

Read Novel Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 671-680

Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 671

Even if Julian desperately wanted to reach out and hold Diana, to embrace her tightly and greedily breathe in every bit of her presence...he couldn't.

It wasn't because he feared the Pabian family, or anyone else.

It was because... He had to protect her in a way that seemed at odds with her, a way that appeared to belittle her.

Julian refused to believe that Clifford had the audacity to invite Diana as a guest to his home.

Despite the Channing family's involvement, this scheme to test Diana's worth in his heart didn't seem like something Simon or Kenneth would come up with. Moreover, they seemed to differ from the script of the one responsible for orchestrating this act from behind the scenes.

As for whether Oliver was the mastermind behind it all, Julian couldn't rely solely on speculation.

He needed further confirmation.

If it really was Oliver, and the man had become so deranged as to target Diana...

Julian's eyes narrowed slightly as a dangerous aura poured out around him.

If that was really the case, he was determined to make Oliver regret it!

The most important thing before exposing Oliver's true face was to use the substitute incident and spread news of his estrangement from Diana. Only then would Clifford and his enemies realize that Diana wasn't his weakness.

It was the only way he could protect Diana as much as possible during these trying times.

But now... Because there was no time to explain, it was evident that he had hurt her feelings deeply.

As for Clifford... He was still watching them from behind the car. If Julian got out now and ran after Diana, her next encounter with Clifford wouldn't just be limited to today's incident. It would become an ever-present danger in her life!

He couldn't let her fall into such a perilous situation.

"Let her go," Julian said as he glanced at Noel. "Keep driving forward, and don't stop."

"But, sir..."

"Keep driving!"

Julian dared not look back or even glance at Diana's current state in the rearview mirror.

The only thing he could be sure of was that the more distant and strained their relationship appeared, the more advantageous it would be for Diana.

Noel could only obey his command.

Once the car left the outskirts and reached a place where Clifford couldn't see them anymore, Julian couldn't bear it any longer. He ripped off his tie and shouted, "Stop the car!"

He needed to find Diana.

He had to explain to her the reason behind his earlier attitude!

However, making a U-turn in the car would draw too much attention. To avoid Clifford from noticing, Julian instructed Noel to continue driving while he returned alone.

It was dark, and Julian hadn't rested for a long time. It would take him a considerable amount of time to walk back this distance, and Noel was naturally concerned.

"Sir, your health might suffer..."

"I'm not that stupid," Julian retorted, and he instructed Noel to go ahead.

While his more commonly used phone numbers might be under surveillance, he still had the one for Mr. Whatever, a pseudonym he had casually created.

It was proving to be quite useful now.

Julian stood tall on the side of the road, and pulled out the phone to send a message to Diana.

[Where are you?]

At the same moment, Diana was already in Nina's car.

"I'm freezing," she complained as she huffed indignantly. She tossed her phone aside and quickly rubbed her hands together for warmth, and requested Nina to turn the car's heating up to the maximum.

Finally feeling a bit warmer, her body was no longer as stiff as before. Diana then hurriedly recounted the events of the evening to Nina.

Nina listened with anger. After Diana was finished, she exploded, "Tell all those people to buzz off!"

She clenched her fist, and her brows furrowed deeply in her skin. It was clear she was indignant on Diana's behalf.

"You should never return to the villa again, Diana! Don't pay any attention to that despicable man! I'll take care of you!"

As she spoke, she took out an invitation card and handed it to Diana. "Look at this. Tomorrow, I'll take you to eat delicious food and console your wounded soul!"

Diana was taken aback. She took the invitation card and asked, "What's this?"

"Hehe," Nina chuckled awkwardly. "It's just a banquet..."

Diana nodded, and opened the invitation card.

To her surprise, the seemingly simple and elegant invitation card unfolded into a three-dimensional mountain, with the text written in pure gold.

One glance at it and Diana knew this banquet was no ordinary event.

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Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 672

Just by looking at the invitation card, anyone could tell that the host of the banquet was either rich or powerful.

Diana stared intently at Nina with her beautiful eyes.

Sure enough, Nina quickly succumbed to Diana's gaze." Forget it. This banquet is organized by that woman who got engaged to Vans."

She bit her lip and lowered her head. Her voice grew smaller as she said, "I just want to see what she looks like..."

She didn't dare to go alone, so she wanted to drag Diana along. Before they even set off, Diana had already seen through the ulterior motives behind this banquet.

"I wonder... Who was it who just told me to tell everyone to buzz off?" Diana teased Nina with raised eyebrows. "And here you are, still thinking about Vans?"

Diana snorted. "It's okay for you to think about your lover, but I'm not allowed to think about my ex-husband? That's unfair to me."

