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Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 581

Chapter 581

Madam Fulcher seemed to have guessed Diana's thoughts, and smiled.

"Silly girl, I'm fine. Remember, I promised you I'd live a long and healthy life. I'm in good shape now. Right now, I just want to make a bet with you."

A glimmer flickered in Madam Fulcher's eyes, and Diana's features seemed to be deeply imprinted in them. Madam Fulcher looked like she dearly wanted to hold Diana in her arms, and her eyes were filled with love.

Madam Fulcher genuinely loved Diana.

And she truly felt heartache for her.

She wanted to live a long life in this world, and await the day Diana and Julian would reconcile and have children.

But now...

Her heart twinged with pain and her vision blurred, and certain things became unclear, only appearing as a blur.

Madam Fulcher knew her illness was acting up.

After years of enduring and training, she had long mastered the skill of remaining calm and composed even in the face of great challenges. She was confident she could hide her physical condition from Diana and prevent the latter from noticing.

When she spoke, her voice was louder and clearer than usual. "I just want to see which of us is right. I want you to confirm Julian's feelings."

She was certain the person who had bound her and Diana to this place was definitely not Julian.

Furthermore...

They were very likely being held hostage by Kayla, which was why Julian had no choice but to announce his engagement to her publicly.

Madam Fulcher knew she had to get Diana out of this place before something happened to Diana.

As long as Diana was safe, Julian would be free to act.

Perhaps he could even fight for a chance for Madam Fulcher to live.

However, all this relied on Diana successfully escaping and being unaware of Madam Fulcher's current physical condition. Otherwise, Diana would never leave her side.

As Madam Fulcher thought everything through and made the best preparations, she also prepared for the worst.

She took a deep breath and said, "If I win, you'll continue to be part of our family and remarry Julian."

'Gran...'

Diana felt this was too hasty, and there were still things she hadn't thought through. It was all a mess and very much unclear to her. But Madam Fulcher didn't plan to give her a chance to react and interrupted her, "If I lose, and you confirm that Julian truly has no feelings for you and only treated you as a substitute, then you can do whatever you want to them. I will take care of it."

The last sentence tempted Diana. "Whatever I want?"

'Whatever you want.'

With Madam Fulcher's assurance, combined with James's downfall, Diana suddenly felt that bringing the matter of the grave to light and seeking justice for the babies had a greater chance. Even if Julian didn't love her, he would have to consider Madam Fulcher's feelings and provide a solution.

'Okay, I agree.'

Madam Fulcher breathed a sigh of relief and released Diana's hand. "Good."

Madam Fulcher moved her arm with great difficulty, covering her heart as sweat formed on her face.

'To verify our bet, we need to start acting now.'

'Acting?' Diana noticed Madam Fulcher's obvious discomfort, and her heart skipped a beat. She immediately made a decision. "You're not acting at all right now!"

How could acting be so realistic?

Tears welled up in her eyes as Diana frantically called out for help. "Hans! Hans! Grandma isn't feeling well! Open the door! I want to see Julian! I want to see Julian!"

"Why the hell are you shouting?" Hans forcefully opened the door and lashed out, leaving several footprints on Diana's body, causing her to fall to the ground.

Madam Fulcher fell as well.

Diana ignored the pain and kept her eyes fixed on Madam Fulcher, noticing how the latter's face was visibly turning pale.

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Diana's hands trembled with anxiety, but as her limbs were bound by ropes, she was powerless to do anything else but weakly call out to Madam Fulcher.

Yet, the old lady never lifted her eyes to look at her.

Diana felt her heart clench tightly, like someone had grabbed it and squeezed it. It was so suffocating that she couldn't utter a word.

The same fear she had when she thought of losing her babies resurfaced, and tears welled up in her eyes as she looked at Madam Fulcher and then at Hans.

'Why are you just standing there?! Save her! Quickly!'

It was evident that Madam Fulcher was experiencing discomfort in her heart. The high blood pressure was causing cerebral hypoxia, and the symptoms were already apparent.

Once these underlying conditions acted up, it was a life-threatening situation.

But Hans remained motionless, even crossing his arms and looking at them as if nothing was happening.

A blaze of anger spread in Diana's chest, and she exerted all her strength to try and free herself from the ropes. But the harder she struggled, the tighter Madam Fulcher, who was bound to her by the same rope, was tied, making the latter increasingly uncomfortable.

