

## Chapter 1323 A Web Of Lies

"This can't be possible," Ariadna muttered, staring at the news in shock, her mind racing.

How could Marco be getting married so soon? He had never mentioned anything about it before... and with Loraine here, who could he possibly want to marry?

"Who is the woman next to him?" Ariadna asked, her voice quivering.

Mr. K gave a vague response. "The report doesn't provide the bride's name, but she appears to be from a prominent family in Zodiac. There are significant business ties between her family and the Cruz family."

Ariadna stood still for a long time, unable to process the news. She was torn between shock at the news and sadness over Marco's betrayal.

Had her cousin really abandon Loraine?

Maybe Marco had changed after becoming the head of the Cruz family. He seemed to have become cunning, treating marriage as a mere tool for profit. It appeared his love for Loraine had long faded.

Ariadna's heart ached with a mixture of sorrow and anger. Clenching her fists, she said, "I won't tell him about Loraine. He doesn't deserve to know. But I want to take care of her myself. Can I?"

"Of course," Mr. K replied with a reassuring smile. "She's your friend."

Ariadna's spirits lifted slightly at his support. "Thank you, sir!"

Ariadna hurried to the medical room to gather the necessary supplies for Loraine. She then made her way back to her friend's room, her heart still just as heavy.

Standing beside Loraine's bed, Ariadna looked at her friend's weary face. "Marco is really a scumbag! Loraine, you're here recovering from an accident, and he's already moving on to marry someone else!"

The truth about Marco was a bitter pill to swallow, and she could no longer find any excuse for his actions.

Ariadna decided that for now she would just focus on taking care of Loraine, who was still unconscious.

Outside the room, Mr. K, having overheard Ariadna's words, couldn't help but smile.

The butler, standing beside Mr. K, observed his expression and cautiously asked, "Sir, do you really think this will work? If Ariadna contacts Marco, the truth is sure to come out."

Mr. K's smile vanished instantly, replaced by a stern, calculating gaze. He fixed the butler with a chilling look. "I have my plans. Your concern is unnecessary. I suggest you focus on your own duties."

The butler dared not say more and silently withdrew.

A few days later, under Ariadna's care, Loraine finally woke up.

She sat up slowly, confusion evident on her face as she tried to make sense of her surroundings. The bandages wrapped around her head only added to her confusion. Seeing Ariadna by her side, she looked at her with puzzlement and asked, "Who are you?"

Ariadna froze for a moment, her heart sinking as she tentatively asked Loraine a few questions.

The responses made Ariadna's heart sink as she realized that although Loraine survived her accident, she now had memory loss.

But as she looked at Loraine, Ariadna soon found a sense of relief. Perhaps this amnesia was a blessing in disguise. With Marco moving on to someone new, Loraine's memory loss might spare her the heartbreak of knowing that he was getting married to someone else.

"Why am I here? What happened?" Loraine's voice was tinged with fear, her amnesia causing her emotional distress.

Ariadna leaned closer, her eyes gentle and reassuring. "I've been taking care of you. I'm so glad to see you awake. The man who saved you must be relieved as well."

Loraine's anxiety began to ease under Ariadna's comforting presence. She tentatively started to engage in conversation, asking questions about her current situation. Ariadna answered as patiently as she could, helping to ground Loraine in her new reality.

After a thoughtful pause, Loraine asked, "You said your name is Ariadna and that you're my friend. Can you tell me who I was before I lost my memory?"

Ariadna hesitated, the question bringing to mind Loraine's connections to the Universe Group, the Torres family, and the Wilson family.

Given Loraine's current state, Ariadna knew it wouldn't be appropriate to reveal her full identity or her past connections right away.

She feared that sharing detailed information with Loraine

might draw her back into the conflict between Zodiac's prominent families, potentially leading to another encounter with Marco.

Ariadna's thoughts turned dark when she recalled that Marco had abandoned Loraine, causing her to hesitate. After a moment, she said softly, "You were a famous singer known as Alice."

Loraine's eyes lit up as she repeated the name, a flicker of recognition passing over her face. "Alice..." She seemed to find a sense of familiarity with the name and accepted it readily.

Loraine then asked, "Do you know my family? Can I contact them?"

Loraine was a member of both the Torres and Wilson families, but Ariadna knew little about them. Then, she remembered Jennie, a close friend of Loraine's.

Ariadna's eyes lit up. Although it wouldn't be wise to inform Marco, Jennie could be the right person to involve.