Her appearance was too charming.

Her eyes seemed to speak, every movement she made created ripples. She exuded a tender and elegant aura. Not to mention, her skin was creamy smooth, and her lips were plump and pink like fresh peaches.

Even as a woman, Nina was stunned. She clutched her heart and screamed, "Diana, please stop being so adorable with me. I really can't take it. I can't...!"

After saying that, she commented on Diana's previous words. "Vans was pressured by his family, but Julian... He has repeatedly hurt you. He's complete scum!"

Diana remained noncommittal. Various emotions flickered across her face, and she was clearly unwilling to discuss her problems further.

And so, she spent the night with Nina like that.

The next day, Diana finally saw the message from Mr. Whatever.

She quickly replied. [Sorry, I didn't see your message yesterday.]

Julian had been waiting for her message all night, worried that something untoward had happened to her. He had Noel search for Diana's location throughout the city in the dead of the night.

After going in circles, he finally discovered that Diana was at Nina's place and was relieved. Taking a taxi from the outskirts in the middle of the night wasn't convenient, so he ended up waiting for Noel to come back and pick him up.

By the time he returned home, it was already five in the morning.

Later, he wondered how angry Diana was, and how he should apologize and appease her to subside her anger.

With this thought in mind, he stared at the phone screen and

waited anxiously. As soon as the screen lit up, he quickly sat up from the bed and devoutly replied, [It's alright...]

Before he could finish typing what he wanted to say, he realized he shouldn't reply as himself, but as Mr. Whatever instead. He quickly deleted the message, and adopted a more business-like tone. [No problem. I just finished reviewing the reports last night and wanted to say that the studio did a good job.]

[It was so late yesterday when you sent me the message. Haven't you rested?]

Diana was amazed. While washing up, she thought of a reply. [But that's normal. My beloved is just like you, very diligent. That's why you're both successful.]

Even as a landlord, one couldn't achieve what Mr. Whatever had done without intelligence and diligence.

Understanding the principle of having money do the work and always maintaining vigilance was necessary to ensure the wealth in one's hand continued to multiply.

Originally, Julian hadn't thought of a way to apologize and felt nervous. Seeing her mention him proactively and still referring to him as her beloved, he was instantly delighted.

The gloom of last night vanished, and he regained the courage to meet her and apologize. Even though the specific way to apologize was still a blank in his mind, he decided to communicate his thoughts to her as promptly as he could.

That was the only way he could live up to Diana calling him her beloved.

The more Julian thought about it, the more beautiful everything seemed. His handsome face seemed to be covered in brilliance, exuding even more charm than usual.

Even Noel couldn't help but be surprised when he saw him." Sir, why do you look so good today?"

Julian raised an eyebrow and glanced at Noel, who had developed dark circles from working tirelessly these past few days. There was a touch of disdain in his cold gaze as he sneered, "Do you think everyone is forever alone like you? n

Noel was speechless. What did being in a relationship or looking good have to do with each other?

It was still early in the morning, and he had woken up despite the late night. Yet, he got unfairly criticized...

But instantly, he understood. "Did you and the madam reconcile?"

"Not madam," Julian said, shaking his head. "My beloved."

Noel looked at the mysterious smile on Julian's lips, and became even more confused. Everytime something happened between Julian and Diana, Julian seemed to transform into a completely different person.

It was as if...as if he had changed from a domineering, aloof CEO into a pure-hearted and loyal dog.

Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 673

However, Noel dared not pry the specific details as to what had changed from last night and led to Julian's blissful mood.

He simply waited quietly until Julian had everything prepared, and silently brought the car out.

Seeing that Julian's joyful expression remained, Noel took the opportunity to bring it up. "Sir...?"

"Hmm?"

"Yesterday, the madam said--"

Julian corrected him stubbornly, "My beloved."

Noel seemed taken aback, and couldn't figure out a proper reply.

Julian, amused, glanced at him. "And? What did she say?"

"Nothing." As soon as this topic came up, a wide smile spread across Noel's face. "She just mentioned that you should give me a day of paid leave."

He had been working as Julian's assistant for so many years, and had never really taken a break. When Diana brought up this matter, he was quite tempted.

"You mean to say that even when she's angry with me after leaving the Pabian family's residence last night, she still thought about asking for a paid day off for you?"

There was suddenly a sour taste in the air, and the temperature plunged downwards.

Noel chuckled awkwardly. "Sir... Are you jealous?"

Julian glanced at him with a smile that didn't meet his eyes, neither confirming nor denying Noel's question. "Jealous? Jealous of you? You must think very little of me. Didn't Diana only exchange a few words with you? And she wanted to speak on your behalf to give you a paid day off, too."

