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Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 651

Lucy heard that everyone in Richburgh had silently acknowledged Diana as the young mistress of the Winnington family.

She even heard that Old Master Winnington had personally looked up Julian in hopes that Diana would acknowledge her family ancestors.

At that, Julian simply said, "What makes you think that Diana wants to be part of the Winningtons?"

His simple statement left the Old Master Winnington in disgrace. From then on, he dared not bring the matter up again or visit Diana.

This incident added to Diana's legend in Richburgh.

Suddenly, thousands of people wanted to curry favor with her.

Kayla, on the other hand, was stuck in jail.

She was stuck there, in endless sorrow and pain.

Lucy had to save her daughter!

As long as Lucy could save Kayla, given her face that somewhat resembled that of Diana's, there was definitely a chance that Kayla could regain Julian's affections once more!

Lucy conveyed her thoughts to her boss.

Her boss smiled comfortingly. "Don't you worry."

The clothes he was wearing were pressed neatly, and the quality of the fabric was clearly better than what Lucy saw on Old Master Winnington. Yet this boss of hers was supposedly merely a servant of a huge family.

The thought increased Lucy's reverence towards him. "Can she be saved?"

Could Kayla be saved from prison?

“Yes, she can.” The boss grabbed a bottle of water and passed it to Lucy. “As long as you drink this, you’ll be able to see your Kayla.”

Lucy was confused. Why and how could she see Kayla after drinking this?

Her mind was filled with doubt, but then she thought perhaps he meant that by the time she finished this bottle, he would be able to save Kayla from prison.

Thinking that, her boss seemed so powerful.

Lucy smiled and grabbed the bottle from him. “Thank you, sir! Thank you!”

The moment she drank, the woman by the name of Lucy Landon no longer existed in Richburgh.

The Porsche drove slowly out of Richburgh toward the west, not leaving even a trace of surveillance footage behind.

The day Kate came visiting was the day Richburgh snowed for the first time this winter season.

Kate wore a thin layer of clothes, a long sleeved cardigan and an inner sweatshirt. Her ensemble made her feel exceptionally cold on this early winter day.

Diana wrapped herself up tight in her down jacket and suppressed the pity that flashed past her heart. Her eyes were cold as she asked in a chilly tone, “What are you doing here?”

Kate, for her part, didn’t expect Diana to be so cold.

At that moment, she awkwardly pulled at the zipper on her jacket.

To her dismay, she was unable to pull it up properly. It made things even more awkward for her.

In the end, Kate was still Diana’s biological mother.

Although she treated Diana horribly, Kate did share meals with Diana once, and even made Diana noodles on her birthday.

Diana recalled the taste of the noodles, which inevitably brought back memories of Grandma, who had celebrated her birthday and even counseled her on the hurts of her past.

Pain flashed past her heart and compassion overwhelmed her.

“Come on in.” She took a side step and let Kate into the house.

Joy filled Kate’s heart as she continued walking into the villa.

However, Diana stopped her just in time. “Let’s just talk at the door.”

They were standing under a roof which could block out some of the wind and snow, and make Kate less cold than she would be outside.

Diana knew Kate had come with an ulterior motive, and surely not because she missed her. It was probably... because of James.

As she had expected, Kate pondered for a moment before speaking, “Your dad...”

Diana shook her head. “I don’t have a father.”

Ever since he dug up her babies’ grave, she had said that she would never acknowledge him as her father.

What’s more, she had never called him her father. Why would she address him as that now?

Kate felt as though she had choked on something, and grumbled inwardly at Diana’s pride from riding on Julian’s success. Diana looked radiant and glowing, and even more arrogant and haughty than before.

“I’m still your mother!” Kate puffed up her chest, in hopes that Diana would see for herself who she was.

At that, Diana said indifferently, “I know that.”

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If it weren’t for the fact that she had given birth to Diana, or for the noodles, Kate wouldn’t even have the chance to come into the villa’s porch.

Kate was shocked by the cold look on Diana's face, which clearly told of the fact that Diana had no intention whatsoever to treat her like a mother.

Fury tainted her face red.

She didn't even feel so cold anymore. Her head buzzed as she screamed, "What do you know? Your father and I are suffering right now, cowering in that lousy place and eating terrible food! Doesn't your heart ache one bit for us?"

