

## Read Novel Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 281-290

### Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 281

This was the second time Julian had run his hands over Diana's stomach. Last time, he had touched her at the same spot when he thought she was in pain due to her period, and had brought her to the hospital afterwards.

Back then, she hadn't known about the babies in her belly. But this time...

The threat he had given her still rang clear in her mind.

Diana looked down at the slender hand resting on her lower abdomen. Yet, she didn't feel the longing and warmth that she remembered in the past.

At this moment, she could only fear terror for him.

She feared he would attack her babies, and she feared....

That he would disappoint her yet again.

She raised her hand and pushed his hand away. "Don't touch me."

Her voice was loud and cold, though tinged with a hint of fear.

The back of Julian's hand turned red from where she had hit him.

She had used a lot of force when pushing his hand away.

He looked down, staring at her hand before he reached out to grab it. "Let me see."

The bruise from when he had accidentally touched her had gotten worse. Her hand looked like it was swollen. She hadn't tended to it, despite being back for so long.

His eyes looked so caring; if Diana didn't know better, such a look would've given her the wrong impression. She pulled away her hand firmly from him and said, "You don't have to worry about it."

"If not me, who? Oliver?"

Julian felt hollow, and his heart ached painfully at her rejection of him. He glared at her. Before Diana could reply with an angry retort, he continued, "Don't get any ideas. If you don't want me to get the wrong idea about you and Oliver, and you don't want me to insult him, you should just go along with me."

Once again, another threat.

Diana sighed ruefully. She didn't understand why Julian was so fond of taking everything she did or said as a personal insult. Thinking about it for a while, she finally said, "I came back because I thought Kayla would stop bothering me after I apologized."

"Hmm." Julian's expression was indifferent. There was no change in it even when Diana mentioned Kayla.

Instead, his actions turned gentler as he moved to treat her wound.

It wasn't like Diana couldn't feel the change in him. This reminded her of the sweet moments they shared when they were married; when Diana was the only woman in his eyes, and when Julian would do everything for her personally.

Back then, she had thought that the person he loved was her. Thus, she happily accepted all the good things

he did for her and was more than willing to return his love the same way

But now, she knew that she had only been a stand-in for Kayla.

No matter how well Julian treated her, Diana could sense that his love and affection weren't hers.

She desperately told herself not to overthink it and not to indulge in the warmth of his affection for her, no matter what. Doing her best to calm herself, she tried acting as if his tenderness wasn't for her.

"Julian," Diana called softly.

"Hmm?" Julian still kept his head down, carefully helping her apply the ointment. His voice was low and sensual, tinged with an alluring compulsion that perhaps even he was unaware of.

Diana averted her eyes. "What's the meaning of this? Why did you come back to the villa to see me? Kayla will be unhappy when she finds out about this."

If Julian forced Diana to apologize again, she would be very upset.

It was obvious she was always provoked at every turn for absolutely no reason. More than anything, Diana didn't want to be caught in the awkward triangle she had been in today.

Julian stiffened; Diana furrowed her brows slightly at his reaction. His hands trembled lightly, as if he was unaware of how tense he had become. Finally, he lowered his head to blow on her wound.

"Stop talking about her."

Having said that, Julian realized he might have sounded a tad too harsh. He looked up at Diana and quickly added, "I'll help you treat your wound first. Otherwise, it'll fester and inflame like before. There'll be a lot of trouble if that happens."

Oh! So Julian was doing this because he feared Diana would give him trouble in the future.

Diana suddenly sighed in relief. At the same time, disappointment spread deep within her heart.

Yes, Julian didn't love her.

That was good.

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Why did Julian have to bring up the past? It made Diana's heart throb in pain. By the time he finished treating the bruise, thirty minutes had passed.

Julian handled the wound carefully. When he was finished, the bruised area looked much better.

Diana only realized her wrist hurt badly after he was done, but she hadn't felt it until now. The seriousness of her injury was more of an afterthought to her; she only realized how bad it was when Julian had finished applying the ointment.

“When I brought up the child, I didn’t mean it that way,” Julian suddenly said after a long stretch of silence. You don’t have to worry. I’ll make sure you deliver the babies safely.”

He would make sure she delivered the babies safely? Then, what would happen after that?

Diana’s heart skipped again. “You...want me to leave the children with the Fulcher family and kick me out? Alone?”

Diana was usually such an intelligent person; yet for some reason, she always went in the wrong direction regarding these matters. Julian was quite upset over how badly she thought of him.