The more Julian spoke, the more uneasy Noel felt. He practically bit his tongue in regret and stuttered, "Sir... I... I..."

“You, what?” Julian said as his expression turned cold.” Since it was Diana’s suggestion, I’ll allow it.”

Noel was pleasantly surprised. “Really?!”

“Really.” Julian’s lips curved into a faint smile. “In fact. I’ll give you your day off today.”

Noel was overjoyed, and he almost lost his bearings in excitement.

This was the only day off he had in so long!

As Noel reveled in his joy, he couldn’t help but glance at Julian. The sinister smile playing on the latter’s lips made his heart tremble.

Oh no!

Things weren’t that simple, were they?

As expected...

After parking the car at the entrance of the banquet, Noel heard Julian say, “Go ahead.”

Noel was elated, and a glimmer of anticipation flashed in his eyes. “To where?”

Not only did his boss grant him the requested vacation per Diana’s instructions, but the man also wanted to help him plan the itinerary for his break!

Noel was almost moved to tears.

The next moment, Noel saw Julian’s eyes flicker and his lips twitch.

“Weren’t you planning to go on vacation?”

Noel nodded.

“Then why aren’t you hurrying away?” Julian asked. “Clifford and the others are waiting for you.”

Noel was speechless.

What a turn of events!

He shouldn't have mentioned Diana's intention to help him get a day off!

What did Julian mean, Clifford and the others were waiting? He was basically telling Noel to keep an eye on Clifford so he could expose the mastermind who had arranged for Diana to be brought over to the Pabians' yesterday.

Normally, the laborious work of squatting in the corner shouldn't have fallen on Noel.

But now, the responsibility had landed on his shoulders...

"Oh, and one more thing," Julian added. "After today, a project in Adorn requires someone to be there for a month. Don't forget to go."

Noel was silent.

Who said that Julian wasn't a jealous man?!

His whole world was obviously filled with bitterness right now!

Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 674

The venue for the banquet was a five-star hotel in the city center.

As soon as Diana and Nina arrived, they began to observe their surroundings.

The banquet hall was glorious; the whole floor was covered in thick woolen carpets.

What made it more extravagant was the fact that these carpets were said to have been specially procured for this event.

It was evident that the organizer of this banquet had considerable financial resources.

Nina was overwhelmed as soon as she arrived. While she was Vans's official girlfriend, in the face of such grandeur, she couldn't help but think that she was nothing compared to Vans's fiancée...

Diana noticed her insecurity, and gently guided her to adopt a positive mindset. "You've been to so many grand occasions while photographing

celebrities. You didn't have any problems with that. Why are you so nervous now?"

Nina couldn't help but correct Diana, saying, "Those weren't grand occasions for me. Those were paparazzi shots."

As a paparazzo, even a top-tier one, it was indeed difficult to be seen in legitimate settings.

One reason was the fear of being recognized by familiar celebrities, making it harder to capture them in the future.

The other reason was the fear of retaliation from celebrities who got photographed.

Whenever Nina followed celebrities to attend banquets or award ceremonies, she would always hide in a corner.

In other words, she preferred to stay in the shadows.

But today, she came here with Diana out in the open.

"Thank goodness you're here." She tugged at Diana's sleeve, nervous. "If you weren't with me, I wouldn't be able to hold my head up high."

Diana was about to encourage Nina to be more confident when a group of women approached them from the opposite direction.

The thick carpeting muffled the sound of the women's high heels, even though they were about seven or eight centimeters tall.

It was only when the women reached their vicinity that Nina and Diana realized they were obviously hostile.

The ladies were adorned with valuable jewelry and clad in high-fashion outfits.

Diana could immediately tell that their clothes were made of rare fabrics, and just the cost of one outfit could feed an average family for a year.

Alarm bells rang in her mind, and she instinctively shielded

Nina behind her.

The woman at the forefront wore a vibrant-colored dress with an emerald on her hand. She held her head high, as if she wanted to look down on others, then turned to the security guard behind her. "Are they the ones who snuck in with fake invitations?"

Diana's heart skipped a beat as she quickly looked at Nina.

At the same time, Nina was also staring at her in astonishment.

"It's not fake," Nina mouthed. "I had a minor celebrity help me get it..."

As long as it wasn't fake, that was a relief.

Diana regained her composure, and waited for the woman in front to finish speaking.

This woman was none other than Vans's fiancée, Lina Jennings.

"No one said anything about our invitation..."

Diana hadn't finished her sentence when Lina interrupted her. "Shh..."

Diana froze, thinking the other woman was about to say something.

And so, she politely waited. After all, she had come today to accompany Nina; she didn't want to cause trouble for her dear friend.

But in the next second...