Finally, Diana dared not move.

However, her wrists were already rubbed raw, and due to her physical condition, the wound quickly swelled and grew larger. The rope was constricting the wound even deeper. Still, she was completely unaware of the pain as her eyes were glued on Madam Fulcher, fearing any further deterioration in her condition.

Fortunately, Madam Fulcher's physical condition didn't appear to worsen.

Her mental state, however, remained poor; she still couldn't open her eyes or speak to her.

If they continued to wait like this, something would inevitably happen to Madam Fulcher here.

Thinking back to Madam Fulcher's mention of shares and her tone of discussing matters after her passing, Diana couldn't contain her impatience.

But it was clear that Hans had no intention of saving Madam Fulcher. Diana began to believe that perhaps Julian hadn't orchestrated this kidnapping.

As despicable as he might be, he couldn't possibly do something like this to Madam Fulcher!

Her gaze swept around the room and finally settled on a cup, and she breathed a sigh of relief.

She looked at Hans and asked, "Are you really planning to let her die?"

Hans remained silent, staring at them with indifferent eyes.

'Fine," Diana spat as she gradually calmed down. "As long as you tell Julian, the one who kidnapped me, that Grandma's death has nothing to do with me and ask him not to hold me responsible.'

Hans felt relieved, thinking they hadn't figured out their plan yet since she didn't mention Kayla.

Diana truly believed that Julian was the one who kidnapped her.

This aligned with the explanation given by Kayla when she hired him.

He wasn't so nervous anymore, and simply nodded before glancing at the old lady lying on the ground and walking out of the room with a cold smirk.

Kayla had made it clear that if the old lady died due to illness and not through foul play, the ransom for the kidnapped person would double.

Thus, it was only natural that Hans wished for the old hag to die.

Besides, they couldn't find a way out of this room anyway. He confidently closed the door and left without any worry.

With a click, the lock slid into place.

Once Diana confirmed that Hans had left, she didn't waste time catching her breath. She then used her head to hit the table in front of her repeatedly.

The dull thumping sound echoed in the room and her forehead swelled quickly, but Diana didn't care. She continued this self-destructive action and only stopped when the glass on the table was knocked over onto the floor.

She needed to escape!

She needed to save Madam Fulcher!

These thoughts kept repeating in her mind. Diana clenched her teeth and endured all the pain running through her. With sheer willpower, she picked up the broken pieces of the glass with her mouth and slowly began to cut through the rope.

After completing these tasks, Diana's face and mouth were swollen, with traces of blood mixed in. Her entire face was approaching disfigurement.

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Even Diana's hands were swollen, and looked like a pig's trotters. Her hands almost melded with the severed and torn rope, making it impossible to distinguish where her flesh or the rope began.

Fortunately, Madam Fulcher seemed to have recovered slightly.

Her complexion had regained its healthy color.

"Diana..." She opened her eyes, and as soon as she saw Diana's appearance, she was filled with grief and almost burst into tears.

In fact, she did cry. "I'm so sorry, my dear."

Diana smiled weakly at Madam Fulcher, as if she had no strength left. "You...ugh...!"

The cuts on Diana's mouth caused by the glass shards stung, making it incredibly painful to speak.

She tried several times, but couldn't speak normally.

Madam Fulcher's tears flowed even more fiercely.

Her trembling hand gently touched the wound on Diana's wrist, where the broken glass had caused a deep cut. She hesitated and withdrew her hand. "I know you want to say that I don't owe you an apology, but this time, I was really in the wrong. I wanted you to escape and verify our bet, so I staged that performance just now. But as an actor who didn't know the script, you improvised. And the result..."

She reached out with trembling fingers to touch Diana's wound, but recoiled and withdrew it. "The result is that you got hurt to this extent."

Diana was slightly stunned. Was the acting Madam Fulcher mentioned referring to the play they just performed, pretending to be seriously ill?

She looked so distressed, almost unable to breathe-and it was all an act?!

Like a balloon that suddenly lost its air, Diana instantly collapsed to the ground as the adrenaline that coursed through her dissipated.

Madam Fulcher immediately acted like a guilty child, looking down and cautiously asking, "Are you angry with me?"

Diana shook her head.

She was relieved.

And that feeling had crashed over her, leaving her with no strength.

Whether it was acting or not, as long as Madam Fulcher was safe, Diana's own physical condition didn't matter.