Ariadna took out her phone and sent a message to Jennie, explaining the situation and asking for her help. Turning back to Loraine with a reassuring smile, she said, "I don't know your family very well, but I can get you in touch with someone who does. You should rest for now, and I'll let you know as soon as I hear back."

Loraine nodded, feeling more at ease and beginning to trust Ariadna.

Meanwhile, Mr. K's subordinate quickly informed him of Ariadna's intention to contact Jennie. After a moment's thought, he waved his hand decisively. "Inform Essie about this and ensure she manages it perfectly. No mistakes."

## Chapter 1324 His Troubled Mind

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Meanwhile, Keely, freshly discharged from the hospital, was out shopping with Marco. She claimed she wanted to pick up where they left off, to regain the memories they had shared.

In the past few days, Marco couldn't shake the feeling that something was off about "Loraine." He couldn't pinpoint it, but she just seemed different. He assumed it was because she hadn't regained her memory yet and figured everything would return to normal once she did. So, he went along with her with no complaints.

Loraine had always been driven to excel, but since waking up, she seemed to have lost that fire. Now, everything she pursued had a calculated, profitable angle, with little done purely out of passion.

She no longer resembled her old self; instead, she was more like the kind of person she used to look down on.

Despite his unease, Marco tried to reassure himself. Maybe he was just worn out from waiting so long for Loraine's recovery. That could explain why he wasn't as elated as he thought he'd be.

Keely, on the other hand, was thrilled.

Finally, she could walk arm-in-arm with Marco, right out in the open. Loraine was out of the picture, and it was her turn to shine.

Keely had always believed that Loraine wasn't worthy of being

Marco's wife and life partner. She felt that role should be hers. Now, she was simply reclaiming what she believed was rightfully hers.

Mr. K had given her an opportunity, and she took it. Looking like Loraine was her ticket to staying close to Marco. Just being near him was enough for her.

She noticed Marco seemed distracted, but she brushed it off. After all, men often get bored while shopping with women. The fact that Marco stayed with her despite his boredom was proof enough of his love, wasn't it?

"Marco," she said, squeezing his hand and looking up at him with bright eyes, "can we go get dinner? I'm getting hungry. Let's go to that restaurant we used to love."

Marco glanced at her, lost in his thoughts. He felt guilty for not being there for Loraine and for putting her in harm's way. It was time to make amends.

He nodded. "Okay. I'll take you to the restaurant we used to go to."

Keely beamed with happiness, but as Marco led her away, he frowned and sighed softly, a gesture she didn't catch.

He took Keely to Rose Restaurant, slipping away under the pretense of using the bathroom to buy her a bouquet of roses.

"I hope you like them," he said gently, handing them to her.

Keely was over the moon. Roses, the symbol of love! She had never dreamed Marco would give her flowers, let alone roses. Her heart soared as she clutched the bouquet, feeling like she had finally won.

"Thank you, Marco! They're so beautiful! I love them!" She leaned in, ready to kiss him, and Marco didn't move at first. But

then he felt a strange, gut-wrenching sensation, almost like a voice in his head screaming for him to pull away.

His instincts kicked in, and he took a step back.

Keely froze, her face twisting from joy to confusion and hurt. Her eyes searched his face for an explanation, but Marco could only muster a weak smile. It was all becoming suffocating and awkward.

"Sorry, I'm not feeling well," Marco mumbled, avoiding her gaze. He quickly excused himself and retreated to the bathroom.

Inside, he locked the door and leaned heavily against the sink, staring at his reflection.

The man in the mirror looked drained, lost, sad, and tired of life.

He balled his fists, frustration boiling over, and slammed them against the wall.

Why did he feel this way? Why did the thought of kissing Loraine repulse him so much?

He loved her—he was sure of it. So why did the thought of her kiss make his skin crawl?

Was he not the devoted, affectionate man he believed himself to be? Was he just a hypocrite?

Marco pulled out his phone, gritting his teeth. He opened the gallery and stared at a photo of him and Loraine. A warm memory of their past surfaced, soothing his troubled mind. All the repulsion faded, replaced by a fleeting sense of calm.

Was it just fatigue messing with his emotions?


Marco shook his head, still unable to make sense of his emotions. Desperate for distraction, he opened a group chat with his friends, Jimmie and Slater, and typed out a

message: "Hey guys, let's hang out sometime."



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