Lina raised her hand, and Diana received a mighty slap on the face.

This was incredible!

She had slapped Julian just yesterday, and today, someone had slapped her in turn.

Was this karma?

She was still in a daze when Nina screamed and rushed in front of her, pushing Lina away forcefully while yelling, "What are you doing?!"

If it weren't for someone holding her upright, Lina would have undoubtedly fallen flat on her face.

As the young heiress of a wealthy family and the hostess of this banquet, how could she tolerate such humiliation?

She immediately called her companions. "Come on!"

She arrogantly pointed at Diana. "It's this vixen! She seduced Vans! There's a special mark on her invitation that I made! Ladies, grab her by the hair and beat her mercilessly! Let's kill her!"

She then glanced at Nina. "Don't leave this b*tch out, either. Neither one of them will get away today!"

Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 675

Diana and Nina never expected Lina to say such things in front of everyone, nor did they anticipate her starting a fight with them in such a bold manner.

What's more, it never crossed their mind that the invitation would turn out to be fake. It seemed Lina had collaborated with the celebrity who had given it to Nina, and marked the invitation with a special sign to lure Nina so Lina could vent her anger at this banquet.

What was even more unexpected...

Was that they actually mistook Diana for being involved with Vans!

"Look at her seductive appearance. She's definitely a temptress!" Lina spat as she looked at Diana, eyes burning with jealousy. "Tear out her hair! Bald her! And those shining eyes of hers... Blind her!"

Nina was going crazy at what was currently happening.

She couldn't fathom how a wealthy young lady could have absolutely no ladylike qualities to her.

More accurately, Lina was even more vulgar than a shrew!

Even more surprisingly, Diana's beauty became the reason for Lina's mistaken belief.

While apologizing to Diana with her eyes, Nina desperately protected the former. She desperately shielded Diana from

the women's blows.

"Your little lackey is quite fearless." Lina was clearly infuriated by Nina's actions. "Ladies, listen to me! Hold her hair tightly and get her out of the way!"

As soon as she finished speaking, a piercing pain shot through Nina's head.

Someone had actually ripped out a small portion of her scalp!

Diana's heart ached when she saw what happened. Her eyes turned red, and she desperately tried to push Nina away.

But Nina clung to her like a rigid statue, protecting her tightly and not allowing her to move.

"Diana, I'm so sorry..."

Things had already escalated to this point, yet Nina was still apologizing to Diana.

"It doesn't hurt at all! It really doesn't!" Diana tried to explain to Nina, in hopes she would let go.

It would be much better for them to face these vulgar ladies together than for Nina to bear their fury alone.

Yet, Nina refused to let go.

It wasn't until her scalp started bleeding that someone shouted, "Mr. Fulcher's here!"

The surrounding noise and commotion immediately ceased as soon as the words were uttered.

"W-Why is he here?!"

"Oh my God! It's all Lina's fault! My reputation is ruined!"

"Yeah! This is all her fault! You know, I heard that Mr. Fulcher treats his ex-wife very well. If I can win his favor, maybe I'll have a better life than Lina. I hope his ex-wife will remain forever his ex!"

Diana, who was Julian's aforementioned ex-wife, was at a loss for words.

“Ugh. Never mind, this is boring now.”

Without anyone to help her, Lina lost her drive to continue beating Nina and Diana. Adding to that, Diana had struggled free from Nina’s embrace, and her beautiful eyes were filled with a storm-like intensity.

It was enough to make one shudder!

As a result, Lina couldn’t bring herself to move away from the two women.

Meanwhile, Julian had already walked over with Vans at his side. They both saw Nina and Diana, but neither approached or spoke to the women.

Diana could understand them not showing much concern for her as she had only received a slap in the face, but Nina was littered with injuries! The lovely girl had even lost a piece of her scalp, giving her a frightening appearance.

However, Vans acted as though he hadn’t noticed at all. He walked straight up to Lina and asked, “How are you doing?”

Lina immediately cast a triumphant glance at Diana and Nina, while replying smugly, “I’m fine. I can’t believe that you and Mr. Fulcher came to my banquet! What a lovely surprise, and of course, a good boost to my image too.”

“After all, we’re engaged,” Vans replied smoothly, sounding like he wasn’t affected by the scene before him at all. He didn’t even spare Nina a glance throughout the conversation. “It’s only right for me to bring Mr. Fulcher to support you.”

Lina visibly brightened at his words, obviously delighted. Her face was flushed with excitement, and she couldn’t avert her gaze from her face as she clung to Vans like an infatuated mouse.

Nina witnessed everything unfold before her, and tears streamed silently down her face. Watching her best friend in this state, Diana couldn’t bear it any longer.