Seeing the sparkle in Diana's eyes, Madam Fulcher was deeply moved.

"I'm glad you're not angry with me."

She was extremely relieved, and wished to bring Diana and Julian together before her death to let them know each other's feelings and reconcile.

As for her, she was already in her last moments.

Madam Fulcher endured the suffocating feeling of oxygen deprivation in her brain and the stabbing pain in her heart. She pretended to be fine as she untied all the ropes that Diana had helped her cut, and then walked to the window steadily.

"Look, it's all a backdrop."

In other words, this place wasn't a luxurious hotel.

Diana realized this, and looked at Madam Fulcher in shock.

"Everything here is an illusion," Diana said, pulling aside the backdrop before her to reveal the building behind; it was covered in reinforced

concrete, filled with spider webs and dark empty windows, as if it had been abandoned for a long time.

"It looks like...an abandoned residential area." Diana struggled to swallow, 'Right?"

'Yes," Madam Fulcher replied. "We can't determine who our kidnapper is at present, but the one thing I can be certain of is that you must escape from here."

Diana covered her mouth, preventing the pain from speaking as she asked, 'So... You pretended to be sick, forcing me to have an outburst and give us a chance to survive?"

'What else could we do?" Madam Fulcher said. "Sitting around waiting to die isn't my style."

At this moment, there seemed to be a hidden knife in Madam Fulcher's gaze, sharp and resolute.

Seeing how clear Madam Fulcher's words were and her logical reasoning, Diana finally believed the former had only been pretending to be ill.

'I'm sorry to have put you through this," Madam Fulcher said. "You had to pay such a great price to break free from the ropes and gain your freedom."

More importantly, it had worked to lower Hans's guard.

This increased the probability of Diana successfully escaping.

Yet at that moment, neither of them could have anticipated that despite everyone's efforts in the kidnapping case, in the end... Each person would be trapped in the whirlpool of fate, and there would be no winners.

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After a series of twists and turns, Diana successfully escaped from that room. It turned out that this place really wasn't a luxurious hotel.

If Julian had believed the information she had provided earlier, it would've been all in vain; he would never find this abandoned residential area completely unrelated to a luxury hotel.

Diana slid down the makeshift rope made from bedsheets in the room, and continued running without stopping until she reached a relatively safe place.

By now, she was already exhausted. However, Hans had taken her phone earlier, and she couldn't determine where she was exactly without it.

She considered borrowing someone's phone to contact Julian, but her disheveled appearance made people avoid her as they feared trouble. She had no choice but to ask for directions, and slowly make her way toward the central area of Richburgh.

Unexpectedly, she had been walking for a whole day and night. When she reached the hotel where Julian had announced his marriage to Kayla on television, her lips were cracked and her wounds had stuck to her clothes, making her blood and flesh indistinguishable. Her wrists, ankles, and face were swollen to the point her original appearance was unrecognizable. The white dress she wore had become dirty, as if she had rolled in the mud.

When she arrived at the hotel entrance, as expected, she was stopped by someone.

The security guard at the entrance sneered at her, approaching with a baton, intending to drive away this troublesome beggar. "Who do you think you are? Do you think the likes of you can see Mr. Fulcher?"

But Diana refused to move and kept repeating, "I want to see Julian."

As the auspicious time for the wedding approached, the security guard became impatient.

'Will you leave or not?"

"I'm not leaving!"

Madam Fulcher was waiting for Diana at that place, and she had to ensure Julian rushed over as soon as possible. Madam Fulcher's safety would be at a higher risk every minute she delayed. That's why she hadn't dared to waste a single moment on her way here.

"I want to see Julian!" she shouted towards the hotel entrance, trying to make her voice heard.

By now, more guests had started to arrive. Diana stood at the entrance, appearing entirely out of place. The security guard became more anxious, and he picked up his baton and struck her repeatedly.

' Are you going to leave or not? This is Mr. Fulcher and Miss Kayla's wedding! We won't let you off the hook if you delay this joyous occasion!"

As Diana listened, a pang went through her heart.

Back then, Julian had also given her a grand wedding, with ceremonies and all the necessary pomp. Still, it lacked this kind of world-declaring grandeur, and there were fewer people coming to congratulate them.

But now, Julian and Kayla's wedding, although announced late, had reached the level of being widely known all over.

