

## Unconscious 1121

### Chapter 1121

After a moment of contemplation, she gently cupped Holden's face in her hands and uttered solemnly, "No, you're not Holden. You're my Theodore."

Holden, caught in this web of confusion, couldn't help but let out a resigned sigh. He found himself in a tight spot, compelled to play along. He conceded, "Alright, alright, I'm Theodore."

At this juncture, Ariana scrutinized him once more and reached out to caress his face, her eyes misty from alcohol but still shining.

Perplexed, she probed, "If you're Holden, where's your mask?" "What?" Holden was completely at sea, not comprehending the enigmatic reference to a mask.

Ariana embraced him, drawing nearer. Her alcohol-blurred eyes had a watery luminescence to them, rendering her strangely

captivating. She tugged at Holden's visage, her curiosity unwavering. She asked, "Where's your mask? Where have you hidden it?"

Confronted with her persistent curiosity, Holden sighed and grabbed a random piece of paper, poking eyeholes and playfully donning it. He quipped, "Here, my mask."

He thought this would appease Ariana, but to his surprise, she pouted and muttered something while shooting him an accusatory glare.

Holden didn't quite catch her words, so he removed the paper mask and regarded her patiently, gently inquiring, "Pardon? What did you say?"

Ariana huffed and turned her head away, grumbling loudly, "You're Holden. | won't play your game!"

Holden was taken aback, a sense of disquiet gnawing at him. He nervously asked, his lips tightly pursed, "Why not?" "Because Holden is nothing but a wolf in sheep's clothing!" Ariana asserted with unwavering conviction.

Holden retorted, "Then I'm certainly not Holden." He made a quick decision and added, "I'm just your online friend." [ninjanovel.com](http://ninjanovel.com)

Even though Ariana continued to ignore him, Holden gently tugged at her sleeve and pressed on, asking, "Why did you block me?"

Ariana turned to fix him with a gaze that could freeze fire and replied, "Because you're Holden!"

Hearing this, Holden's heart sank. He had a vague inkling that Ariana could have uncovered something significant; otherwise, she wouldn't have abruptly cut ties with him online.

Holden wanted to delve deeper into the matter but decided to begin with a direct question, "How did you know that?"

"I don't possess that knowledge," Ariana mumbled in a drowsy manner, evading a straightforward response. Despite Holden's several attempts to extract more information, Ariana remained evasive. Eventually, she simply ignored him and found a comfortable haven in her seat, drifting off into slumber.

Faced with her somnolent state, Holden had no choice but to secure her in her seat with a seatbelt and take her home.

Reaching the villa's entrance, Holden propped Ariana up with one hand and pressed the doorbell with the other. However, after two futile attempts, he became puzzled. Was Melon not home?

He pressed the doorbell twice more, confirming that there was no response from inside. Turning to Ariana, he questioned, "Is there no one at home? What's the door code?"

Ariana mumbled a sequence of numbers. Holden was on the verge of entering the code as per her instructions when he suddenly froze, realizing that the numbers she gave him corresponded to his birthdate.

Was it a mere coincidence? Or..

Holden cast a skeptical glance at the drowsy Ariana in his arms and couldn't help but wonder if she was playing a cunning prank on him while under the influence.

#### Chapter 1122

After a moment of hesitation, he decided to enter the birthdate as the door code. To his astonishment, the door swung open without hesitation! As the door creaked open, Holden stood there, his disbelief freezing him in his tracks.

Whether it was fate playing its fickle hand or some other cosmic twist, Holden didn't have the luxury of pondering it. Ariana, in a sudden burst of energy, attempted to shove him aside. Before he could react, she had already pushed him away, running to the nearby flowerbed, where she started a bout of uncontrollable retching.

Holden followed, feeling utterly helpless, and got out a handful of tissues for her. To his astonishment, Ariana pushed him away once more, extending her arms in a wide embrace of a nearby pillar, serenading it with a heartfelt, albeit slightly off-key, tune. She adamantly refused to step inside.

With no other recourse at his disposal, Holden tried to coax her, doing his utmost to lead her away from the pillar after a prolonged tussle. Yet, even after he had successfully coaxed her down, Ariana remained obstinate, firmly declining to cross the door into the house.

Following more commotion, Holden managed to carry the nearly unconscious Ariana inside.

Gently placing her on the bed, he proceeded to tenderly wipe her face with a warm towel and applied ointment to her injured arm.