She stood up, intending to approach Vans, but a hand forcefully pulled her back.

Before Diana could react, the entire banquet hall plunged into darkness as the lights went out in an instant.

When she snapped back to her senses, she had already been dragged into a corner. She looked up, and all she could see was a black suit.

She didn't need to consider anything else, and instantly knew the man in front of her was none other than Julian.

At this moment, he was using his suit to envelop them in a small corner. His eyes studied her with a silent gaze filled with devotion.

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Diana started to panic. She grabbed the corner of the suit, and hurried to move.

Yet Julian held on to it even more tightly, wrapping both of them in a tight embrace.

Diana didn't understand why he was acting this way. "Julian!"

She looked at him, and her voice was trembling as she stammered, "Nina...Nina's scalp got torn off! She needs me right now! I have to..."

She had to protect Nina!

Only by doing that would make her feel better.

Julian understood where she was coming from. Despite that, he said quietly, "She doesn't need you now, Diana. She needs Vans."

Diana looked like she was struck by something. When realization dawned upon her, she finally calmed down and stopped struggling.

Julian looked at her, and his heart ached. "Your face..."

He never expected Lina to slap Diana.

How could Lina have the nerve to slap the woman he cherished so dearly and cared for so carefully?

At that moment, Julian wished for nothing more than the complete annihilation of the entire Jennings family-as if

that was the only way he could vent the anger burning in him.

As if influenced by the fury he exuded, Diana finally realized that Nina wasn't the only one hurt by the incident. She was as much of a victim as Nina was.

What's more, Julian was gazing at her with such deep affection.

Ouch...!

The heartbreaking look in his eyes inevitably made her yelp, as the pain from the slap earlier finally registered to her.

Julian's heart ached deeper to see it. When he spoke, it was in a voice that told of a storm brewing inside him.

"Don't you worry." He looked at Diana, his eyes piercing. "When the lights went out just now, Vans slapped Lina back ten times. If it weren't because he needed more time to tear off the hair on her head, my anger wouldn't be appeased even if he slapped her a hundred times!"

Diana was stunned. "You two were behind the black out?"

"No, it was arranged by that idiot Lina herself." Julian and Vans had simply leveraged on what was already planned." Vans is still engaged to her, after all. If we were too obvious in dealing with her, it'd affect his family."

But if Vans didn't stand up and do something to teach Lina a lesson, by the time Julian decided to step forward, not only would the Jennings family be affected, but even the Stanley family might be implicated as well.

It was precisely because Vans understood the rationale that

he took the initiative to raise this suggestion to Julian. "In the future, when she finds out that I was the one behind

Vans slapping her and giving her that horrid haircut in the dark, she'll probably puke blood out of anger."

"All the better, then," Diana said.

Vans could consider himself lucky this time.

If Julian didn't need to fish out the mastermind who planned for Diana to be a guest—therefore making it inconvenient for him to stand up for her—he wouldn't have bothered preserving Vans's pride, no matter how good their friendship was.

What's more...

Vans had helped him protect his children when he wanted to hurt them and Diana in his ignorance, even though his children didn't make it in the end anyway.

Ultimately, it was because Vans stepped in that Julian didn't mess up big time.

Further, it was Vans who revealed Diana's pregnancy to him.

Julian had kept in mind the deeds Vans had done for his sake, and remained forever grateful for it.

Diana was smart, and quickly understood why Julian was covering their heads with his suit. "This banquet's huge, and there are many guests around. Are you doing this because no matter when we leave, someone will find out that you're here for me?"

Julian stared at her, shocked. "You...know that I'm here for you? I said so many nasty things yesterday. Aren't you angry with me?"

"I've been waiting for you all this time. Of course I know you'll come for me."

She simply wasn't sure just when he would come.

No matter; whenever it may be, she would welcome him with open arms.

She believed that without a doubt.

Thinking of that, she smiled. "I'm not angry."

With that, she caressed his cheek. "I even slapped you. You should be the one angry with me."

Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 677

He was such a proud man.

He probably had never felt such indignation in his entire life.

Yet, he had to receive a slap from her in public.

“How could I ever be angry with you?” Julian was in high spirits. “As long as you’re not upset with me, I’m fine with you slapping me as much as you wish. The circumstances forced me to say those awful things to you yesterday, and...”

“I know,” Diana cut him off. “Clifford has a hold over you. You can’t show him that we have a good relationship. Not only would I be in danger, but it’d also add more burden to you.”

Julian was shocked to hear it. “Where in the world did you get that from?”

Diana grinned cheekily. “I guessed correctly, didn’t I? The moment Simon invited me to see the Pabians, I knew what was on their mind. Since they don’t intend to harm me and Clifford has no desire to avenge his son, they’re definitely trying to sound me out.