But when he pondered about her question, he couldn’t answer. He didn’t want the babies to leave his family, nor did he want her to leave.

However, he also knew that Diana would think he was lying if he said that. It was to be expected, especially with how she was feeling at the moment.

Fearing she would accuse him as a liar, he kept mum.

It had taken Julian an awfully long time to finally figure out that his feelings for Kayla and Diana were different. Where Kayla was concerned, he simply wanted to be responsible and repay her for saving him. When it came to Diana, however, his heart would beat faster; he loved her and was quite possessive of her.

To make matters worse, he had been the one to bring up the divorce in the first place. If he suddenly poured his heart out, Diana would never accept it. Besides, it wasn’t like he could say everything either.

Had he done that, it would seem as though he treated deep feelings of love and marriage like child’s play. It was especially humiliating to know that someone as sharp and intelligent as him committed such a

ridiculous mistake.

If Julian said out loud that the woman he truly loved was actually Diana....

He feared no one would believe it.

Yet, he knew it to be true. Since he sorted out his feelings, his stance had become even firmer.

When Diana saw Julian's hesitation, her heart tightened painfully in her chest. She clenched her fist, her eyes filled with disappointment and fear as she said, "Julian... Are you really going to do this to me?"

Julian was stunned. "What are you talking about?"

Diana tried to sound as calm as possible, but the tremor in her voice betrayed her feelings. "That you want me to leave my children and chase me away after I give birth."

"

Julian could hear the anger underlying her tone and the panic running through her. It was understandable.

Rather than laughing at her vivid imagination, this time, all he felt was guilt and an agonizing heartache.

All this while, he was the one who had mistreated her.

Unfortunately, he had come to this realization a little too late.

Throughout her pregnancy, he had broken her heart repeatedly. He roused anger in her and filled her with

caution.

It was him...

Who had been wrong.

Julian said nothing, but his gaze bored deeply into her eyes. She could decipher nothing from those dark, mysterious eyes; it felt like time had stopped for a moment as they continued staring into each other's eyes.

Feeling like they were stuck in a stalemate, Diana couldn't help but get nervous again. She even wondered if she should contact Madam Fulcher and tell her about the pregnancy. That way, she may have another lifeline to reach out to when the time comes.

No matter what happens, she would never accept being separated from her babies!

Just as she was about to make a desperate lunge for her phone, Julian suddenly opened his arms.

Diana immediately understood what he was doing.

In the past, whenever he made this gesture, she would dart toward him quickly like a bird in flight and cling

to him.

Back then, he would take her for a walk in the yard to look at the flowers or bring her to the old mansion for a meal. Even in front of Madam Fulcher, they would be glued together by the hip and be inseparable. Madam Fulcher often laughed at them, but was elated and never berated Diana for not acting appropriately. Rather, she would treat Diana even better due to that. She said it was because Diana was the right partner for Julian, and that Diana could make him happy.

But in this case, Madam Fulcher, who was infinitely wise, was wrong.

Diana was never the right partner for him.

Now, she could no longer do as she did in the past and run into his arms.

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No matter how much Diana wished to return to the old days, it was impossible.

Faced with a husband who couldn't tolerate having children between them, and was even planning on how to separate her from her babies as soon as they were born...

She couldn't pretend that none of these things had happened and play along with his sudden interest in her.

She remained unmoving and stayed where she was.

Julian seemed to realize something at the same time, so he stopped making the gesture. Eventually, he still managed to persuade Diana into his arms.

He didn't know what to say.

He didn't know how to comfort her, nor how to soothe anxiety and fear in her heart.

He was even more at a loss on how to confess his feelings to her, and how to apologize to her.

All he could do now was hold her tightly in his arms with all the tenderness he could muster and simply keep

her in his arms.

His embrace indeed warmed Diana.

When her ears were pressed against his chest, she could hear the steady beat of his heart. A familiar feeling rushed through her heart, and various emotions suddenly filled her at that moment.

She recalled the time his embrace solely belonged to her, the current situation they were in right now; it had only been one short month.

Yet, in this brief period of time, so many things have changed.

Diana couldn't be greedy and yearn for his arms.

It would only serve to turn her weak and vulnerable.

"I won't compromise," Diana said, her voice muffled from where she was pressed against him. She slowly pulled away from his embrace. He was probably hugging her so that she would be coaxed into agreeing to the absurd condition of leaving her children in the Fulcher family as soon as they were born.

