. It was strange because obviously, Kayla had spent more time with Julian than her.

Kayla was about to throw a fit, but thinking of Lucy's instructions, she forced herself to hold back and greeted Diana with a smile. "You're tired out from last night? I'm not feeling well, so I'll have to trouble you a little longer."

In other words, Diana was her stand-in, so this was something she was also substituting for Kayla

Sure enough, Diana's face soured slightly when the matter was brought up. It was a wound she had buried deep in her heart, and it was puzzling to her that Kayla would know to bring it up in a situation like this.

When Kayla saw the shift of emotions on Diana's face, she smiled smugly. Her mother was right. To be a proper lady, one had to be calm and endure..

She even took the initiative to get up and pull out a chair for Diana. "Come and sit. Breakfast has been prepared."

With that said, she called out to Mr. Carter. "Have them serve the food. I'll check on Julian."

She acted as if she was already the mistress of the residence and a proper hostess.

Diana couldn't help but shake her head and lamented how overeager Kayla was. The key to Diana and Julian's divorce was actually Madam Fulcher, so Kayla was putting in effort in all the wrong places in Diana's

eyes.

She was entirely devoted only to Julian.

When Diana observed this, Kayla didn't seem too terrifying anymore. She definitely wasn't a threat to her or her baby's safety. It was her parents and Julian's attitude and bias for Kayla over Dian that had made Diana subconsciously exaggerate Kayla's ability.

Kayla stood from her seat. Seeing the dazed look on Diana's face, she smiled and deliberately moved forward, raising her leg....

And stomping down on Diana's feet.

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"Oh dear..." Kayla purposely looked at Diana with huge, innocent eyes. "Are you unhappy I'm here, Diana? If you are, I can... leave..."

Diana froze in pain. She didn't have time to think about why Kayla was acting up again and could only feel the stinging soreness on her feet.

After all, Kayla was wearing heels.

It was fortunate Diana was sitting down. If she had been standing up, Kayla's action might have caused her to fall

When Diana thought of that outcome, her face twisted into an unsightly look. She shoved Kayla away, snarling, "You're crazy! Get off me!"

Kayla collapsed to the ground in one smooth motion and looked at Diana with an aggrieved expression. Her voice was muffled as she cried, "D-Diana W-why?"

"What's the point of pretending?" Diana was unused to seeing her in this state. "You clearly stepped on my foot first. I didn't cry from that, yet you are?!"

Besides, Diana hadn't used a lot of strength when she pushed Kayla. Yet, Kayla sat on the ground as if she was hurt. Who would she put on an act for?

-Julian!

Sure enough, Diana turned around to meet a pair of angry, dark eyes.

She should have realized that Kayla wouldn't kick up a fuss with her without any reason.

"Kayla, does it hurt?" Julian came to her side and helped her up, looking pained, as though Kayla's pain was his own. His whole body was tense with anxiety. "How about your throat? Does it feel worse? You've been crying a lot lately."

Kayla sobbed and fell into Julian's arms. "Julian. I'm fine. I settled in your house when it was obviously not my place before this, and I came here today uninvited. It's only natural Diana would be angry with me."

Her statement not only highlighted her pitiful state, but it also declared that she had returned to the villa early this morning, covering up the embarrassment of how she had left on her own accord last night.

Diana couldn't be bothered to argue.

She ignored the intimate scene between her husband and her sister before her as she rubbed her foot. After a while, she went upstairs to change out of her nightgown that Julian had touched the previous night, and washed her hands before returning to the dining hall

She calmly sat back down on the chair, serving herself breakfast. She drank milk and ate all kinds of sandwiches, and even slices of bread. She didn't eat a lot, but it was obvious she had a good appetite.

The more she ate, the more the taste felt familiar. It tasted exactly like how Julian used to make them.

Huh. Was it necessary to make the act so realistic to this extent?

Diana shrugged it off and wiped her mouth after eating. She planned on returning to her room to rest,

ignoring Julian and Kayla the entire time.