Had Julian gone all out like this for Kayla's sake? Or... Was it true, as Madam Fulcher said, that he had only done all of this because they were held hostage and he was threatened by Kayla?

Did Julian...

Truly have feelings for her?

Then, what did his childhood friendship with Kayla amount to?

What about all those years of waiting, even their marriage? Was it all because of Diana's resemblance to Kayla's face? Did Julian truly never have feelings for Kayla?

Diana didn't dare to dwell on these thoughts.

Right now, she relied on her love and concern for Madam Fulcher, who was like her own grandmother, to carry her through.

Regardless of the truth, she had to see Julian first.

She could only ensure Madam Fulcher's safety by meeting him. The thought of Madam Fulcher being alone in the abandoned residential area made Diana extremely anxious. Even though the baton struck her, her feet were rooted to the ground and she had no intention of leaving.

But by now, the guests had started to arrive. The security guards, seeing that the baton wasn't effective, had no choice but to restrain her physically. With her weak strength and numerous wounds, she couldn't withstand their pulling and was immediately locked in the hotel's storage room.

There was no one here, and the surroundings were filled with stored items.

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As Diana heard the door click shut and lock, she grew even more uneasy. No matter how hard she tried, she couldn't escape because the storage room didn't even have windows.

Meanwhile, Julian was waiting at the villa for news from Noel.

After a sleepless night, the call finally came.

'Sir...'

Upon hearing Noel's tone, Julian's heart sank. "Is there still no sign of them? ■

'No,' Noel replied apologetically. "I apologize, sir. It's my fault. I'm incompetent."

Their influence spread throughout Richburgh, yet they couldn't even find two women!

Julian felt increasingly frustrated, but had to accept the hard reality." Forget it."

In this world, not everything would go according to his wishes. Ever since he realized his feelings for Diana, he had become more aware of his limitations as an individual.

'I'll marry her.'

As long as he married Kayla, she would tell him the whereabouts of Diana and Madam Fulcher, and they would be safe.

'But sir...' Noel felt it unfair to Julian.

Julian was an invincible boss to him, and the man had never faced such a threat before!

'There's no buts,' Julian said flatly. "I lost in this match against Kayla, and that's a fact.'

When one lost, it is necessary to accept the punishment from the winner...

And marrying Kayla was Julian's punishment.

Despite that, this wedding wasn't like what Kayla had imagined, where everything followed her wishes. There was no traditional ceremony, not even

an exchange of vows. Also, Julian only came out of his room when Kayla arrived at the villa.

The first thing he said was, “Are Diana and Grandma safe?”

And the second thing was, “I want to talk to them again.”

Due to her excitement, Kayla had barely slept all night. She started doing her makeup at three in the morning, resulting in her bridal look today. Her wedding dress was carefully selected, and the veil on her face didn’t appear excessive. Instead, it added a touch of mysterious beauty to her overall appearance.

Unfortunately, her eyebrows and eyes were nothing like Diana’s.

Julian’s heart tightened at the thought of Diana.

‘Well?’ His eyes flickered, his gaze as sharp as a sickle, as if they could pierce through Kayla’s body.

If it weren’t for Diana and Madam Fulcher still being in her hands, Kayla was sure she would have died a thousand deaths already.

However, she wasn’t afraid.

She gently touched her own heart. As long as her life-saving favor remained, Julian would always hesitate when it came to her.

He was someone...

Who placed great importance on such debts.

However, she couldn’t resist his domineering demand in the end, and she obediently called Hans. However, the man refused to answer.

Kayla sensed something unexpected had happened, so she glanced at Julian before walking out of the room and continued dialing.

Hans finally picked up after numerous attempts, but he sounded panicked. “Hello?”

Kayla pushed her worries aside and asked sharply, her voice like a crow screeching, “What happened?”

Hans knew that he couldn't hide it any longer. "That b*tch ran away! She's gone!"

Kayla felt as if someone had taken a bat to her head; rage coursed through her to the point she almost threw up blood.

'What did you say?!'

Diana escaped?

How would Kayla continue this act?!

'Diana ran away!' Hans was also outraged, and recounted what had happened to Kayla. "She tricked me! She made me believe that she had no intention of escaping. And with the old hag looking like she was about to keel over, she didn't seem like a threat. So I relaxed a bit..."

'Didn't seem like a threat?'