Julian wanted to rage at Diana's thinking. In the end, he only managed an exasperated smile. There was a small hint of affection in it, however.

The kinder he acted, the more wary Diana was of him. Determination flashed in her eyes, and she repeated, "I won't compromise. Listen up, Julian. I'll give birth to my babies, and I won't be separated from them. If you want to hurt them or get me to leave without them, I'd rather die!"

Her tone was so firm that it made his heart clench painfully. Yet he also felt that she was being overly solemn and pushing herself too hard, so he frowned and said, "I wouldn't let die."

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Then, was he intending to torture her slowly?

"Just what have I done to you?" Diana sighed helplessly, her eyes taking on a wet shine. "Julian, just what have I done to you to deserve...this?"

What crime had she committed to deserve being tormented by Julian?

Julian understood the implications behind her words. He could tell more certainly that today wasn't a good time to open up to her about his feelings, or to apologize.

Glancing at the door to the room where they used to go about their daily lives, he said, "You should get some

rest."

The daily necessities in place were brands worse than the ones she had used before.

Julian was going to rectify this. He would meet Mr. Carter later.

He also hoped that in the next few days, he would be able to move back into this room. It would make it more convenient for him to care for his pregnant wife.

He had read that the first trimester was the most vulnerable time for pregnant women. Perhaps she would feel more at ease if he could stay by her side and protect her.

Now was not the time to argue or go against her wishes, lest she became angry or grow more fearful of him.

"I'll be downstairs," Julian said. As if uneasy, he stressed, "Don't be scared. Whatever you're worried about... It won't happen."

He closed the door behind him softly, as if he was afraid of giving her a scare. From this small action, one could feel how gentle and thoughtful the man was.



However, Diana had already seen how cold and cruel he could be. At this moment, it wasn't easy to associate

him with such words.

But... What had he meant by saying all that before he left?

He had said the things she feared would never happen.

Was he talking about the babies?

Did he mean that he wouldn't force her to get an abortion or separate her from them?

That...was impossible, right?

It was a bit sudden to experience such unexpected happiness.

After so many days of being on edge, it wasn't that easy for Diana to unwind and release the wariness running through her. Besides, Julian had a history of turning hot and cold in a terrifyingly short span of time. She didn't believe that such good luck would drop in her lap so easily.

Even so, she couldn't help but wonder what Julian had meant with his words.

If he spoke the truth, then she didn't need to worry anymore. She could even go to the maternity clinic openly from now on.

Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 284

Diana wondered and wondered, and soon lost track of time. It was already ten at night, yet sleep evaded her.

Then, her phone suddenly chimed.

She pulled it out to see it was a text message from Julian: "Don't block me."

Diana remembered she had blocked Julian on her app. Feeling a little embarrassed, she quickly pulled up her

app

and unblocked him before replying to his message.

“Okay.”

Julian’s lips curled up in a smile when he read her reply. “Good. Go to sleep.”

Sleeping late wasn’t good for pregnant women and their babies. Not to mention, Diana was having twins, which was more difficult than pregnant women with only one baby.

The words on the screen gave her a familiar warmth and affection, and Diana couldn’t help but grow ever more suspicious.

“When you left my room, you mentioned the babies and me...“

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As she typed, she bit her lip and thought it over again. In the end, she deleted the message.

Perhaps she was overthinking it.

Julian could only be treating her kindly because she had apologized to Kayla. She shouldn’t have asked for a mile when he already gave her an inch.

Besides, last time at the factory, Julian had made himself very clear that no woman other than Kayla would be allowed to bear his child. Yet now... Despite knowing that the babies in her stomach were his, he not only didn’t force her to get an abortion right away, but also said such good things about her and the babies?

It must be a misunderstanding!

Yes, that’s right!

Just a misunderstanding!

Diana shivered at the thought, then turned her phone off along with her bedside lamp. She kept reassuring herself that she would cross the bridge when it came to it.

If Julian were playing a long con and continued attacking her and her babies tomorrow, she would go straight to Madam Fulcher!

As for whether the older woman's involvement would further delay Julian's plan for divorce, Diana didn't

want to think about it anymore.

In her sleep, she dreamt of Julian forcing her into the operating theater once again, and woke up in cold sweat the following morning. She rushed to take a shower before going downstairs for breakfast.

Unexpectedly, Julian actually did sleep downstairs, as he came out of his room the moment Diana reached

the bottom of the stairs.

Hadn't he gone to keep Kayla company?