After he had finished attending to her, he perched himself on the edge of the bed, watching as Ariana drifted into a dazed state. In the tranquil night, he found himself reluctant to leave. [ninjanovel.com](http://ninjanovel.com)

Holden's eyes remained fixated on Ariana, and without thinking, his fingers traced the contours of her eyebrows and eyes as if drawn by an invisible force.

His heart was filled with joy just by looking at her in this manner.

He knew he should keep his distance from Ariana, but no matter how resolute his efforts to remain composed, she possessed an irresistible allure that tugged at his emotions. Her mere presence could effortlessly stir his feelings, even during his professional pursuits.

Of all the people he had crossed paths with, she alone possessed the capacity to evoke such sensations in him. Holden gazed at Ariana with pure adoration, a palpable desire compelling him to lean in for a kiss.

He inched closer and stopped mere inches away, his heart galloping like a wild stallion. Yet, reason admonished him that this was taking things too far.

Thus, summoning sheer force of will, Holden put an end to his wayward intentions. He straightened up and, unable to bear the sight of the figure lying on the bed any longer, fled the room like a man escaping a maelstrom.

Descending from upstairs to the living room, the gentle night breeze offered some solace to his restless soul. He glanced toward the door and noticed that when he had carried her inside, he had left it a bit open.

Contemplating the door's peculiar security code, he couldn't help but wonder at the uncertainty of it all. How could such an unlikely occurrence be? He began to suspect that the code lock had malfunctioned. Stepping over, he shut the door and made another attempt with the code.

To his astonishment, the code lock functioned flawlessly, and only one particular date had the power to open that door — his birthday!

He stared at the now locked door, lost in reverie. He couldn't fathom the mystique behind why Ariana's house had his birthday as its passcode.

The following day, Ariana stirred from her hangover-induced slumber, and the clock's hands pointed close to noon. Her head pulsed with a painful rhythm, and as she gingerly propped herself up, she noticed that her clothes had been changed. It appeared that someone, likely Sonia, had escorted her back home and done it.

Recollection trickled back to her, reminding her that she had sent a message to Sonia, imploring her to come to get her at the bar when she had felt the first hints of inebriation. But beyond that, her memory was a labyrinth shrouded in fog.

She clambered out of bed, holding her throbbing head, and ventured toward the bathroom. Leaving her room, she heard sounds emanating from the kitchen. As she approached, she found Sonia adorned in an apron, frying eggs.

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Sonia glanced over as Ariana drew near, her expression a mix of exasperation and relief.

"At long last, you've awoken. Do you have any clue that you contacted me last night? But when I arrived, you had vanished into thin air. I was beside myself with worry, fearing the worst. It was only through inquiries that I discovered that you left, and upon returning home, I found you fast asleep as if bewitched."

Ariana was taken aback when she heard Sonia's words.

"What do you mean?" she asked, staring blankly at Sonia.

"Wasn't it you who brought me back last night?"

Sonia's face wore a befuddled expression as she fixed her gaze on Ariana.

"You must have been truly sloshed. When I got to the bar last night, you were nowhere in sight."

Sonia didn't appear to be jesting. Slapping her forehead in frustration, Ariana realized something wasn't adding up. [ninjanovel.com](http://ninjanovel.com)

It couldn't have been her who brought herself home. She had no memory of it, and in her inebriated state, navigating the road home would have been as easy as finding a needle in a haystack!

At that very moment, Ariana's phone rang, drawing her attention to an incoming spam call. She promptly ended it and blacklisted the number.

Yet, as she did so, her call log from the previous night caught her eye — an incoming call from Holden, spanning five long minutes.

Ariana was utterly thrown off. Fragmented memories began to resurface, and she dimly recollected that it was indeed Holden who had come to her rescue last night.

Ariana stood there, her mind spinning, piecing together pieces of the prior evening. She recalled playfully ribbing Holden about his mysterious mask and inquiring about where it was. Later on, it seemed she was in an unfortunate bout of vomiting and a tantrum on the ground.

The more she remembered, the redder her face became. It was as if her cheeks were aflame.

Incredibly, she had subjected herself to two bouts of inebriated absurdity before the same stranger. It was not just embarrassing; it was downright mortifying!

She tried her best to recall, but many of these memories remained shrouded in haze, and she couldn't quite conjure up Holden's face.