Kayla pinched the bridge of her nose, wishing she could rush to Hans's side right now and smash his head.

'Are you telling me that you thought the formidable old lady from the Fulcher family and Diana, who established a successful studio in such a short time, posed no threat?'

Kayla felt like she was about to go mad from the anger Hans was causing her.

'You idiot!'

She desperately wanted to tear open his head to see if anything was wrong with his brain.

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Ultimately, the only thing she could do right now was to remain calm lest Julian noticed something was amiss.

"Can you identify the direction Diana fled?"

Hans replied quickly, "No, she's already escaped for one day and one night w

Fire burned in Kayla's chest when she heard this. She spent so much money to hire Hans Lemmington precisely because he had experience in murder and all sorts of crimes.

She thought that given how vicious he was, he would definitely show no mercy to Diana.

She never expected him to end up losing her!

What's worse, he only decided to inform her after one entire day and night had passed.

One day and one night!

It was entirely possible that Diana had fled from the desolated suburbs to the main city.

For Kayla she knew, she was already waiting at the hotel for her and Julian to arrive...

Fear gripped Kayla the more she thought about it. She immediately called the hotel staff to take note of a woman with an outstanding air about her. She even sent them a photo of herself before she was disfigured, and reminded them to hold Diana back if they spotted her and hand Diana to her.

Afterwards, she asked Hans, "Where's the old woman? How is she?"

"She..." Then, Hans changed the subject. "When are you going to pay me the balance?"

"You lost that woman and you have the cheek to demand me for money?!" Kayla was on the verge of being angered to death. "You..."

"Don't give me hot air!" As a man who had been in jail and even murdered, Hans cared not for reason and only for his money. "I helped you kidnap her, so you must pay me. If you don't. I'll take that old woman away!"

That won't do!

If that happened, Julian would never spare Kayla.

Kayla did want something untoward to happen to Madam Fulcher, but she didn't want herself to be responsible for it. She wanted it to happen when both she and Diana were together, so she could push the blame to Diana.

But now, Diana had fled.

Therefore, that old woman had to remain safe and sound.

Kayla had no choice but to give in. "Fine, fine! I'll transfer the money to you right now. But you must promise me that you'll keep a close watch on that old woman. Don't let her escape, and definitely don't let her die!"

Satisfied, Hans said, "I'll see how sincere you are first."

With that, he hung up.

Kayla's heart raced as it finally dawned on her that she was completely incapable of controlling a murderer like Hans.

Thankfully, she had money.

With money, she would be able to control that man.

Yes!

Hans loved and needed money. As long as Kayla had the money, he would surely listen to her and take good care of that old woman.

The more she thought about this, the more reassured she was. Just then, Julian's cold voice snapped her back to attention. "Well?"

There was a tinge of anxiety in his voice.

Kayla sensed it, and her heart immediately hardened. "No, nothing. Diana doesn't want to talk to you."

He said such hurtful things yesterday, it was completely understandable that she didn't want to talk to him over the phone...

Julian inevitably disappointed course through him.

‘Then tell her that and let me hear her voice,’ he pressed. He would only be willing to go through with this ridiculous wedding Kayla wanted so badly if only he could confirm that Diana and his grandmother were safe.

“She said that she feels disgusted hearing either of our voices,” Kayla lied without batting her eyelid. “Grandmother said so, too. Whatever it is...” She shrugged and looked at Julian. “It’s about time for the auspicious hour. If we can’t reach the hotel in time, I’m not sure if any wounds will appear on Diana’s body...”

Julian came to a compromise immediately. “Don’t!”

Kayla had never expected to see Julian so easily manipulated.

Diana Winnington...was greatly influential to him.

Kayla sneered, confident she had complete hold over Julian. “As long as you go through with this wedding with me, she’ll return to your side safe and sound.”

Julian’s Stand-In Wife chapter 587

“What about Grandma?” Julian’s eyes turned dark. “She’s advanced in years, and her health is poor. Take good care of her.”

“I will.” Kayla nodded without any hint of guilt. “I’ve already said I’ll let my men take good care of her. She’s my grandma too, after all.”

Julian didn’t expect Kayla to be so thick-skinned.

Truly, he had been a ridiculously poor judge of character over the years.

He used to think of Kayla as an innocent little girl. He never expected that the kind little girl who saved him back then would one day grow up into...