Diana recalled that he had packed his bags last night when he took her to apologize.

"Remember to eat more folic acid. This is a hybrid type, which is better than regular ones," Julian said as he handed her a bottle of pills when he caught sight of her.

Diana felt a shadow creep up in her heart when Julian handed her the bottle. His particular action traumatized her, for she remembered the contraceptive pills he gave her in the past...

He had also been the one to swap it out for her to eat.

Who knew if he had also done the same for these so-called folic acid pills?

Was Julian changing the way he wanted Diana to get an abortion?

He was even here, supervising her so that she would take the pills instead of accompanying Kayla.

When she thought of it, Diana was sorely tempted to immediately head for the old mansion and explain her pregnancy to Madam Fulcher. However, it looked like Julian would stop her from doing so since he was still

at the villa.

After all, he very badly wanted the divorce.

In the end, she waved her hand dismissively and said, “H–haha... It’s okay. I have my own.”

What she had was the normal folic acid pills, and Julian had seen it last night. But seeing how insistent she was on refusing it, Julian didn’t force the issue and simply placed the bottle on the table.

“Take it with you after you eat. You can compare the difference between the one you have and this one and take whichever that’s better.”

“Okay,” Diana said as she pulled out a chair to sit. It suddenly occurred to her, with a jolt, that Julian had long since denied her permission to eat breakfast at the villa.

In fact, she had only recently gotten out of being a forced nanny.

Fearing the man before her would find fault in her actions again, she quickly stood up and said, “I’m leaving now. I definitely won’t eat at home.”

Julian’s Stand-In Wife chapter 285

“Why?” Julian was stunned at Diana’s words as he instructed the kitchen staff to hurry up and serve

breakfast.

He had woken up early in the morning to prepare all the food that Diana loved, though with a few modifications in the ingredients as she was pregnant.

He hadn’t made breakfast for her in a long time.

In fact, he even made some new dishes and was a little nervous about if she would like it.

Seeing everything before her and the expression on Julian’s face, Diana felt even more frightened.

What was he planning now?

Was he trying to fatten her up like a pig for slaughter?

Or in other words, was he trying to make sure she was well enough to give birth, then separate her from her babies?!

She very well couldn't stay here for another minute!

She lamented the fact that she had returned to the villa last night without informing Julian and Kayla. This was probably what upset Kayla and angered Julian.

Yes, that was probably what led them to be in the situation now.

When Julian saw her sorrowful face and refusal to sit, he stood up.

Julian was a tall man; he was imposing as he towered over Diana, who was just a small, petite woman.

Before him, she couldn't help but feel small and insignificant.

She was also wary of him and subconsciously moved to cover her stomach. "W-What do you want?"

"Nothing," Julian said as he approached her, dropping his hands gently on her shoulders and guiding her to sit. "I just want you to eat your breakfast."

Diana was speechless.

She really didn't want to end up being like a pig fattened up for slaughter. With so many things she needed to make sure of with Julian, she was still anxious and not in the mood to eat. [1]

"Julian..." Diana picked up a sandwich, then placed it down. "Give me a definite answer. You really won't hurt my babies, right?"

Even in the wild, a tiger wouldn't harm its own cub.

Julian was startled by her grave look, and was even more chagrined at the fact that he had forced her to get

an abortion before.

"Yes. I'm-"

Before he could apologize, Diana interrupted with a voice filled with relief, "Okay. That's good."

He had wanted to apologize, but Diana had cut him off and taken his unfinished sentence as the answer to

her question.

It seemed the terrible mark he had left on her back in the hospital was heavy in her mind. But if this would put her mind at ease, then Julian would simply swallow his apology and go along with her for now.

When Diana saw Julian had no objections, her chest immediately felt lighter.

Her cheeks were still flushed because she had just woken up not too long ago, making her look more lovely and sensual than usual. Pregnancy seemed to have changed her temperament somewhat.

Julian couldn't help but stare at her, as if he couldn't get enough of her. Each glance made him see a different angle of her beauty, and he couldn't avert his eyes. I

Julian was acting strange today.

The fact he gave a positive promise that he wouldn't hurt her babies was unusual.

The more he looked, the more Diana felt fear gradually creeping up her heart again. For a moment, she really felt like she was a pig for slaughter in his eyes. After thinking about it for a while, she finally asked cautiously, "Then... Are you planning to torture me and force me to separate from my babies?"

Again with that separating nonsense!