Ariana promptly checked Holden's social media profile and removed his account from her blacklist.

She had impulsively banished him from her digital realm, spurred by the knowledge that he was currently assisting Sadie in selecting a wedding gown. She had intended to maintain a safe distance, but hindsight now rendered that decision irrational. Holden, in all likelihood, remained oblivious to her discovery of his true identity as her affluent online confidant.

As soon as she unblocked him, a smiling emoji popped up on the chat box from the other side.

This only deepened Ariana's discomfort. She surmised that he knew she had unblocked him, but she remained uncertain about how to proceed.

Should she confess, saying, "I know you're Holden," or should she continue to feign ignorance? Just as Ariana wrestled with this decision, the other end sent a message. "Were you out on a drinking spree last night? | called, and your voice seemed rather unusual."

On the opposite end, Holden anxiously awaited her response as he composed his message. He understood that divulging his identity could prompt Ariana to withdraw, especially given the link to Sadie.

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Furthermore, based on her remarks from the night before, she likely harbored suspicions about his true identity.

Thus, in this tense moment, he stared at his phone screen, grappling with the hope that Ariana would not directly address his true self.

It was a somewhat duplicitous strategy, but it provided a modicum of relief.

Upon receiving the message, Ariana hesitated momentarily and then realized that he was still maintaining the facade of ignorance.

She responded, "Yes, | was out partying with friends last night. | imbibed quite a bit and inadvertently blocked you by mistake. | only noticed today. My apologies."

Both of them instinctively adhered to the unspoken pact. Holden heaved a sigh of relief and they engaged in casual conversation for a while. Soon Sonia finished cooking and called Ariana for lunch, so she terminated the conversation and went to eat.

On the uppermost floor of the BRD Group's headquarters, Holden set his phone aside and sighed with relief. He felt somewhat drained and reclined in his chair.

Devin, bringing coffee, noticed Holden's troubled expression. Concerned, he inquired, "Is something bothering you, sir?"

Holden rubbed his temples and replied, "It's nothing, just a bit fatigued." He chatted amiably with Devin for a while, but Ariana's face continued to play in his thoughts.

Holden sighed in resignation and asked, puzzled, "Have you ever encountered someone with whom you feel an immediate, profound connection, as if you've known them for an eternity? Someone who can effortlessly sway your emotions and disposition?"

Hearing Holden's words, Devin understood him. His reference to Ariana was as clear as day, and it caused a quiet sigh to escape Devin's inner depths.

But Devin maintained an unwavering facade of composure, choosing his words with precision.

"One can never truly navigate the winding river of human connections." With a cautious demeanor, he ventured further, "Have you, perhaps, encountered a noteworthy individual recently who has stirred your thoughts on this matter?"

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Holden didn't try to conceal, merely nodding in response.

"Indeed, I have," he admitted, keeping the enigmatic figure's name secret.

Swiftly shifting gears, Holden asked, "How versed are you in the chronicles of events that transpired half a decade ago?" Devin's heart danced a hesitant waltz in his chest upon hearing this question.

He had always anticipated such a day after Ariana showed up at the Fredrick family estate the other day, but the arrival was as unexpectedly sooner.



Bound by Aldus's directives, Devin couldn't help but feel the tremors of anxiety creeping up his spine. Nevertheless, he responded, "I possess the same knowledge as you, sir."

A moment of silence hung in the air like a heavy curtain before Holden asked, "And what of Sadie? What do you have about her?"

Devin knew little to nothing about Sadie. She had suddenly materialized out of nowhere, and he hadn't had much time to get to know her.

After thoughtful consideration, Devin replied, "In truth, Miss Pierre's arrival, accompanied by Adele, caught me by surprise as well.

Prior to that juncture, her existence was unknown. It is undeniable, however, that Adele's your child."

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He paused, then added, "Perhaps you veiled her existence well during that time, and these pages of your past remained largely unturned."

Holden maintained a stoic silence, offering no rebuttal to Devin's words. His desire to unearth the truth had taken root like a gnawing hunger.

In the past, he had been content to let his memories lie dormant, heeding his grandfather's counsel that the past was a ship long sailed.

An unsettling feeling gnawed at Holden, unlike any he had experienced before. The hunger to unravel the mysteries of yesteryears ate at him with a relentlessness he couldn't ignore. For the first time, he felt that he would lose himself if he didn't know his past.

