

Unconscious 141

Chapter: 141

“About an hour. It’s easy to put pictures together for the video, but we need to search for some usable material first.

But...” Betsy hesitated in the middle of her sentence as she felt a sudden wave of embarrassment. She took a deep breath before continuing, “But Sarah is so ugly in these pictures. She’ll kill us if she knows what we are about to do.”

Ariana smiled slyly as she patted Betsy on the shoulder and assured her, “Just do as I say. Our best course of action is to shift everyone’s focus elsewhere.”

In his deluxe presidential suite, Jasper lay on the sofa, his legs crossed, playing computer games.

When he won a game, he took a glance at Sloane Brown, his assistant, who was sitting beside him.

“How’s it going? Have the online trolls we hired started attacking yet?”

Sloane tapped twice on the keyboard and replied, “As soon as the promo video was released, they started reposting and commenting, but...”

Jasper interrupted before he could finish.

“Everyone must hate Sarah by now,” Jasper said with a laugh. He threw down his phone and said in a light tone, “Ariana wants to fight me? She can dream on! How could she defeat me?”

Jasper was imagining how embarrassed Ariana must be right now.

She was probably calling everyone she knew for help.

“Go and continue to stir things up. We are going to make Sarah go trending!” He crossed his arms over his chest and raised his chin at Sloane.

Sloane looked a little embarrassed, and pointed at the computer screen. “There’s no need for that. Her hashtag’s already trending, but...”

“Already?” Jasper interrupted again. Excited, he stood up and walked over to the computer. When he saw the screen, his face darkened. “What’s this? Why is the hashtag different from the one we had planned?”

The trending hashtag on the top was about Sarah’s memes. And the one ranked fourth was about Sarah’s funny videos.

Confused, he clicked into the comments section, and what he saw made him want to smash his computer.

“Sarah seems more down to earth than she was five years ago.”

“She must be on the Internet a lot; she’s really funny.”

“I always thought of her as this otherworldly superstar. I didn’t expect her to be so down to earth.”

“She’s so cute. I’m a fan of hers now!”

“I heard she’s releasing a new album. I’m really looking forward to it!”

“Wow, she’s so cute and funny. I Love her!”

“I’ve become her fan now.”

“She’s so different from how she comes across. She seems so quiet in public, but she’s actually really

funny.”

Not only did the netizens make comments, but they also created memes of her. They were everywhere.

Chapter: 142

Now that there were all kinds of memes of Sarah online, she was getting more and more fans.

And the negative comments about her became drowned out.

The more Jasper read, the angrier he became. He dropped the mouse onto the floor and shouted,

“What the hell? Didn’t the trolls do their job? Have I really spent that much money to get nothing in

return?”

Sloane picked up the mouse gingerly. “I’m guessing Sarah just found a better PR team, who came up with this idea.”

Jasper pulled his own hair angrily and wracked his brains to think of a solution.

Instead of everyone hating her, Sarah had become the loveable star of the variety show before it had even been broadcast.

Ariana must be so pleased.

He couldn’t let them win this easily.

“Keep buying bots and online celebrities to troll her!” Jasper ordered.

“Of course, I’ll do it right now,” Sloane replied immediately.

Jasper picked up the phone from the sofa, and went onto the balcony to call Josh. He immediately

started blaming him. “I asked you to bring her down, but instead she has even more fans!

How stupid are you? Did you edit the video as I told you?”

“Yes, I did as you said. I didn’t even answer any of Ariana’s calls or reply to her messages. I didn’t see

this coming at all,” Josh said.

With a deep breath, Jasper closed his eyes and rubbed his temple, trying his best to suppress his anger. After a few seconds, he said, “Cut all Sarah’s scenes in the first episode, especially her singing part. I don’t care how good her performance was. No one can see it.”

Josh hesitated. Sarah’s buzz in the media right now was a great opportunity to promote the show.

Everyone was expecting great things. “I’m afraid we can’t do that. She’s a hot topic right now. If there’s not a single scene of her, it might...”

“That’s not my concern. Anyway, I don’t want her in the first episode,” Jasper interrupted. He added with a sneer, “I know you’ve always wanted to go into the film industry. It’s good for you to have dreams and ambitions. You’re a talented director, and I’m sure you don’t want to make variety shows long-term.

The Anderson family is quite influential in Eleymond, so it wouldn’t be hard for us to help you with that.

And it would be just as easy to make those opportunities hard for you. So you should make a wise choice.”

Josh was intelligent, and he knew what this meant. If he didn’t listen to Jasper, he could be blacklisted from the entertainment industry for the rest of his career.

He gritted his teeth, and agreed. "Okay, I'll do as you say."

Over the subsequent few days, Sarah's popularity continued to rise. Because of the funny videos and the memes, she attracted more and more attention.

Both Ariana and Betsy were thrilled. They brought fried chicken and coke to the hotel room to celebrate.