Julian got angrier as the minutes passed, and he finally reached out to pull her arm and said, "Diana,

apologize to Kayla."

Diana was speechless at his order. "Why? Because to you, I'm the one staying here when it's not my place? Is that it? So whether I was in the wrong or not, I have to apologize to Kayla regardless?"

Julian furrowed his brows. "I saw you push her with my own eyes. There wasn't a mistake!"

"Then, did you see how she stepped on my foot?"

“Julian...” Kayla whispered. “I was going to call out to you then, and I accidentally stepped on her...”

“Yes, so you don’t have to apologize, but Diana pushed you on purpose and used a lot of force. The person who purposely did something should be the one to apologize,” Julian finished, glaring at Diana.

It was true Diana had shoved Kayla away, but whether it was forceful or not, only Kayla and Diana knew best.

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If Julian insisted on continuing his probing, then Diana would insist on telling the complete truth. Sadly, Diana knew Julian didn’t care about it at all.

Julian may go on and on about justice and fairness, but at the end of the day, he would still favor Kayla regardless of the facts.

What had Diana expected?

She laughed mockingly to herself. It was because Julian had given her the bed last night that she felt that perhaps he wasn’t as cold and cruel as she thought.

In the end, that was only wishful thinking. It wasn’t because of that.

It was only because Kayla wasn’t around, and perhaps when he saw Diana’s face last night, he only thought of Kayla and was considerate toward her.

She had spent three years as Julian’s stand-in wife, so how could she not understand how he thought?

He treated her well because he was good to Kayla. In his mind, Diana Winnington didn’t exist.

Diana was going to divorce him, and Kayla was the one he wanted to love and spoil. Diana had finally figured this out last night, and the reason for her restless night was ridiculous now that she thought of it.

She strode up to Julian, looking like she was about to apologize, but then simply put something in his pocket. Then she turned to Kayla and said, “Bye-bye, birdbrain!”

Birdbrain?

For a moment, Julian and Kayla failed to react to what Diana meant by that. Kayla first came around and shrieked, “Did she just call me stupid?!!”

Julian remained frozen before he finally realized that Diana had slipped something into his pocket. He lowered his head and pulled it out, to find that it was actually their marriage certificate.

Did she carry this around with her everywhere?

There was an imperceptible hint of happiness in Julian’s eyes, but he also quickly understood why Diana had thrown their marriage certificate and called Kayla a birdbrain.

This wasn’t an apology. It was an insult!

Julian apologized to Kayla and quickly explained, “I should’ve picked you up last night, but because of Grandma, I had to help Diana move back in. I didn’t expect you to return so early in the morning or be ridiculed by Diana.”

Kayla stared at the document in his hand, her eyes burning with envy and jealousy as she looked at the two people in the photo. She tried her best to smile despite the burning rage. “I thought it was impolite to run off like that so suddenly... I was also afraid that you’d be worried, so coming back on my own was the least 1

could do.”

“But doesn’t this anger you?”

“No,” Kayla said, gesturing to the marriage certificate in his hand. “It’s for the sake of our future, so I can

put up with anything now.”

This implied that sooner or later, she and Julian would be married.

However, Julian didn’t share the joy in her determination. Instead, he felt something heavy in his heart, but he was unwilling to think about it.

He said, “Don’t worry. I’ll make sure Diana apologizes this time. She won’t have anything to eat until she does.”

Last night, Diana had ordered takeaway even though it had been late. Julian didn't believe Diana could endure it if he starved her!

He passed the instructions to the servants and spoke to Diana. Even though he informed her that she wouldn't have any food until she apologized, it didn't seem to affect her. He could even hear her humming

after he left the room.

It seemed the period of withholding food from her wasn't long enough, so Julian ordered the servants not to bring any food to Diana in any shape or form, and returned to work.

When he returned home for dinner in the evening, Diana still hadn't come downstairs.

As for the servants, none of them had sent even a glass of water upstairs, as per Julian's instructions.