He remained in contemplative silence for a moment before finally saying, "Devin, I want you to seek out a psychologist for me. I wish I could reclaim the fragments of my memory from five years ago."

Devin's heart skipped a beat upon hearing this, as he wondered if Holden had stumbled upon some truth. However, he refrained from prying further and merely acquiesced, feigning ignorance of any momentous revelations.

At that very moment, Holden's phone rang, and it was an unfamiliar number. He glanced at the screen and answered. Melon's voice on the other end greeted him, "Daddy!"

ninjanovel.com Holden was momentarily taken aback but responded tenderly, "Melon, what's the matter?" Melon proceeded to explain that he was currently in a summer camp, offering insights into his experiences there.

Holden had been wondering about the whereabouts of Melon the previous night, and now he knew that the boy was engaged in a children's summer retreat.

Following a brief conversation, Holden discerned a shift in Melon's demeanor. The boy's voice quivered as though he struggled to keep his emotions in check.

Brow furrowing with concern, Holden asked, "Melon, has something untoward occurred at the summer camp?" "Daddy, when are you coming back?" Melon's voice grew muffled, and distress colored his words. "The other kids at the camp, they all have fathers, and they mock me, saying I don't have one!"

Holden, attuned to the slight tremor in Melon's voice, felt his heartstrings tug. Seeking to console the youngster, he said, "Daddy shall return soon. He is here with you."

With a skillful touch, Holden succeeded in mollifying Melon's unease, concluding the call with a heavy heart.

Listening to this exchange, Devin found himself in a befuddled state of mind. Apart from Adele, who was this child calling him Daddy? And it appeared that Holden had grown quite accustomed to it.

After ending the call, Holden sank into a chair, lost in contemplation, his face contorted.

Devin looked at the time and remarked, "Sir, 'tis time to prepare for the impending meeting."

Startled from his reverie, Holden donned his coat, his countenance burdened with concern, as he replied, "Tell Shawn to represent me in the meeting. I have pressing matters to attend to." With that, he grabbed his car keys and left.

Devin found himself trailing behind, struggling to keep pace with Holden's swift departure.

Meanwhile, at the children's summer camp, youngsters frolicked on the verdant lawn. Melon, relegated to the sidelines, cast wistful glances at their merriment, yearning to partake in their activities.

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At that moment, a chubby young lad stepped forward, exuding an aura of authority, obstructing Melon's path. He said, "We've decreed not to play with fatherless children, lest we risk a similar fate!"

This kindled Melon's ire, and he retorted with fervor, "Your words hold no sway! I have a dad! Stop it!" The boy paid Melon's assertion no heed, emitting a disdainful snort and condescendingly looking down at him. "Your words are but fabrications. You have no dad!"

Unbeknownst to Melon, the youngster had stumbled on school records in the counselor's office, where he noticed that Melon had a single parent. No mention of a father.

"You're the liar here! I have just called my father!" Melon's face reddened, and he teetered on the precipice of tears.

The two youngsters embarked on a heated quarrel, with the chubby boy's taunts escalating.

"Oh, your father?! Perhaps your mother just weaves tales for you!"

"My mother is honest!" Melon retorted vehemently.

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"My father assured me of his return soon!"

Ascornful chuckle came from the boy.

“Ha! Return? You have no father to speak of!” The kid mocked Melon, making expressions and making the other kids laugh. “You're incredibly stupid! Maybe your father is already gone! Are you talking about a phone call? That has to be a fake father!” Enraged, Melon lunged forth, delivering a resounding blow to the rotund boy's face.

“Your father is the one who's dead!”

The chubby lad wailed and, unwilling to concede defeat, grabbed Melon's face, and the two tumbled on the grass. He cried, “I shall report this to the counselor! You hit me! You're a fatherless bastard!”

“I am not fatherless! Shut up!” Melon's eyes glistened with tears as he grappled fiercely with his adversary, their conflict unabated.

The other kids were terrified and raced to alert the counselor. In the midst of this tumult, the camp's loudspeaker crackled to life.

“Max Anderson, your father just arrived bearing two laden packs of snacks to see you. Please come to the lecture hall.”

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As the broadcast reverberated through the airwaves, the two youngsters grappling on the verdant lawn found themselves abruptly at a standstill.

The chubby lad, seated on the grass, appeared taken aback and bewildered. Could it truly be the case? Did this lad genuinely have a dad?