"Eating terrible food?" Diana recalled her old memories. Her tone was gentle despite the harsh words she was about to say. "I'm sure that food still tastes great. After all, it was my staple food when I was young. Now that I'm with Julian, he's not used to eating such food and prefers fancier delicacies and feasts. Even his vegetables are flown directly from Switzerland. Now that you've mentioned it, I rather miss the taste of that food I used to enjoy."

Diana was deliberately reminding Kate the terrible life she suffered in her youth, as well as showing Kate the great contrast between the miserable life she and James were leading compared to the delightful and luxurious life Diana was enjoying.

Diana wasn't leaving Kate any dignity, nor was she intending to offer Kate any form of help or consolation.

Kate's face went black, and she no longer wanted to speak any further.

On second thought, she imagined the look on James's face as she waited at home for her to come back with some

good news. She opened her mouth once more and said "Diana, I'm still your mother."

She took a deep breath. As if Diana was holding a knife against her neck, she forced herself to say, "I've come all the way here. Please, at least give me some money so I can eat. Your dad..."

The swift change in Diana's expression forced Kate to hurriedly amend her words.

"I mean, James is a proud man. He can do without luxuries at home by himself, but if he were to head out or if he has visitors, he'll certainly have to

bring out something good to host them. He'll also need new clothes when he goes out."

Every attire and every imported food didn't come cheap.

In a matter of days, he had spent all the money that Kate had painstakingly saved up over the years.

It was no surprise for Diana.

Rather, what surprised Diana was something else. She voiced her curiosity, asking, "Why don't you leave him?"

Leaving James would probably allow Kate to lead a better life.

Kate was stunned for a moment, as if completely shocked. She had lost the position of Mrs. Winnington that she had held in such high regard, and lost all chances of riches, wealth, and glory. Even Old Master Winnington had made clear that because of the huge losses Winnington Fashions suffered-which effectively halved the Winnington's family assets-he had issued the order of never allowing James back home.

It could be said that if she were to continue following James Winnington, her chances of regaining her past glory and wealth were nil.

And yet, Kate continued staying by his side.

"I..." She paused for a moment as a thought came to mind. "I'm waiting for Lucy Landon?"

Diana repeated her words, slightly confused. "Waiting for Lucy Landon?"

Kate nodded. "Yes. I want James to know how wrong he has been over the years. Ever since all this misfortune befell us, Lucy ran as far as she could and never returned. Yet I willingly stayed by his side, suffering alongside him. I want him to see for himself whether I or that Lucy Landon is better."

Her words only served to deceive herself and others.

Diana could sense that Kate did have affections for James.

At the same time, her heart was deeply bitter. “I thought you were greedy for riches and sought glory for yourself, which was why you refused to accept me and favored Kayla so much.

But now that I see it, you not liking me means just that.

It has nothing to do with riches and glory.

In fact...

You don’t favor Kayla that much, either. You just like her a bit more than you like me.

The thing you care most about is your own pride and dignity -the pride you want to preserve by hiding the fact that James had betrayed you a long time ago!”

It was why Kate chose to turn a blind eye to Diana being abandoned and instead treated Kayla like a precious treasure all these years. It was precisely because she refused to admit that James had long betrayed her. She didn’t want people realizing that he was no longer her knight in shining armor.

Kate was completely stunned by Diana’s remark. Her mouth opened and closed, but she found no words to say.

‘You don’t love anyone but yourself.’ Diana took a deep breath. “You’ve never mentioned Kayla’s name since you came here, not even once. In fact, you didn’t think of visiting her in jail. You didn’t even...”

Diana paused for a moment as disappointment filled her heart. ‘You never think of me except for when it benefits you. Only then would you deign to call yourself my mother.’

But so what?

Did Diana have to bow down to Kate just because the latter proclaimed to be her mother?

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Impossible. That would never happen.

Diana smiled. “Pity I am as stubborn as you are.’

The difference was that Kate protected her own pride and dignity, whereas Diana protected her own feelings.

She no longer wanted to fall into the trap of the so-called care of her heartless parents and end up disappointed once more.

“Nonsense!” Kate saw Diana calling for security to shut the door, blocking her outside of the house, and started panicking. “I’ve never thought that way before! I love and dote on both you and Kayla!”

Both were her children!

One was her biological child, and the other adopted.