He looked down, hiding the disappointment in his eyes. “She’s not your grandmother.”

Never will she be in your entire life.

He would never acknowledge it.

Neither would Madam Fulcher.

All generations of the Fulcher family will never acknowledge it!

“Let’s go.” He looked away and walked into his own car, not even sparing a glance at Kayla who had meticulously dolled herself up.

Kayla wanted to call him to go into the wedding car, but the cold look in his eyes made her swallow the words back down her throat.

It was already good enough for him to willingly go through with the wedding with her.

As long as everyone in Richburgh was aware she was married to Julian, all was good.

As for how he would arrive at the hotel, she was willing to leave that to him.

Julian was still an impressive and powerful man whom she simply had a hold over. If she were to push him to a corner, no one would know what he was capable of doing.

It was more important to get through the wedding first.

Kayla had been waiting for this wedding for a long time. There were many staff members who worked through the night just to make her dream wedding a reality.

But...

What was strange was that James and Kate had yet to contact her today.

Kayla couldn’t overcome the curiosity in her heart and called James, but no one answered her call.

Could her emerging as champion at yesterday’s exhibition made the Winningtons’ fashion business wildly popular overnight and extremely profitable, thereby making James so busy he no longer cared about being Julian Fulcher’s father-in-law, something he used to care about above everything else?

Kayla had raked in so much money for the Winningtons; by now, her status in the family was surely secure!

After the wedding, given how she saved Julian's life and how she brought prosperity to the Winningtons, which would make her grandfather step forward and speak up for her, Julian wouldn't be able to do anything to her.

She would then take on the title of Mrs. Fulcher and lead a happy life.

Most importantly, she defeated Diana just with this disfigured face of hers!

She even managed to snatch Julian back, who belonged to her to begin with.

Kayla's mood improved with every passing thought. She didn't even care who was here to attend her wedding. She even forgot about the fact that Lucy didn't contact her at all.

She only cared about getting the wedding ceremony over and done with.

Meanwhile, Diana was losing hope with every minute she stayed in the warehouse.

This place was practically impenetrable. Forget going out to look for Julian, she could almost feel the air in here getting thinner simply staying in here and breathing.

She even wondered if she would die here.

On the day when Julian and Kayla would get married, no less...

Just as Diana was sitting hopelessly on the ground and coming to terms with her fate, she heard a familiar voice sounding in her ears. "Well, well, well. We meet again."

The fan in his hand opened and closed as he stood in the dark warehouse and stretched his hand out to her. "Look how miserable you are right now! Give me your hand, I'll get you out."

It was Simon Channing!

Oliver Channing's brother, who resembled Julian somewhat...

To Diana, he was quite the deviant.

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She never thought she would feel such affinity for that little deviant!

The last time he sent her back to the villa in the rain, Julian must've found a chance to knock some sense into him. That probably resulted in their chance meeting today.

Diana reached her hand out eagerly. "Thank you."

'Thank me?' Simon's face fell suddenly, and he even retracted his hand. "What are you thanking me for?"

He had always been a temperamental man.

Diana sensed that something was off, but refused to let go of the only hope she could see. "For getting me out of this place..."

"Getting you out of this place?" Simon furrowed his brows as if confused, and looked helplessly at her. "What's with you? Do you need my help to get out of this place?"

Given how miserable Diana looked, anyone would be able to guess that she needed help and wasn't out for a stroll during a vacation.

Yet Simon Channing chose to turn a blind eye to her miserable state.

He clearly didn't have the intention of saving her.

She decided not to waste her breath and instead save energy by ignoring him.

This woman was interesting indeed.

He had seen her sashay around Julian and being demure and dignified before Oliver. Yet, nothing was as shocking as seeing her like this.

Ugly.

Truly ugly.

Yet, there was still a tinge of resilience between her brows. Her bony shoulders looked weighed down with life's burdens, but were still stubbornly holding on.

It was a mesmerizing scene to behold.

Simon drew closer to her and pressed hard onto her wounds, making her inhale sharply with pain.

Even so, she refused to make a sound.

She didn't overreact. That sat well with him.

He suddenly felt his heart soften toward her and spoke once more. 'TH get you out?'

If she were under ordinary circumstances, Diana certainly wouldn't believe the words of someone like Simon. But right now... Grandma was still waiting for her, and she needed time. As much time as she could get.

She wouldn't let any minute possibility slip by.