Melon, as well, remained in a state of astonishment, surmising that perhaps there was another boy at this summer camp who bore the same name and surname as himself. It took him a moment to connect the dots.

Upon finally snapping out of his reverie, his blood still simmering with the fury ignited by the boy's previous utterances, he lunged at him once more, tugging fiercely at his sleeve while demanding, "Apologize! You've yet to extend your apologies to me!"

By now, fellow campers had rushed to summon the camp counselor. She swiftly approached the scene, taken aback to find the two juveniles embroiled in a tussle. Without hesitation, she intervened, separating them, and inquired, "What's the fracas all about? Why are you two fighting?"

Seeing the counselor's approach, the chubby boy promptly scrambled to his feet, dusting off his trousers, and expeditiously laid forth a grievance, "He was the one who launched a sudden assault on me!"

Angela's Library "No, you're the one who insulted me!" retorted Melon, his face flush with ire. "He said I'm fatherless and resorted to calling me a bastard with a dead dad."

At this juncture, a timid young girl who had summoned the counselor timidly said, "He started by insulting Max first. We all heard it."

The counselor furrowed her brow upon hearing such harsh language, wondering where these youngsters had picked up such phrases. She chastised the boy, stating, "You mustn't hurl insults at your fellow campers; your words were exceedingly harsh."

After admonishing the chubby boy, the counselor instructed him to extend an apology to Melon. Hearing the apology, Melon reluctantly conceded that his resorting to physical altercations had been unwarranted.

With the matter between the two youngsters resolved, the counselor turned to Melon and said, "Your father awaits you in the lecture hall. Come along; I shall escort you there."

Melon stood rooted to the spot, utterly bewildered. Had that broadcast just moments ago truly been targeting him? Had his Daddy really come?

He felt incredulous, a whirlwind of confusion and excitement coursing through his veins. He promptly followed the counselor to the lecture hall.

Entering the hall, Melon saw a man in a leather jacket seated by the window.

Melon was dumbstruck; this individual bore an uncanny resemblance to the Dad depicted in the photograph!

The appearance of his father, an individual he had never laid eyes on before, was just as sudden. Melon found himself overwhelmed with a heady mix of exhilaration and hesitancy. He stood immobile, unsure of how to proceed.

Startled by a noise, Holden turned his head and immediately caught sight of Melon. The boy's face was marked with dirt and bore visible blemishes from their earlier scuffle. He instinctively furrowed his brow and quickly advanced, stooping down.

"What happened? Did someone mistreat you?"

Melon regarded him with an intense gaze, foregoing his inquiry, and instead posed a query of his own, "Are you truly my father?" Holden chuckled warmly and tousled Melon's hair.

"Any doubts, my boy?"

Didn't you express a desire to meet me when we conversed on the phone?"

Chapter 1128

It was at that precise moment that Melon got it all. He sprung up in ecstatic elation, rushing into Holden's embrace and encircling his arms around his father's neck. With an affectionate tone, he exclaimed, "Daddy, I've missed you so terribly!"

Having poured out his sentiments, he planted a joyful kiss on Holden's cheek and commenced an animated conversation, regaling him with tales of everything under the sun.

Meanwhile, Devin, who had accompanied them, couldn't be more thrown off.

Both he and Holden had donned leather jackets, but the divergence lay in the fact that Holden had deliberately disguised himself. His wig replicated the hairstyle Theodore had sported five years prior, nearly identical. Though he didn't appear dramatically distinct from his usual self now, the semblance was convincing enough to deceive a child.

However, Devin hadn't foreseen the existence of Holden's illegitimate child in the summer camp!

Initially, he believed Holden had come to evaluate potential investments, but he never imagined that a child who bore an uncanny likeness to Holden would be their intention for coming. The manner in which their eyes and features mirrored each other was astonishing.

Even the faint dimples on the child's cheek reminded those of Holden's own from his youth, albeit less pronounced now that he was an adult and only visible when he chuckled.

And to further intensify the intrigue, there was Adele, who also had those same dimples!  
ANGELA's LIBRARY The revelation that they all possessed such striking resemblances left Devin thoroughly astounded.

Melon turned around and found Devin, his face flushed like a summer sunset, bursting with excitement. Curiosity washed over him, compelling him to ask, "Who might this be?"