She cared for both of them. Life just happened to be too tough right now and she did not have the luxury to think about them-that’s all!

Yet, Diana clearly didn’t want to hear her explain herself any further. “Ever since James and Kayla were in cahoots to dig up my babies’ grave and you chose to stand on their side even after knowing the truth, I no longer consider you as my mother.”

Despite the fact that her babies were never born, Diana had experienced what it was like to be a mother. She knew first hand what the love of a mother should look like.

All the more she knew clearly that Kate’s so-called love was far too shallow and fake.

And all the more she didn’t care for Kate’s love.

In any case...

She turned back and looked at the huge villa with a smile.

She had a family now.

She had Julian.

He would love her forever and heal the pain in her heart.

Kate, met with rejection and unable to get what she wanted, ended up hurling insults at the door.

“Diana, you’re a heartless animal!”

“You have no conscience to speak of!”

“You deserve death!”

“You shouldn’t have been born in the first place!”

“Diana, you…”

Exhausted, she paused for a moment, having run out of words to yell out loud. Finally, she ended with a final hurrah. ” Diana, you’re not fit to be loved by anyone in this world!”

The security guards could no longer tolerate her anymore and sent someone to seal her mouth and chase her miles away from the villa.

Meanwhile, Diana couldn’t care less about Kate’s words.

“Just let her be,” Diana said. She looked at Julian seated at the couch, waiting for her further instructions.

She added slightly bitterly, ‘This biological mother of mine has never spoken so many words to me before.’

The insults seem to have made up for all that was left unspoken over the first half of her life. Simply hearing them from Kate made her throat go dry and parched.

Julian’s heart ached for Diana, but he didn’t say anything.

He simply stayed by her side in silence as Kate kept on insulting Diana at the door. Subsequently, he heard cries from outside which gradually disappeared, as if Kate was really exhausted and had finally run out of energy.

Diana refused to head out and take a look at Kate the entire time. The only thing Julian noticed was that she seemed to be drinking more water than she did before.

She tended to drink more water when she was feeling anxious.

Julian knew that Diana wasn’t feeling good. Ultimately, she wasn’t able to get past her own conscience.

He thought about it, and decided to have Noel send some food to Kate and James in private. That would prevent something bad from really happening to them, which would make Diana feel even worse.

To his surprise, Noel told him that they had disappeared.

Julian was baffled. "What do you mean, disappeared?"

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"Everything in that rented apartment has disappeared." Noel found it strange as well. "I tried to ask around with the neighbors, and they said that a luxury car drove by to pick up the couple."

Julian's brows furrowed. "A luxury car?"

The Winnington family were no longer receptive to James.

Why would there be a luxury car coming to fetch them?

Where did the car bring them to?

"Yes," Noel replied. "Apparently, they were exceptionally happy when they left, and they flung all their belongings into the trash can, as if they were about to enjoy a good life in the days ahead."

Julian found it strange. "Did you check the car plate number?"

"No, I didn't," Noel said. "Their apartment was in an old estate which didn't even have traffic lights, not to mention surveillance cameras. No trace of the car was left behind."

Things seemed rather suspicious, and Julian tasked Noel to investigate things further. But memories of Kate insulting and scolding Diana outside the villa yesterday, which upset Diana and sent her mind into chaos, flashed in his mind. Julian concluded that perhaps, their departure might be for the better after all.

"Forget it," he said, "don't bother."

Kate and James were fully grown adults who could take care of themselves. There was no need for him to worry about them.

As for the news of them, he decided to wait for a beautiful afternoon during which Diana was in a good mood. She was cooking porridge in the kitchen when he told her about James and Kate.

Diana looked rather ambivalent about Julian's update.

There was, however, a change in the expression on her face as her tone soured. "I knew it all along."

She knew all along that they cared naught for her as their daughter.

No matter where they went, they wouldn't even bother bidding her goodbye.

"Forget it." She said the same thing as Julian had said, "There are some relationships that one can only wish for."

She held Julian's hand tenderly. "Don't be sad."

Instead, she ended up comforting him.

Julian burst out laughing, a sharp line tracing down from his exquisite brows to his hard jaw like a bejeweled saber, softened and made tender by the soft glow of the afternoon sun.

The look on his face together, together with the fragrance of her wholesome porridge, brought warmth to the depths of

her heart.

Diana wasn't sure when, but Julian suddenly began becoming busy.