But what impact and threat would I, a woman who owns a tiny studio, pose?

They just wanted to gauge my importance to you in order to threaten you in the future.”

After getting kidnapped by Kayla, Diana had grown to be

very careful in matters like these. She knew Julian wasn’t an ordinary person, and was determined not to be his Achilles’ heel.

At the very least, not in front of outsiders.

When she confirmed it was Julian who rushed into the room last night, she decided to enact a little drama with him-one involving the two of them in discord.

Nevertheless, she didn’t expect him to blurt out the truth before she could.

The moment he did, all her guesses were confirmed.

After all, Julian couldn't bear to utter a harsh word to her unless forced by unfortunate circumstances.

Having listened to her, Julian burst out laughing. "Oh, Diana! How terrible am I in your eyes?"

Diana didn't understand what he meant. "Huh?"

"Do you really think trash like Clifford Pabian can threaten me and have a hold over me?" As he went on, he gazed at her with a hurt look. "Was that why you didn't resist at all when you were brought to the Pabians? You were worried that it might affect me badly."

What good did he do in this lifetime to earn such a wonderful woman like Diana, who thought wholeheartedly of him?

She was even able to keep her cool before someone as vicious and ruthless as Clifford Pabian.

It was just that...

Ultimately, Diana was frightened.

Julian recalled how he had rushed into the Pabians' residence to witness her smashing the windows with her hands, and his heart ached once more. "I'll never let you suffer such indignation ever again."

Once he figured out if Oliver was truly behind this, Julian swore he would go on a roaring rampage of revenge!

He would make the Channings, the Pabians, and anyone with the audacity to eye Fulcher Inc. understand that no one could cross his bottom line.

And Diana, his darling, was an existence none should ever dare scheme against!

Diana finally understood what he meant, and felt rather ashamed. "So...you're not afraid of Clifford Pabian at all?"

"Why should I be?" Julian snorted disdainfully. "He'll have to wait a few lifetimes longer if he wants to have leverage over me!"

The moment Noel gave him news to confirm whether Oliver was the mastermind behind everything and that Clifford and Simon were the instruments for his plans, Julian would immediately let Clifford taste the miserable consequences of standing on the wrong side.

Weren't Clifford's hands already tainted with his son's blood?

In the past, Julian could disregard that. This time, however,

Julian vowed to make Clifford lose everything he cared deeply about, his relentless scheming notwithstanding.

'The only one I fear is Oliver,' Julian said in all seriousness. 'I suspect he's the mastermind who brought you to the Pabians.'

Only Oliver would have such a deep understanding of Julian and Diana.

He was also the only one who dared to consider using Diana to attack Julian.

Above all, he was perfectly aware that hurting Diana was akin to making a move on Julian's lifeline.

Julian's Stand-In Wife chapter 678

Chapter 678

Only by making a move on Diana would Oliver stand a chance of effectively distracting Julian.

He made a move on Fulcher Inc.'s share prices when Diana was brought to the Pabians.

Oliver assumed that with Julian's attention split in many different directions, the latter wouldn't be able to do much about the spies lurking within Fulcher Inc.

At the same time, he could take advantage of Julian's distraction and continue sending spies into Fulcher Inc., thereby emptying out all of the company's confidential information.

Yet, he forgot that Diana herself was very clever.

What was more, she believed Julian with all her heart.

Even when she was scared out of her wits during her imprisonment at the Pabians', she never gave up hope that Julian would come looking for her the moment he returned from his business trip.

But right now, Diana was rather confused. "Why must you bring Oliver into this?"

She simply couldn't figure it out. "Even though he no longer fancies me, there's no reason for him to go to such extreme measures just to retaliate."

Given the kind of man Clifford Pabian was, it would be no surprise if he did anything vicious to her during her little visit at his residence.

Oliver wasn't such a ruthless person.

It seemed Diana wouldn't believe the things Julian said.

This was exactly what he was afraid of.

It was why he wanted to wait till everything was water-tight before breaking the news to her.

And right now was the perfect time.

Julian looked at the photo that Noel sent to him. He pulled open the suit, so that both of them were once again exposed to the outside air. "It's confirmed."

His eyes were dark as granite. "Look."

He showed the photo to Diana.

"I just returned to Richburgh yesterday, and then we parted ways at the Pabians' residence. And today, an internal conflict arose among them when they met"

The photo of the three of them meeting was no big deal. Neither could it reveal much of the truth, nor could it verify Julian's guess.

Thankfully, Noel had always been reliable. He had sent a voice recording as well.

The recorded exchange confirmed that Julian's assumption was correct.