This was the nth time Diana was bringing this up after he had told her he was aware that she hadn't gotten an abortion. Julian was at a loss as to how to explain to her for her to let go of this topic.

"I won't." He thought for a moment before he added, "If I really wanted to, it would definitely get back to Grandma, and she wouldn't let it happen."

That was true.

If he were to keep them and chase Diana away after the children were born, it was impossible for Madam Fulcher not to notice it. It was even more impossible for the older woman to remain unaware of this happening.

Madam Fulcher loved Diana, and would never allow it to happen to her.

Diana seemed a little more at ease than before, and concentrated on eating breakfast.

The taste was familiar.

As soon as she took a bite, she could tell that Julian had made it personally.

But then, she started to wonder again.

“Julian.”

“Hmm?”

Julian’s Stand-In Wife chapter 286

Diana was speaking unusually much today.

“Why exactly do you not care about my being pregnant all of a sudden anymore?”

It wasn’t Kayla who was pregnant with Julian’s baby, but her, Diana Winnington. Based on his thoughts from before, didn’t she and her babies deserve to die?

Diana’s eyes were wide and round; she seemed genuinely confused and was pondering very hard on this

matter.

Julian snorted.

He was furious with her thinking.

“Diana, I’m not so cruel as to kill my own child with my own hands.”

“Then, why did you say those things in front of Luke...?”

“That’s because...”

Julian trailed off and froze. He hadn’t realized his feelings yet back then, but now, he was well aware of them.

Even if Kayla got pregnant, it wouldn't be worth more than the little lives Diana carried in her belly.

No, more accurately... Kayla would never have the chance to get pregnant with his child. He didn't have the desire to touch anyone but Diana.

There was never a chance to get anyone else pregnant.

"Never mind," Diana said, seeing Julian's hesitancy. She didn't want to push the matter any further and simply added, "As long as you don't hurt the babies or try to separate me from them, we can talk about everything else later."

However, there was one thing that was bugging her. She blinked a few times, trying to formulate the words. "Can I ask who actually told you I didn't get the abortion?"

"Vans," Julian replied immediately. "He was drunk. I set him up."

Diana was speechless. Seriously! Julian was such a two-faced bully! Whenever something was wrong, even if it were just a bit, he would do everything he could to find an answer that could satisfy him.

"Also, he doesn't know that he outed you."

Julian was a real schemer, and she couldn't let down her guard for even a moment! Diana did regret it

somewhat and said, "When I lied and said that the babies were Oliver's... It was because I had no other choice.

"

Back then, she thought they could divorce peacefully if she said that. To her surprise, it provoked Julian's anger instead.

Now that he knew the babies were his, he calmed down, began to treat her decently, and took care of her like

a pregnant woman.

Diana lowered her head, looking at the uneaten egg and beef sandwich in her hand and the special milk for



pregnant women on the table. An unspeakable warmth bloomed in her chest.

It was different from the many breakfasts she had eaten in the villa. The food before her now was made in consideration of her babies growing in her.

At this point, she didn't care how Julian treated her. She only cared about how he treated the babies.

Because the babies do need their father.

Even if they wouldn't see or know him, as long as Julian loved them, Diana would let them know he cared and loved them deeply.

Unlike her own parents, who were decisive about severing all ties with her.

A parent's love could become the pillar of a child's confidence. That was what Diana firmly believed. For the sake of Julian's fatherly love, she was willing to spend a peaceful morning with him in person.

"I know."

The entire misunderstanding had happened because Julian had failed to sort out his own feelings. He only ever thought of repaying the person who had saved his life, and mistook those feelings for love.

If he hadn't been so blind and stupid, he would be living a good life with Diana and looking forward to the birth of the twins. So many of the hurtful things between them would also not have happened.

"Diana..." Julian said as he looked at her seriously. "Have you ever thought..."

He trailed off, once again hesitant. He had never looked so uncertain before when he spoke, which gave Diana a bad feeling. She clenched her fist tightly, feeling her nails dig into her palm. She didn't loosen her hand, as the pain was the only thing helping her relax at this moment.

Julian also clenched his hands unknowingly. "Have you ever thought that, maybe, I have a perfect solution? It'll allow you to have the babies safely and be together with them, and also make Grandma happy."

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What kind of solution did Julian have?

At this point, the only solution Diana could think of was getting divorce.

If possible, she didn't want to talk to Madam Fulcher about her pregnancy until she absolutely needed to.