"He's my right-hand man," Holden responded, playfully tousling Melon's hair with a warm grin. Seeing this interaction, Devin, brimming with joy, walked up to Melon.

"Well, hello there!"

His tone radiated excitement and joy while conversing with the young lad.

The chubby boy, driven by insatiable curiosity, followed suit. Seeing the adults in the lecture hall, his eyes widened like saucers, and he exclaimed in sheer amazement, "Anderson, you've got yourself a dad, huh?"

Devin was momentarily caught off guard by the mention of the Anderson surname. During the earlier broadcast, he had been uncertain, but now it was as clear as day that the child bore the surname Anderson. He couldn't help but find it rather coincidental, though he entertained the notion that the child could use his mother's surname.

Melon, clinging to Holden's neck with a proud expression, replied, "Indeed, my dad is the most handsome, and he's nothing short of awesome!"

Holden noticed both kids were fighting, so he turned to Melon and asked, "Tell me, what happened here?"

That marked the first time Melon had his old man as his wingman. His voice quivered as he recounted, "He said that my dad was dead, that I was fatherless, so I duked it out with him!"

Melon explained while in Holden's embrace, growing increasingly vexed with each utterance. Holden's countenance turned graver with each word he said.

The chubby kid, sensing the gravity of the situation and daunted by Holden's stern demeanor, took a step back and offered a timid defense, saying, "I peeped in the counselor's records, and it said Max only had a mom."

The counselor quickly interjected, "Perhaps there was a glitch during registration. My apologies for any mix-up." The head counselor stepped in, remarking, "Both of you already hashed out your differences earlier, didn't you?" Melon pursed his lips, feeling more emboldened now that he had backup.

"But I can't just swallow his apology. He slandered my dad, cursed him, and said he's dead!"

In the presence of Holden, the chubby boy found himself caught between a rock and a hard place, his face turning as red as a beet.

At this juncture, Holden held Melon and conversed rationally with the boys. It didn't take long for Melon to feel reassured by his father's presence.



Melon glanced at the boy and quipped, "Well, in that case, you'll have to help me give snacks to all and sing my dad's praises. Do that, and I'll let bygones be bygones."

Holden couldn't help but smile at Melon's request and affectionately ruffled his hair.

Realizing the error of his ways, the boy hastily concurred, "Alright."

With that done, he followed the counselor outside to distribute the snacks.

It was only after he had genuinely sung praises about Max's dad being as dapper as a daisy to every single one of their fellow campers that Melon finally forgave him. With that, the incident was finally put to rest.

Holden and Devin had stayed quite a while at the summer camp, keeping Melon company. Only when they saw Melon merrily frolicking with the other youngsters could they finally heave a sigh of relief.

Time whizzed, and Holden checked his watch, realizing the hour had grown late. He and Devin had to hit the road. Before taking their leave, Holden requested that Devin exit first and then leaned down to talk with Melon in hushed tones. "Remember, we've got to keep today's meeting with Daddy on the hush-hush from Mommy, alright?"

Clutching his snacks, Melon looked up at him with a perplexed expression, batting his eyelashes.

"Why? Doesn't Daddy want to see Mommy? Don't you long for Mommy?"

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Holden hesitated for a fleeting moment, his mind racing to concoct a plausible excuse. After a thoughtful pause, he finally told Melon, "You see, Daddy's profession is secret, and this time, I clandestinely slipped away to keep my boy company. Should your Mommy discover our Little escapade, she'd surely be fuming and fraught with worry. You know how much Daddy despises seeing Mommy distressed, and you share that sentiment, don't you?"

Melon, not fully grasping the intricacies of the situation, got Holden's words and nodded in agreement. He extended his hand, suggesting a pinkie promise.

“Shall we seal the deal?”

“Alright, no lying.” With a wry grin, Holden intertwined his pinkie with Melon's and playfully tickled his nose.

Melon was still hesitant to part ways. He got his smart watch and showed it to Holden.

“Daddy, this is my contact information. Can I add your details? We can video chat whenever you find time.”

“Of course,” Holden readily agreed, proceeding to add Melon's phone number.

Finally, Melon kissed Holden's cheek, bid farewell, and stood at the summer camp entrance, watching his departure.

As Holden got away from the summer camp, with Devin at his side, a thoughtful silence lingered, Devin contemplating whether to voice his thoughts.

Sensing the turmoil in Devin's mind, Holden cast a sidelong glance.