So she gritted her teeth; ignoring the reason why Simon would press so hard on her wounds, she nodded and said, "Sure."

But a look of awkwardness suddenly appeared on Simon's face. "Forget it."

He retracted his hand once again.

'There's nothing between us. I wouldn't want to get involved between you and Julian and get myself into trouble again.'

With that, he leaned against an industrial rack and simply stood right there.

Diana could no longer stand his fickle-mindedness and unpredictability. This time, he merely pressed down hard on her wounds. What if he strangled her next time?

He was a temperamental man who didn't operate by logic. Staying by his side would subject Diana to his mercy, just like a helpless sheep/

She would rather go all out and escape out of this place by herself!

She stood up, and finally found a wrench after searching through the racks.

The wrench was slightly heavy, but thankfully, she had gotten used to carrying all those heavy fabrics that she had grown accustomed to handling such a weight.

Simon was curious about her actions and sat down staring at her. 'What are you doing?'

Diana remained silent.

Without uttering a single word, she used the wrench to repeatedly smash the lock on the metal gate of the warehouse.

As she did so, she realized why Simon kept going back on his word: he was trapped in here, too.

Although she didn't know why he was trapped here, it remained a fact that, like her, he was unable to leave this place as well.

In fact, it was only until just now that he realized this.

Simon, that little pervert...

He wasn't as cruel and fickle as Diana thought he was, but...

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The insidious look in his eyes was much too overwhelming, and Diana didn't want to interact too much with him. She had this feeling that he was even more dangerous than Julian, and was in fact an amalgamation and exaggeration of all of Julian's flaws.

...Strange.

Why did she associate the two of them?

Diana shook her head, and focused on repeatedly smashing the lock on the gate with the wrench in hand.

This was way too energy consuming.

Simon was tickled pink by her actions. "What good would that do? By the time you're done smashing the lock, the wedding will be over."

Given what just happened, Diana wasn't as resistant against talking to him.

"You know that I came because of the wedding?"

“To snatch a man, what else?” Simon surveyed Diana from top to toe in disdain as he sneered, “Who couldn’t tell?”

She couldn’t be bothered to explain things to him, and she found no need to do so anyway.

Simon refused to let things go. “Is that Julian Fulcher so good? Oliver Channing’s pretty decent, too. Why don’t you choose him instead?”

‘That’s your brother,” Diana corrected Simon’s address of Oliver, feeling as if she had unknowingly drawn closer to this little pervert. She wanted to say more, but the wound on her lips hurt so badly that she decided to talk no more.

Simon wasn’t happy to hear that as he flipped his fan open and close repeatedly. “Are you lecturing me?”

He was clearly upset, and it sounded like he said that through gritted teeth and in an obviously unfriendly tone.

Diana looked up and glanced at him.

Simon could be considered a handsome man, but his features were always twisted in a cold and dark snarl.

That aura tempered through the years had probably affected his rather twisted appearance.

Whatever it was, he wasn’t a man she should get close to.

She looked down and stopped talking to him, trying her best not to provoke the unpredictable man before her.

Simon saw her remain silent, and felt even more displeased. Once again, he reached out and pressed on her wound.

Diana couldn’t stand it any longer and turned away.

Yet, she couldn’t dodge his attack and she felt that pain pierce through her senses.

“You haven’t replied to me.” Simon felt even more indignant than she did, and he felt justified in pressing down on her wound.

Diana really didn't want to waste her breath on him, but had to relent." Reply to you about what?"

Her wound hurt so badly.

Her repeated smashing of the lock on the gate already made her feel worse. She didn't need Simon rubbing salt in her wound.

"Reply to me," Simon said emphatically, seemingly taking the subject very seriously. "Is Julian Fulcher really that good?"

So good that everyone chose him.

At that moment, Diana could sense Simon's mood getting darker, and the relatively harmonious air was once again dashed. She had no choice but to put her guard up once more. "He's alright."

It was her heartfelt words.

She truly didn't know whether Julian was really that good, but either way...

She wasn't sure anymore.

Whatever it was, her priority right now was to deal with Simon and do her darndest to knock down that door.

Simon's eyes lit up upon hearing Diana's perfunctory response. "I think he's rather ordinary, too."

Too?

What did he mean by "rather ordinary"?

Diana never said that Julian was ordinary.

She simply didn't know how to answer Simon's question.