Yet, this fact made her heart as heavy as stone. It made her uncomfortable when she thought about how big of a deal she was hiding from the older woman; she felt uneasy.

She wanted to make Madam Fulcher happy.

But now that she had Julian's promise, there wasn't any need to add trouble by leaving, and there was even more no need to leave Madam Fulcher some false happiness. Diana didn't want to leave her children with the Fulcher family and be separated from them.

Sadly, the reality was that neither Julian nor Kayla would allow her to stay.

Her own pride wouldn't allow it, either.

Her original plan was to get the divorce papers as soon as possible, then take her babies as far as possible

from here.

Julian obviously knew what she had in mind. He had read her divorce plan, which only had the word 'patience

typed repeatedly in the document.

At that time, he hadn't understood her urgency. After learning she was still pregnant, and with twins to boot, Julian finally understood.

Diana had only wanted to keep herself and the babies as safe as possible.

There was nothing wrong with that.

There was also nothing wrong with wanting to complete the paperwork as fast as possible.

Julian even felt somewhat happy to know that Diana was in such a rush to divorce him not because she didn't

love him anymore.

At least, in his eyes, it seemed she was rushing everything for the sake of the babies. She had done it to avoid him finding out that she was still pregnant. She was still willing to give birth to his children...

These were things that Julian found comfort in.

“Think about it. If you want to know, then come and talk to me.”

Julian continued to throw her bait, his dark eyes looking at her like he could see through her heart.

“After all, this might be the best solution to satisfy everyone.”

A solution that could satisfy everyone?

Did Julian mean he could fulfill her wish of not parting from her babies and Madam Fulcher’s desire to have great-grandchildren?

It was hard to admit, but Julian’s words were tempting.

However, Kayla was still in the picture. Everything Julian did, he did with Kayla as his priority.

Despite knowing this, Diana couldn’t help but mull over his words. If he really had a solution that could satisfy everyone...

Then she wouldn’t need to feel guilty or ashamed when she met Madam Fulcher anymore. Not to mention, she wouldn’t need to hide her pregnancy anymore.

Julian could tell Diana was thinking about it, and knew she had taken the bait. There was a chance she would come around, and this matter would bear fruit soon.

After eating, the two went their separate ways, with Diana heading to work. When she arrived at the office, she was faced with even worse attitudes from her colleagues; so much more than before.

Knowing that Kayla must have added fuel to the fire by telling them that Diana had deliberately pushed Kayla into the fire, Diana didn’t need to think of the reason.

Obviously, Kayla's little followers knew all about how Diana was the one who had been set up.

But did it matter? No one cared about the truth.

They only cared about standing on the winning side.

Diana would bring no value or benefit to them, so Kayla's side was the winning one by default.

Luckily, Diana had long since gotten used to being isolated by her colleagues. She was happy to sit alone in front of her computer to work and draw quietly.

However, she didn't expect to find the work assigned to her to be several times heavier than usual at noon. Looking through the list, she noted some that didn't belong to her and returned them.

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This soon became known to Kayla, and the resentment she harbored for Diana deepened.

Last night, Diana had given such an insincere apology and quietly left, looking as upset as Kayla felt.

She obviously thought herself to be Kayla's better!

In addition, Julian hadn't returned to stay with Kayla as he had promised. Kayla knew it must have been because of Diana.

As such, Kayla made sure Diana would feel her rage today in the company. She couldn't help but think that... that Diana and Julian must have slept together again.

How shameless of Diana!

She was already pregnant, yet she was still seducing men!

Kayla had gone through all the trouble of acting out such a tedious play, but she still failed to keep Julian by her side. Even his concern for her had been short-lived.

She had racked her brains to come up with so much... Was it true? Was she not destined to win Diana? Would she always only be second best?

No! That was impossible.

There must have been something Kayla had yet to do.

Suddenly, an idea popped into her mind. If it was difficult to break through on Julian's side, she could start with Diana! Kayla's eyes flashed with excitement as the thought entered her mind.

Diana had always wanted the title of being the eldest daughter of the Winnington family, and for them to openly acknowledge her identity as so.

Kayla's eyes sparkled as she called James. With a smug smile on her face, she greeted him affectionately, "Daddy!"

James was equally happy to hear from his daughter. "My dear, what's wrong? Come, tell me."

The furrow in Kayla's brow loosened when she heard that, and her smile stretched wider. "It's nothing much, Daddy. I just want you to give Diana an identity and status for real now."