Diana glanced at the calendar, noting that it was nearing the new year. She thought about the various annual reports and updates that were due for her company. Things started getting busy at her studio as well, not to talk about a company on the scale of Fulcher Inc.

She was exceptionally patient with Julian.

She didn't complain even when he didn't return home for consecutive days.

She simply focused on dealing with work at her studio. Both of them concentrated on performing their duties at work and shining in their respective capacities.

Today, Diana finally saw the light at the end of the tunnel in the work she had to settle.

She decided to report her progress to Fanny.

Fanny was, after all, the first investor of Diana's studio. Had it not been for Fanny at the start, Diana truly had no idea how she managed to survive.

However, she was unable to get in touch with Fanny.

Diana asked Nina, who could only tell her that Fanny had once again risen the ranks in the entertainment industry. Fanny wasn't only an A-list celebrity, but now an AA-list celebrity. 20 hours out of 24 were spent on filming and taking on advertisements.

The work demands consumed Fanny's entire life.

Nina lamented, "How much money is she making right now? You can really make fast money as a celebrity."

Diana smiled. "Why don't you be one yourself?"

"No way!" Nina said. "Celebrities might look all glamorous, but behind that...Tsk, tsk! It's up to fate whether they become popular or not."

Nina knew that Fanny was going all out right now because she understood the fact that nothing good could last forever.

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'The height you've risen to will be the height from which you fall in the future. It only makes sense for her to earn as much moolah as she can while she's at the peak of her career.'

Diana begged to differ.

She was sure Fanny wasn't one to care so much about money, neither was the latter in need of money.

So why was Fanny working so hard right now?

"Maybe she just enjoys being a celebrity." Diana harbored a guess as she imagined Fanny's beautiful face. "She's a born star, after all."

Nina didn't agree. 'You thought wrong.'

She updated Diana on the latest news. 'The paparazzi exposed that Fanny's in dire need of money right now. Aside from high-end product advertisements and good scripts, she even began exposing herself to unknown products and lousy web dramas for the sake of some cash. As long as the remuneration's good, she'll never fail to be there for it.'

Diana choked on Nina's words.

How did things turn out like that?

The A-list celebrity, who was always laid-back and lazy like a cat, never used to be like this.

If this were to go on, it would only waste away her spirit. Fanny would end up all spent.

Fanny had invested in Diana a huge sum at her lowest point and given her the chance of making a comeback.

Fanny had also given her a chance to shake free of Julian and give her relationship with him a better second chance.

Diana pondered for a moment before deciding to look up Fanny with Oliver in tow.

With Oliver as a medium, she was sure she could get hold of Fanny very quickly.

To her surprise, Fanny's reply to Oliver was the same: that she was busy.

Diana mentioned her attempts to reach out to Fanny to Nina, who teased, 'What, trying to find a back-up for yourself? Are you unhappy now that he isn't at your beck and call?'

'Nina!' Diana was baffled. 'What goes on in your mind all day...?'

Nina sounded justified. 'What? In all the shows I've been filming, be it young men or famous and experienced men in the industry, all of them are the same. They all look out for secret lovers for themselves. If you don't believe me, just check out your socials. There's another celebrity couple who used to be all lovey dovey, but they're now getting divorced. The man has many other lovers

outside. When he was busy filming, one would be in charge of his laundry, another would cook for him, and another would warm his bed. Tsk, tsk...”

Nina was filled with admiration. “Impressive. Simply impressive!”

She cried out to the heavens. “Ah! Diana, I want a secret lover myself too!”

A whole closet of them!

“I want Vans Stanley to see me in a different light!”

Ultimately, she cared about what Vans thought. It seemed she was still affected by his engagement.

Diana couldn’t bear to see her dear friend hurt. “Nina, I suggest you break up with him. Otherwise, you’ll be faced with a lot of trouble in time to come. You might even earn yourself the reputation of a homewrecker.”

If it weren’t for the fact that she was truly the one who saved Julian in the past, Diana wondered if she was the one who had come in between Julian and Kayla’s relationship.

But now, she fully understood that her so-called identity as the replacement or interference was nothing but spurious.

Everything that had happened was due to Kayla’s fault. She had claimed credit for saving Julian, which should have been Diana’s.

In fact, Kayla should thank Diana for being able to meet Julian in the first place.