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“Speak your mind, Devin. If you have something on your chest, don't hesitate.”

Brimming with anticipation, Devin inquired, “Was that young child we encountered earlier your son?” Holden met Devin's gaze and replied, “No.”

He paused before elaborating, “He's the son of an online acquaintance.”

| merely lent a helping hand with a small favor.”

Devin’s previous fervor evaporated instantly, deflated by Holden’s words.

Devin didn’t press further, but he couldn’t shake the uncanny resemblance he noticed between the child and Holden. Could it all be a trick of the mind?

The following day, on the set of a certain movie, Sadie found herself seated in a van, deftly editing photos in Photoshop. Displayed on her phone was the image of Holden bestowing a kiss on the cheek to Ariana, a snapshot captured five years prior during her discreet investigation of Ariana.

With finesse, Sadie replaced Ariana’s face with hers, altering the backdrop to craft a seamless image using her expert photo editing skills.

All this effort was not for immediate use but rather to allay and deceive Holden, hiding her ruse until the opportune moment.

In her musings, Sadie pondered the fact that, when she and Holden eventually tied the knot, there was no intention to invite Ariana.

Consequently, no one would stumble on the photoshop work.

Aknock resounded on the car door at that time, and the assistant outside reminded her, “Miss Pierre, it’s time for the opening ceremony.”

## Chapter 1130

Following her recent exposure for manipulating votes related to Ariana’s team, Sadie’s professional prospects had dimmed, and her resources had dwindled. She had accepted a role in a detective action film to salvage her reputation.

The script held promise and popularity. Leveraging some of the Fredrick family connections, she secured the female lead and took on the role of a police officer.

However, the cast and crew list had been kept secret to avoid leaks.

To Sadie's astonishment, she discovered on the first day of filming that the male lead was none other than Tyler, Ariana's steadfast confidant.

What's more, Ariana herself had made an appearance backstage!

Sadie, her brows furrowing, inquired, "Why is she here?"

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The assistant met her gaze and disclosed, "Miss Edwards is our producer."

At that moment, Ariana's eyes fell on Sadie. She hesitated briefly, then furrowed her brow and asked the assistant, "Wasn't it said that the female lead was a recently graduated rising star? How did Sadie end up here?"

The assistant at Ariana's side found herself tongue-tied, struggling to deliver a coherent response. Ariana, not one to beat around the bush, turned toward the director.

"Has our leading lady been changed? Sadie Pierre, really? What happened to our original candidate?"

The director, well aware of the animosity brewing between Sadie and Ariana's team on the talent show, sensed that there could be a storm on the horizon. Yet, his hands were tied, so he donned an awkward smile and said, "Think of it as a case of capital infusion.."

Ariana didn't need an explanation to decipher what was happening. It was akin to injecting capital into a company. Sadie had orchestrated the ousting of the initial leading lady, taking her place.

Ariana was no pushover, and she refused to just sweep Sadie's actions under the rug. Since her return to the country, a feud had been brewing between them, not to mention the subsequent run-ins.

Collaborating on a film with Sadie would be like throwing good money after bad.

Besides, even if Ariana didn't pore over the details, she'd caught wind of Sadie's reputation and her acting skills — or the lack thereof. She'd stumbled upon some clips of Sadie's performances, and it was a real train wreck!

Why someone like Sadie, a scion of the esteemed Fredrick family, would dive headlong into the entertainment industry and rock the boat was beyond Ariana's ken. Despite her inner tempest upon seeing Sadie, Ariana maintained a calm facade as she turned to the director and said, "I'd like to

withdraw my investment. What's the penalty for tearing up this contract? I'm prepared to compensate."

The director, hit by the bombshell of Ariana's investment withdrawal, was flustered. It wasn't just about the money; it was also about potential future collaborations. Word had it that Tyler was onboard only thanks to Ariana's sway.

"No, Ariana, let's not be too hasty," the director implored, marshaling a battalion of persuasive arguments to win her over, even resorting to begging, if need be.

But Ariana stood her ground, her resolve unshaken. She made it clear that she did not intend to play nice with Sadie. Feeling cornered and unable to sway Ariana, the director finally broke down in tears right in front of her!

Ariana, taken aback by this unexpected display of emotion, blinked at the director's teary outburst, her words momentarily caught in her throat. In the end, her heart softened. The sudden withdrawal of investment was indeed a curveball.