"Give Diana a status?" James was uncomfortable when he thought about the daughter he had personally abandoned intentionally, and he couldn't keep the unhappiness out of his tone when he said, "What kind of status are you talking about? Isn't it enough that she's Mrs. Fulcher? That title belongs to you, but she's still stubbornly holding on to it! What else does she want?"

"Mrs. Fulcher..." Kayla laughed softly. "She won't be that for much longer. Julian already said that the divorce would definitely go through, and it's already in the process. But Diana might be reluctant to let go, you know?"

Kayla got angry when she thought about this. In fact, she knew that Julian had feelings for Diana; this was the true reason for the delay in their divorce.

However, she couldn't very well tell James that. She was afraid she would be abandoned just like Diana if she

did. She knew from a young age that if she wanted to have a stable position in the Winnington family, she would have to stand out and bring benefits to them.

For James, the greatest value she had was to hold onto Julian and become Mrs. Fulcher.

Unfortunately, Diana threw a wrench in her plans. Regardless, everyone still thought of Diana as Kayla's stand-in. If Kayla continued to insist, then everyone would also assume that Kayla was the true Mrs. Fulcher.

Diana was only temporary. Yet now, she was an actual threat to Kayla.

"That b\*tch!" James cursed under his breath, just as Kayla expected him to. "What the hell does she want?!"

"Thieves would never admit themselves as one. Similarly, Diana will never say out loud what she really wants," Kayla said, deliberately talking like a philosopher. "But I understand her very well. She wants nothing but your and Mommy's love. She wants to be known as the Winnington family's eldest daughter so she'd have our family's blessing behind her after the divorce."

James was silent for a moment before he said disdainfully, "If she wants our family's blessing, it depends if she's capable enough to get it."

"Now's not the time to be petty about this," Kayla quickly cut him off. "The most important thing right now is to get them divorced as soon as possible. We can't allow Diana to drag this on. I can only serve our family's welfare better once I become Mrs. Fulcher."

Kayla had hit right where it hurt, and James said, "You're right. She and Julian have been married for so long, but the Fulchers have never given us any help or business deals on her behalf. Every time we talk about business, they say they're doing it for you.'

There was a hint of relief in his tone. "You're my darling daughter, Kayla."

In his beloved daughter's time of need, of course he would do what she wanted!

And so, a happy family reunion would soon be staged in the Winnington family.

## Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 289

The following day, Diana stood before the entrance of the Winnington residence. This time, she was here because James had reached out to her first and invited her over.

Even though she knew she shouldn't take any chances or expect anything from them, it was impossible to avoid them. So, here she was.

The babies in her belly were doing well. Ever since becoming a mother, she had been even more confused at how anyone would not love their own children.

Kate had done it, and so had James.

"Why are you spacing out and standing there?"

Diana was lost in her thoughts when Kate came out.

Kate hadn't contacted or met Diana since the poisoning incident at Kate's birthday party that had damaged Kayla's throat, so it was strange for her to speak in such a warm tone to Diana.

However, Diana wasn't fazed by the warmth and familiarity that Kate showed her. Instead, she turned cold and said, "I've only just arrived."

The sky above them was dark and dreary, as if it would rain soon.

Kate froze momentarily at Diana's coldness, then touched her hair awkwardly and ushered Diana toward the villa. "Come, let's head inside."

This was the first time Diana had been greeted and escorted in person. She was dying to see what the Winningtons had planned this time.

Without batting an eyelid, Diana took in her surroundings and set her phone speed dial to Julian's number so she could let him know the instant there was a threat to her and the babies.

It would also...test Julian's sincerity.

She wanted to know if he was serious about all the things he had said to her about the babies before.

When she thought of him, she couldn't help but recall what he had said about having a solution that could satisfy everyone.

What was it?

What kind of solution could solve the plight of everyone before him?

Diana thought about it as she walked, and she looked distracted while she did so. When James saw her in that state, he was furious.

Like Kate, he felt that Diana had spent too much time in the boonies and was no longer qualified to be the first lady of the Winnington family. She didn't have the attitude or manners of a noble lady!

Instead, they focused on Kayla, convinced that the younger girl would bring more benefits and glory to their family. They only heeded Kayla's orders regarding Diana, wanting to convince Diana to stop dragging out the divorce, which in turn was delaying Kayla from getting married to Julian.

For someone who had suffered much since childhood, Diana would definitely take the bait if they gave her enough sweetness in life!

James had a sly business-like smile on his face that discomfited Diana the moment she saw it. This was the fifth time she had seen her father.