“Did you forget how Oliver dealt with you and I? When we were younger, and when we exchanged blows with each other, I saw through each and every single one of his moves.”

The moment Julian noticed that a spy had been planted in Fulcher Inc., he knew Oliver had made a move.

He went a step further, convinced that Diana might be in danger.

Oliver used to treat Diana well, so Julian didn't think he would stoop so low.

When he rushed to the Pabians' residence, and saw Luke's funeral picture and Diana trapped in one room...

He couldn't deny that he had the urge to kill Oliver at that very moment.

However, he couldn't.

Because to Diana, Oliver was still a good man.

He couldn't bear to upset Diana because of this incident, especially when he had no evidence at hand.

As for Diana, she was still in disbelief about what she had just heard.

Memories of Oliver's smile, like that of a warm spring breeze, flashed past her mind. She recalled how Oliver saved her from Luke the first time they met. He bought her milk tea, and even operated on Julian...

Whatever it was, Diana found it hard to believe. “Oliver can't possibly...be so despicable.”

Despicable to the point of making a move on her.

‘You heard it from the voice recording.’ Julian's eyes turned chilly. “What part of it do you not believe?”

Oliver wanted to show Clifford and Simon how important Diana was to Julian by inviting Diana to the Pabians' residence as a guest.

But at that time...

Julian was away on a business trip, and it was for a huge project that was household news.

Yet, he disregarded it all and rushed back on the first flight he could book.

His immediate return demonstrated his care for Diana, making it obvious for Oliver and the rest that using her was key in dealing with him and Fulcher Inc.

It was a good plan.

Despite that, Oliver should have never made a move on Diana.

The moment Oliver did, all the appreciation and sympathy Julian felt for him—he couldn't succeed his family, or be a proper businessman—completely vanished. Rather, those feelings gave way to pure animosity.

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From then on, he would show no mercy to the Channings.

Just then, Noel called him. "Sir."

There was no need for Julian to hide his relationship with Diana right now. He had no fear of others seeing them stand next to each other like this. With that in mind, he hung his suit over his arm and tidied up Diana's slightly tousled hair. The solemn look on her face told him that she was still unable to accept such a huge change in Oliver.

Julian could only say that Oliver had put on an excellent disguise in the past.

So excellent, Diana believed wholeheartedly that he was a warm and kind person.

Julian wasn't in a rush for Diana to accept such a sudden and mind-boggling change.

Whatever it was, he had the facts and evidence at hand. Plus, he no longer needed to worry that Diana would stop him from dealing with Oliver.

Noel's voice was tinged with awkwardness. "Sir, Oliver Channing found me out..."

That didn't come as a surprise to Julian.

Noel had already accomplished his mission by taking the photo and recording the exchange.

He was dealing with a cunning man like Oliver Channing, after all. It would be strange if he wasn't found out.

"It's all right," Julian said. "Tell him to come and see me."

Hearing his boss's usual domineering tone, Noel felt confidence surge through his veins. He immediately understood his assignment.

Very soon, he turned passivity into initiative. He turned to Oliver and said firmly, "Mr. Channing, my boss is free in the afternoon both tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. You may visit him during that time."

Oliver was stunned. "At the villa?"

"Yes."

It was merely a day away from the new year. Tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. Julian might very well be at home, but Diana would probably be at home, too.

Was Julian intending to expose his schemes and filthy work right in front of Diana?

Oliver shut his eyes tight. He knew the things between him and Diana...

Were no longer impossible!

His heart was in great pain. The feeling of giving up all hope and giving up his affections for her weren't the same.

Yet now, Julian was going all out to tell Oliver that even if he could scheme against Fulcher Inc. within such a short period of time-something many could only dream of doing

-he was still no match for Julian.

That man...

Was way too conniving. He could always see through everything at just one glance.

Oliver slumped dejectedly on the chair, and looked at Kenneth. "I told you, Dad. I said I can't beat him..."

Now that things had come to this point, they had suffered heavy losses even before their plan had taken off.

Not only did Julian turn the tide in the stock market such that they couldn't benefit from it at all, but Fulcher Inc. even managed to bite a huge chunk off the Channings.

The timing was calculated perfectly.

It happened right after Noel sent Julian the photo of the stock market moving in a new direction.

As for the spies that Oliver had planted in Julian's company...

Under Julian's heavy-handedness, they had unknowingly received false information.

That was why the Channings and the Pabians excitedly bid for a piece of land they initially thought was highly valuable. Now, he didn't even need to dig further to know that such a thing was false information that Julian had deliberately released.

Fortunately, the Channings were still able to handle the loss.

The Pabians, on the other hand, were completely bankrupted by that wrong move.

Even before Clifford had a chance to step out of the gate of the Channings' residence, he ended up being carted to jail by the police under suspicion for killing his own son.