Yet how did he end up assuming that they thought the same way, and even used the word "too"?

More importantly, he used the word "ordinary" to describe Julian.

It seemed Simon was very concerned about how other people viewed Julian.

Perhaps he was still feeling vengeful from being taught a harsh lesson by Julian when he forced Diana back to the villa, and had become especially mindful about Julian as a result.

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He was still a young boy, after all.

Diana just didn't know how much younger he was compared to Oliver. She decided to ask Oliver that question the next time she saw him.

Still, she was in no mood to think further about them. She just wanted to get out of this place.

Just then, Simon's eyes lit up as if he had just obtained a treasure. He grabbed the wrench from Diana and said, "Let me."

He was very strong.

Diana couldn't tell from his usual style of dress, but he was lean yet muscular. His body looked even more toned as he exerted so much force with the wrench that his muscles bulged through his clothes.

Thanks to his powerful smashing, the lock finally had signs of breaking apart.

Simon continued smashing it with all his might.

Diana, on the other hand, was left with nothing to do.

Since she had nothing to do, the gears in her mind started shifting.

She suddenly looked at Simon and asked him a question she had overlooked, "How did you appear here in the warehouse?"

She was locked in here by someone else, but what about Simon?

Simon shrugged. "I came in along with you."

"You came in along with me?" Diana repeated in disbelief.

"Yes. The security guards threw you in here," Simon said. "So I followed them in here, wanting to see how miserable a state Julian's ex-wife would end up in."

What a vengeful man he was!

Julian had merely rebuked him a little, and he turned vengeful against her.

Diana was baffled. “Why didn’t you help me call for help and stop them from throwing me in here?”

Simon stopped what he was doing and gave her a cheeky look. “Why should I do that?”

She was rendered speechless, but she snapped back to attention very quickly. ‘Then why are you helping me to escape now?’

Simon gave her a side-eye, clearly upset with her. “Do I need to explain my every action to you?”

The look he shot her was akin to needles pinning her down.

Thankfully, Diana was used to such pressure thanks to being around Julian’s overwhelming aura, and was able to look back into Simon’s eyes nonchalantly. “You don’t need to.”

Just as long as he was willing to help.

It was tough for her to open the gate just by her strength alone.

However, things were different with Simon’s help.

The lock was almost coming apart. Finally, it fell on the floor with a loud crash.

A smile broke across Simon’s face, as if satisfied with Diana’s earlier response. He liked seeing Julian’s ex-wife behaving submissively to him.

Without a second thought, he reached out to her. “Come on, I’ll bring you out...”

Before he could finish his sentence or touch the wound on her wrist, Diana had shot out of the place like an arrow.

She acted as if he was a scourge.

His eyes turned cloudy with emotions once again.

Bloodstain and traces of dirt left from Diana's wrist tainted Simon's palm. The sight of it filled his eyes with rage. He rushed to the racks, grabbed a bottle of water, opened it, and washed his hands with nary an expression.

He rubbed his hands repeatedly, as if trying to wash away the filth very carefully.

He rubbed so hard that he started bleeding from the blisters caused by the wrench. Then, he stared at the bloody foam in a daze.

Afterwards, he walked out and asked someone to fetch a needle for him. He pricked his blisters open under the fearful and watchful eyes of the others, then pointed in the direction that Diana fled in. 'The beggar the security guards locked up before is running to the front hall to cause trouble again.'

Diana ran as quickly as she could.

She managed to reach the wedding hall from the warehouse in less than thirty seconds.

By the time she found a place to stand, she heard the ear-piercing sounds of firecrackers and loud cheers from outside.

She had once thought that her wedding with Julian was already a grand scene to behold; ultimately, she was the ignorant one. Kayla and Julian's wedding was truly a grand affair.

Lilies filled the entire hall, balloons covered the ceiling, and pastel lilac colored the site. Guests flocked to the hall in endless streams, telling of the humongous effort to make this wedding a reality.

The smell of flowers filled the nose and balloons floated before Diana. Everything felt like a dream, and she suddenly felt her feet take a step back.

Does Julian Fulcher...

Really like her, as Grandma claimed?

Suddenly, someone yelled out loud and interrupted Diana's train of thought. 'The newlyweds have arrived!'

At the same time, amidst the dreamy balloons and blooming lilies, everyone saw the couple walking down the hall.