It was a limited number of times, but as always, he didn't disappoint her. Although there was a wide smile on his face and he seemed to be giving her a flattering look, he could not disguise his disgust toward her in his eyes. In fact, he looked at her as if he was looking at trash.

It seemed today really was a trap they had laid for her.

Diana focused back on reality without much obvious movement and greeted him, "Hello."

She wouldn't give them the satisfaction of calling them by their titles.

It seemed that James was startled by the short greeting, but he was also a little angry and embarrassed." Child, how could you be like that? It's been so long since you came home, yet you won't greet your mommy and daddy properly? That was such an insincere greeting!"

Waving his hand, he gestured for Kate to bring a chair so Diana could sit.



“I didn’t invite you here today for anything special. I simply wanted to have a good chat with you.”

Diana smiled and sat down. She didn’t bother turning around to thank Kate for the chair either, and Kate’s expression stiffened at that.

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Regardless, Diana remained firm and pretended not to see the look on Kate’s face.

Diana wouldn’t forget that back at the hospital, Kate had been so sure that Diana had poisoned Kayla and couldn’t wait for Julian to deal with her. The look on Kate’s face still lingered in Diana’s mind till today.

What was more, Diana couldn’t feel any real care or warmth from Kate the entire time the two had been together. She could even feel Kate’s discontent when Kayla brought over this small chair for Diana to sit.

Haha! If that was still the case, why would they call her, a daughter they often dubbed a street rat, to their family home?

“What did you want to talk about?” Diana asked, getting straight to the point.

James almost choked on nothing when Diana spoke so bluntly. This fact only served to cement that Diana was nothing like Kayla, as the latter was an attentive and obedient girl. In fact, he started to feel glad he had thrown Diana away and covered the fact that he brought his illegitimate daughter into his family by way of adoption for his wife to raise. It had been a good move, indeed.

After a pause, James gathered himself quickly and said, “It’s nothing much. You’re our eldest daughter, so your mother and I are worried about how you’ll live after your divorce and wanted to ask about your plans once that happened.”

As Diana had expected, they wanted to talk about the divorce, which was related to Kayla.

It was an indirect nudge about her divorce from Julian.

Diana looked at her birth parents, who, despite the smiles on their faces, looked at her like she was trash. She truly shouldn't have placed any expectations on them. From the moment she arrived at Richburgh after a long journey and was mocked for finding her family, she should have thrown all expectations out the

window.

Yet, the simple truth was that humans would always covet what they couldn't have.

Her two examples were Julian, the man who didn't love her, and her parents, who had never treated her like their own daughter.

She sighed quietly and said, "The divorce hasn't been finalized yet."

As they had expected! Diana had no intentions of severing ties with Julian any time soon.

James thought about what Kayla had said on the phone yesterday, and his mind raced quickly. The smile on his face grew even more treacherous than Diana thought possible, which made her a little nauseous.

Was this the father she had hoped for when she was younger? One who would care and protect her?

Time and time again, her heart told her no.

This was a man who was only her birth father, and nothing more. He would never be a real father to her. This should have been clear to her from the time she was young and was fighting for food with stray dogs while trying her hardest to survive.

Why else would her family not have spread the word far and wide about finding their lost daughters all these years?

"Diana," James said, convinced he had hidden the disgust toward her well. "If you're afraid you won't have a stable life after your divorce, your mommy and I are more than happy to help you."

"Really?" Diana said, pretending to be intrigued. "How so?"

Voila!

This country-raised girl showed interest before James offered her any sweetness in life. As Kayla had said, Diana wanted the Winninton family's wealth and name.

As long as Diana had something she wanted, it was still better than those who wanted nothing. But...

It would be good if they could make the best use of it.

James suddenly had another idea. He changed his mind and said, "Well, it's nothing much. Why don't we arrange a match for you?"

Diana hadn't even divorced yet, yet here James was, already thinking about how to get her to marry someone

else.

Diana couldn't decide if they cared overly much about her, or if they cared too little.

Her demeanor turned colder, and she said, "Which family? Can they compare to the Fulchers?"

When she mentioned the Fulcher family, Kate couldn't resist interjecting, "The Fulchers?"

The look in Kate's eyes was even worse than James. She looked at Diana as though Diana was a parasite that she couldn't get rid of.

"You only married into the Fulcher family because you have the same face as Kayla! You're getting divorced, so why are you still thinking about the Fulcher family?"