He was the only person left among the Pabians who was capable of achieving anything. Without him around, it spelled utter doom for the entire Pabian family.

"He's too vicious!" Kenneth ran his hand over his beard and lamented, "He's also fast and furious..."

He had lost.

He was also completely convinced in his defeat.

“As much as things have come to this point, it’s not that we haven’t gained anything at all.”

Oliver looked up at his father in shock. “What in the world did we gain?”

‘The gain is that...’ Kenneth tapped open the text Simon sent him and clicked on the photo attached. ‘This woman, Diana Winnington, is indeed very important to Julian, as you’ve said.’

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For Diana to be able to make Julian go all out in getting hold of evidence, and then finally making a decisive move on the Channings and the Pabians...

It clearly showed his deep concern regarding her feelings for him. In fact, he was worried she couldn’t accept his explanation, and wouldn’t believe how Oliver had changed into someone so conniving.

He was worried there would be a chasm in his relationship with her, that Oliver or Clifford might assume they have a hold over him by hurting her.

He even went out of his way to put up an act with her at the Pabians’ residence, as if they were having a big fight.

The mighty Julian Fulcher, of all people, set aside his pride to act for the garbage that was Clifford Pabian-all for Diana’s sake.

It was completely unlike his usual self.

“It’s a pity he doesn’t go into acting.” Kenneth smiled as he regarded Oliver. “Don’t you agree?”

But wasn’t life nothing but a huge act?

Kenneth looked at Oliver slumped over dejectedly, and prodded him. “Don’t you want that woman, Diana Winnington?”

The photo Simon snapped was clear for all to see.

Oliver had feelings for Diana.

"I've already decided to let her go." Oliver could sense the ill intentions in his father's greasy words. The guilt that was already in his heart grew and festered ever more. "She should just stay with Julian and lead her life well."

This incident proved that Julian had the ability to protect Diana well.

"Oliver." It was Kenneth's first time seeing his son lacking the courage to look straight at him. He suddenly burst out laughing. 'You're actually quite the impressive actor yourself!"

For so many years, Oliver had acted as if he had neither ambition nor desire.

As if all he wanted to do was to be a doctor and save lives.

It was all a sham!

The truth was, he had been defeated by Julian many times. At the successor training event in the past, he was unable to beat Julian despite multiple attempts. Each time, his schemes against Julian would end up failing just like they did now. He would always come close to beating, only to fumble at the last minute.

Oliver was scared.

Over the years, he kept telling himself that he didn't care for business. Even when he met Julian's woman and grew a liking for her, he had to force himself to bury his feelings and pretend to be able to let things go.

In actual fact, his ambition was still burning brightly in him.

Kenneth had seen through Oliver. Just like an old fox guiding a pup how to seize a prey, he started tempting his son. 'You still have a chance with that woman."

Something at the bottom of Oliver's heart started coming to life, growing swiftly.

Oliver couldn't help but shoot back. "What chance?"

"A chance to beat Julian Fulcher."

He wanted to beat Julian just once-even if it was just a minor victory.

He wanted to see that Julian wasn't indestructible.

He wanted to see for himself that Julian wasn't an omniscient being, and was just a human like him.

As long as he could see that, Oliver would be able to bounce back to his feet.

He would then naturally have the motivation to continue fighting Julian for Diana's heart.

Sometimes, women were trouble. However, they could also be the best catalyst for moving along in the path ahead.

Seeing Oliver in a daze, Kenneth chuckled. "Did you forget who Simon really is? This time, don't forget to tell him to follow you to see Julian at the villa."

Old was gold indeed.

That was when Oliver finally understood.

Kenneth never really held out much hope in him joining hands with the Pabians to scheme against Julian.

The old fox was simply using the incident to make Oliver face up to his own ambitions; to care about the rise and fall of the Channing family, to have the willingness to succeed his position as heir, and to keep the family business going. That was Kenneth's ultimate goal.

As for Simon Channing...

He was the weapon that would assist Oliver in regaining his confidence—the blade Oliver would wield to pierce right through Julian!

The next day, it was the final day of the year.

The new year was right around the corner.

Julian was at home.

Diana woke up early in the morning, and oversaw the kitchen in preparing a sumptuous breakfast feast of pastries.

Pastries were a staple during celebrations, and were an absolute necessity on the first day of the new year.

As such, during this time every year, pastries of different fillings would cover every inch of the dining table.

Nina, who sustained during Lina Jennings' banquet, dared not return home for fear her parents might find out what had happened to her. She had ultimately decided to stay in Richburgh to celebrate the new year.

As for Vans...

The thought of him filled Diana with disappointment.