Kayla was the one better fitted in playing the role of interfering and bringing chaos to everything.

Diana could now be certain about this not just because of facts, but more so because of her knowledge of Julian’s affections for her.

On the other hand, Vans...

Diana swallowed past her constricted throat. “He’s already wearing an engagement ring. He’s clearly intent on getting engaged with that woman. Nina, hear me out. It’s better to just break up...”

“But this isn’t fair to me,” Nina cut Diana off. Then she added in a softer tone, “Why should I, Diana?”

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“I fell in love with him first, and I met him first. Most of all, we got into a relationship first...”

And yet, she wasn’t the woman who got engaged with Vans.

Nina was about to say something more, but very soon, she composed herself and stopped talking about things between her and Vans.

Diana wanted to pursue things further, but upon sensing that Nina wasn’t willing to talk about it anymore, she didn’t push it.

Nina went on, “Oh, yes. I forgot to tell you that Oliver’s no longer in the emergency room.”

“Has he been promoted?”

Did he become busier because of a promotion?

“How could any other department be busier than the ER?” Because of Vans, Nina gained a better understanding of things in the hospital. ‘That’s the most tiring department in the entire hospital! You’re right that he’s been promoted, but actually, it’s almost equivalent to resigning. He only comes to the hospital for half a day each week at the highest-level specialist clinic, and he only does consultations for three hours each time. According to Vans, it’s tough to get a number with him.’

“What does he spend his time doing, then?” If he only stayed at the hospital three hours each week, why wouldn’t he have time to go with Diana to look for Fanny?

“I have no idea.” Nina shook her head. “He seems to have become more mysterious with his whereabouts all of a sudden.”

A thought came to Nina’s mind. “Diana, I feel that all of these rich heirs...aren’t simple at all.”

There was fatigue in her voice.

Diana's heart ached as she witnessed the ever-optimistic Nina lamenting. Mixed feelings arose in her heart. "If you really want to be with Vans, I can ask Julian..."

"Don't." Nina suddenly turned solemn. "Don't interfere in things between us."

In matters of the heart, no one could make decisions on another person's behalf.

Nina was insistent on this.

Diana nodded. "Alright, then."

They began chatting leisurely. When they hung up, Diana felt rather melancholic.

They were inching closer to the new year.

After the new year, she would be 22 years of age.

Everyone was growing older, and hearts were changing.

Diana sighed, and decided that she had to see Fanny. She was still unable to contact Fanny's manager, and finally

decided to call the front desk of Fanny's studio.

Upon hearing Diana's name, the person on the other end sounded as if she was hit by something.

Her voice immediately turned respectful. "Mrs. Fulcher?"

Diana stuttered, remembering that she and Julian hadn't gone through formal remarriage procedures yet.

But she responded anyway. "Yes, it's me."

Mentioning her name was effective indeed, as she immediately got a response. "I've already told my boss. She said that you can go on-site to look for her directly."

There's no time like today.

Diana pondered for a moment before tidying up her profit and loss reports and annual work schedule summary before heading off to look for Fanny.

By the time Diana reached the site, Fanny was in the midst of filming.

She was as beautiful as she was before.

But she wasn't in as good a state as she used to be, as she was clearly exhausted.

Diana found a spot to sit down, her worry for Fanny growing.

Her brows were still furrowed when Fanny sat down opposite her. "Do you really need money?"

Diana decided to cut straight to the chase.

Fanny looked at Diana in shock. Very soon, she smiled and said, "Yes."

She asked someone for help to twist open the cap of a bottle. "Very, very much in need of money. I need lots of it."

Diana sighed and handed the reports to Fanny. "My studio's been doing well over the past half a year, and I've earned you quite a bit of money. The return on investment has reached 20%."

That was shockingly good results.

Surprised flashed past Fanny's eyes. She was about to take the reports from Diana, but Diana said to her, "I'll work even harder from now on. Can you not work yourself so hard, please?"

If things went on like this, Fanny might exhaust all her energy and spark as a celebrity.

Fanny's pupils dilated, moved by Diana's genuine care and concern for her.

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However, she recovered very soon. "No wonder Oliver likes you."

Diana noticed that Fanny wasn't referring to him with as much affection as before.

“You’re really likable.” Fanny had worked so hard for so many days and slogged for so many years, yet no one had ever told her not to work herself so hard.

Alas, Diana’s offer wasn’t enough to feed her or solve her problems.

Fanny thought that the only way to help Oliver at his critical juncture was to become very rich and famous. That way, he could do whatever he wanted to do instead of being forced to take over the Channings’ family business.

To a certain extent, she, Oliver, and Diana had become strangers because of their family issues.

However, Fanny couldn’t bear looking at Diana’s pure and untainted eyes any longer. She couldn’t bear hiding the fact that she was earning money so Oliver would have the strength and power to fight Julian.

Fanny eventually said, “Talk more with Oliver when you have the time.”

Diana felt rather awkward at the mention of his name. “I’ve tried, but he said he’s busy.”

It seemed Oliver had firmly made up his mind.

Since he decided to return to the Channing family, he would therefore kill all the feelings he had for Diana.

A tinge of pain flashed past Fanny’s eyes. She started stumbling over her words. “I’m very...busy too. Continue on... with the good work at the s-studio.”

She was busy indeed, and the director was starting to call for her again.

Diana had no choice but to leave. “Don’t worry. I’ll keep helping you earn money.”

She would never let her investors’ money go to waste.

Fanny looked long and hard at Diana, but did not say anything anymore. The next second, she ran off to resume filming.

Seeing her and only able to say a few words to her made Diana feel even more melancholic.

On the way back home, realization suddenly dawned upon Diana-everyone had unknowingly changed so much, even before the new year began.

At that point, she felt as if she had suddenly lost all her bearings.

Before she could think any deeper, she remembered that there was someone else waiting for her report.

And that was Mr. Whatever.

He was the second largest investor of her studio.

Since it was nearing the year's end, it was time to present to him the status of the return on his investment.

When she called him, Julian was in the midst of a meeting. He immediately ground the meeting to a halt, a sly look flashing past his eyes.

He decided to hang up on her.

He wasn't about to confess to Diana that he was Mr. Whatever.

Perhaps until after his birthday.

At that time, Diana probably couldn't bear to hit him when he confessed.

Otherwise, Diana might get furious with him for hiding his true identity and investing in her business.

Therefore, he immediately hung up and sent her a text instead, so that he could avoid the risk of exposing his identity. "Hello."

He started off greeting her politely and courteously, but his next text wasn't as courteous. "How are my returns looking?"

Diana looked at her phone, wondering why this person refused to answer her call.

It was only when she received his text that she realized that as a landlord, Mr. Whatever might be even busier than her in collecting rent during the year-end period.

It was best to just go straight to the point. "As good as expected."

Diana didn't bother explaining much, and simply attached the reports in an email.

Mr. Whatever then replied, "Good."

He seemed to be someone straightforward and to the point in doing business.

Diana smiled as she switched her phone off, deciding not to bother him any further.

It was only until the meeting was over that Noel, unable to suppress his curiosity any longer, asked Julian, "Sir?"

Julian looked up. "Yes?"

"Who called during the meeting just now?"

Anyone who could make Julian stop a meeting mid-way was no ordinary person.

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Julian replied straightforwardly, "My wife."

She was no ordinary person indeed. She was the love of his life!

Noel was silenced by Julian's answer, and asked no further questions.

Julian, on the other hand, offered further information. "I put on a disguise and played a game with her, which is why I didn't answer her call and texted her instead."

That alone was worth him halting a meeting with the senior executives-just so he could send a text?!

Noel couldn't figure out what Julian meant by "putting on a disguise," but even if he didn't understand what his boss meant, he had no choice but to agree.

He could sense that Julian was waiting for a response from him, so he chuckled dryly a few times, put his hands together, and said in a tone that was eager to please, "Wow, sir! You must be in a good mood to play such games with your wife."

“Bootlicker, you are,” Julian teased.

By the time Julian returned home, Diana had gotten changed and was seated in the living room as she waited for him.

“Not busy today?” Julian asked deliberately.

“Nope,” Diana replied. “I’ve already finished the year-end summary and reports, and have even contacted my two investors.”

Julian’s brows furrowed. “Including that Mr. Whatever?”

“Yes,” Diana said. “He’s a really proud and arrogant man.”

A thought came to mind and she added, “I used to think that he could’ve been you.”

Julian choked on his saliva. “What about now?”

“I don’t think that way now,” Diana said. “You’d send me thousands of texts a day, and you’d even split your sentences into two just to send me more texts. But this Mr. Whatever... He talks very little and only cares about earning money.”

Julian smiled and teased, “Does he earn as much as I do?”

“Of course not.” She smiled brightly. She was wearing a fluffy white shirt, which made her fair skin look even brighter and dewier. The thermostat in the room was switched on, and the warmth in the house made her cheeks blush a bright red.

Julian was unable to shift his eyes away. “You look more and more beautiful by the day.”

Diana’s hair stood on end at his words. “Why are you praising me out of the blue?”

He was completely unperturbed even when saying such cheesy things.

Another thought suddenly came to Diana’s mind. “Fanny Smith.”

“Hmm?”

“That celebrity, Fanny Smith,” Diana said. “Don’t you know her? She’s the hottest celebrity in the circle right now.”

Julian shook his head. “I seem to have heard her name before, but I don’t remember what she looks like.”

He fixed his eyes on Diana and said, “Whatever it is, she won’t be as beautiful as you are.”

“You and your silver tongue!” Diana’s face flushed even redder at his words. “I’m being serious! She’s my first investor.”

Diana pondered for a moment before recounting everything that had happened between her and Fanny today. “She doesn’t lack money, but today, she said she’s in severe need of money. Oliver’s no longer in the ER, yet he claims to be very busy.”

She looked on wistfully. “Everyone seems to have changed so much. What exactly is going on...?”

Although Julian couldn’t care less about Fanny Smith, he cared about Oliver.

Oliver, no longer working in the ER?

It was a chance he fought tooth and nail for from Kenneth. He wasn’t one to give up so easily.

It didn’t take more than a few seconds for Julian to think things through.

The gears in Julian’s head were turning at a high speed as he considered all possibilities. His dark eyes turned darker for a split second.

When he looked up, the cold look in his eyes had all but vanished, replaced with a playful gaze. “Have you ever considered the possibility that they probably just don’t want to keep in contact with you?”

Diana was stunned for a moment, unable to react to that possibility.

Julian added, “If you really want to meet someone, you’d make time for them.”

His words targeted Oliver.

The mere mention of Oliver’s name never failed to land him in a bad mood.

Diana was baffled. "It's been so long, and you're still jealous of him?"

Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 659

"Of course," Julian insisted. "I feel terrible the moment I hear his name."

He leaned in closer to Diana and unbuttoned the first two buttons on his shirt, revealing his collarbones. "Sniff me. Do you smell something sour?"

"Yes, yes." Diana pinched her nose and pretended to move away from him. She kicked back on her heels and tried to escape the couch.

Yet Julian's long arms stretched out and hauled her into his embrace, bringing the temperature between the two of them to a rise...

"Diana, I'm hungry."

His voice was warm and fuzzy, and his hot breath spewed against her ears, tickling while tempting her at the same time. It made her chest grow hot and her ears buzz.

By the time they woke up, it was already four in the morning.

They were famished, having skipped dinner. Julian initially wanted to call up the kitchen staff to send some supper.

Diana had gotten changed and stopped Julian in time." Don't. Let's head downstairs and whip up something ourselves."

She walked barefooted on the floor, but didn't feel the cold.

Conversely, warmth spread from the floor to her feet.

Julian decided to follow suit and go barefooted as well.

When he stood next to her, he hauled her up in his arms once again.

"I'll carry you downstairs."

He started getting touchy again.

If she let him have his way, she would be tormented through the night again.

She was deathly afraid of him.

She could only shrink backwards and express her discontent. "I'm really, really hungry."

"Is that so?" Julian said perfunctorily, having no intention of putting her down. He turned one round and at the next instance, both of them fell heavily onto the bed once more.

The blanket and pillows bounced up, covering the both of them in the middle.

Diana was speechless. "Julian..."

"Be good." His voice was hoarse with desire.

As if sensing her helplessness, Julian became serious and put his hands on her flat stomach.

Diana sucked in her stomach instinctively. "Julian..."

He pulled his hand back, and she immediately recalled that her two babies used to nest snugly inside. Her eyes

immediately welled up with tears.

"Let them come back." Sorrow flashed past the depths of Julian's eyes, but he covered it up very quickly.

It was as if their warm touch had a healing effect that could heal all wounds of their past, "Shall we? Diana, let's get our Aster and Star back..."

His voice sounded like that of a tempter.

Diana almost nodded, as if in a trance.

They spent the night in bed, and she was indeed no longer hungry through the night.

By the time she woke up again, it was already past nine in the morning and the sun was shining high up in the sky.

Julian had already left for work.

It was the final and busiest phase of the work year.

Diana didn't disturb him. Instead, she woke up and had some food before heading out to buy some items necessary for the new year.

Decorations and new cutlery were some of the things that Diana put in her shopping cart.

By the time she reached home, she had filled up two car boots to the brim.

Some of the items she purchased included clothes for Julian.

He could wear them over the new year.

What she didn't expect was for Julian to leave for a work trip that night, even before he had the chance to try out the clothes.

Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 660

They were three days away from the last day of the year.

And yet... Julian wasn't by her side.

Diana was slightly disappointed. She showed him all the things she bought over a video call. "I bought a couple toothbrush set, and I specifically bought this pair of towels with our initials on it! I spent a long time selecting them.

And this, they're the viral glass chopsticks!

This one, pasting these little red flower stickers on the glass will definitely be beautiful!"

Still, Julian didn't seem very interested. He didn't even look up, and simply hummed away perfunctorily.

Diana was getting angry. "Julian!"

She had been sharing with him the things she'd bought, so why didn't he even bother looking at them?

She even suspected that he didn't even hear a single word she said!

She was about to flare up when she saw Julian's brows furrow.

His voice was laced with fatigue as he put on a piteous look on his face. “In order to earn money to feed you, not only did I skip dinner last night, but I didn’t even eat breakfast today.”

Diana was silenced by his look of indignance, and felt helpless at the sight of the man before her/ “I didn’t ask you to skip your meals. You did so because of work...”

“Yes, it’s because of work, that’s what it is,” Julian said in all seriousness. “I have to work in order to earn money so that I can feed you well. What else did you think I meant?”

Diana was completely defeated.

“Diana, I’m really tired.” This was the first time Julian exposed his vulnerabilities to her.

He wasn’t high and mighty, and wasn’t perfect, but it made Diana feel a bit closer to him. “Come back if you’re tired. I’m waiting for you at home.”

Julian felt his eyes grow hot with unshed tears. “I know.”

As long as Diana was at home, no matter how late he returned, there would be a light left switched on for him at the villa.

Warmth blossoming in his heart, Julian said, “In that case, Mrs. Fulcher, can you let me rest for a while?”

Diana naturally couldn’t bear to hang up the video call, but the fatigue on his face made her soften her tone. She asked him the question she wanted to ask the most, “When will you be coming back?”

“Very soon.” Julian lowered his head to pull something. He didn’t even look up, but his voice was firm. “Before the new year. I’ll return before the new year.”

Diana got hold of his promise, but knew that he really was very busy.

She decided not to bother him any further, and immediately hung up.

After hanging up, she felt uneasy and gave Noel a call. “Did something happen to Fulcher Inc.? Why doesn’t Julian have time for his meals?”

He had gastric issues, and it might become severe if his condition worsened.

Noel was stunned for a moment. “Ma’am, what could happen to Fulcher Inc.? It’s just a matter of a couple of mergers and acquisitions coinciding with each other, that’s all.”

Yet, Julian had never been so tired in the past.

He had left for this business trip in such a hurry, he didn’t even have time to call Diana and inform her about it.

He only managed to inform her that he wasn’t coming back tonight when his plane landed.

Clearly, Diana wouldn’t be able to get any further information from Noel.

Even if she did, she knew that she wouldn’t be able to help Julian.

Fulcher Inc...

Was too huge a conglomerate.

There were many businesses under it, and its corporate structure was complex.

The complex commercial world was not something Diana could intercept so easily.

Eventually, she said, “Just tell him that no matter what, I’ll be by his side.”

Noel heard her serious tone, and wanted to tell her that things weren’t that serious.

However, Julian suddenly cut him off. “Noel Carter!”

There was a slight panic in his voice, as if something bad had really happened.

Noel immediately hung up on Diana and hurried toward Julian. “Sir!”

“Quick!” Julian clicked open the stock market index.” Someone’s short-selling us.”

What was scary was that someone was able to make a move on Fulcher Inc. in a way that was so subtle, Julian only managed to notice now.