"It's a shame that Sarah can't use her phone while she's in there. She doesn't know the good news yet.

If she knew, she'd be so thrilled." Betsy gulped down some coke, and was in high spirits.

"Would she really be happy if she knew she has become famous in this way?" Ariana asked. ©

Betsy froze, holding a chicken leg halfway to her mouth. She raised her head and looked at the computer on the desk. The screen wallpaper was a photo of Sarah rolling her eyes. Not knowing how to answer Ariana, Betsy then changed the subject.

Chapter: 143

A week later, the first episode of the variety show was officially broadcast.

Ariana and Betsy sat in front of the computer together and watched excitedly.

But as they watched, they felt something was wrong.

“Ariana, it seems like Sarah is barely in the show. We wouldn’t be able to find her if we didn’t look hard.

And in the interview, only two of her questions made it in.” Betsy looked at Ariana with a gloomy expression on her face.

“Yes, you’re right.” Ariana, too, looked gloomy and frowned.

She managed to suppress her anger until she saw that Sarah’s stage performance had been cut short.

She stood up and shouted,

“How dare they! They’ve gone too far!”

In the two-hour episode, all of Sarah’s scenes combined lasted about five minutes. That was shorter than her part in the promo video. Her performance, which was originally three minutes, was cut short and was incoherent.

Online, the viewers were deep in discussion.

“That’s it? I came to see Sarah but there are so few of her scenes!”

“Sarah’s new song was awful. I guess her time in the spotlight is over. She should have just sung one of her old songs.”

“What the hell is this variety show doing? Was this some kind of stunt?”

“Elva was really impressive. She’s a real singer.”

“Since Sarah decided to retire from singing, why is she even back on the stage? She should just cherish the reputation she had in the past.”

“The only thing she and her team know to do is to hype.”

“Her fans should really open their eyes. Sarah is behind the times.”

“She used to be a professional singer and that was seriously her performance? I’m disappointed.”

Ariana couldn’t bear it anymore. She grabbed her coat and rushed out the door.

Betsy, who had been reading out the comments, chased after her.

“Ariana, where are you going?”

“To avenge Sarah.”

Ariana hurried over to the program crew. Josh was still eating lunch, and when he saw her, he greeted her casually as if nothing was amiss.

In her anger, Ariana grabbed his lunch box and threw it down.

“Josh, what the hell is that about? Why did you cut all of Sarah’s scenes?”

Chapter: 144

Josh slowly wiped the corner of his mouth with a tissue and crossed his legs. "It's only routine. I did it for the show and for the viewers. Other people's scenes were cut a lot too. None of their agents came here to complain. You're just a troublemaker."

"Do you even believe your own lies? I don't see any other artist's performance being cut like that. Only Sarah's performance was cut short. Her scenes in that episode probably didn't even last six minutes combined. Are you saying that's the same for the other artists?"

Ariana trembled with anger. When the promo video had been released, she guessed Josh and Jasper might do something different to make things difficult for them, but she never thought they would take it this far.

"The contract doesn't specify how long an artist's scenes need to be, and we have our own considerations when it comes to editing. You know nothing about that, so it's not your place to complain. Anyway, you will get paid just as we agreed."

Josh's expression remained unchanged. He clearly didn't take Ariana, or her anger seriously at all. He had no reason to go against Jasper for her sake, since Adrian dumped her.

“You’ll regret this,” Ariana sneered.

Josh laughed, the fat in his face bouncing as he did. “What? Are you threatening me? What are you going to do? You have nothing but your pretty little face.”

When Ariana and Josh parted ways, they had become complete enemies.

Ariana returned to the hotel, full of anger and outrage. Her hope was running out but she called Donna anyway.

The phone rang for a long time before she finally picked up. “If you’re calling to talk about Sarah’s matter, you can hang up right now,” Donna said impatiently.

It was no surprise that Donna guessed the purpose of Ariana’s call. After all, Donna was the department director. It was her job to keep an eye on all of the artists.

But her bluntness did come as a surprise.

“Now that you know, I will be straightforward. I was hoping the company would put some pressure on the program team; otherwise, the company will suffer more losses.” After a pause, Ariana continued with a softer tone, “Sarah is an important artist for the company. If the company doesn’t take her

seriously, then the program team will get even more arrogant. This isn't just about Sarah's career. It's about the company's reputation too."

"The company's reputation has nothing to do with Sarah," Donna sneered.

Biting her lip, Ariana ignored the irony in Donna's words. "So, the company will sort this out, right?"

"You're overthinking this. Why are you asking the company for help over such a small matter? Elva is also an important artist for the company and the program team has treated her well. The company will not take a stand against Guava Broadcasting on behalf of Sarah." Donna's voice became raised and angry.

Ariana moved the phone away from her ear. She could still hear Donna's angry voice without turning on speakerphone.

"Let me tell you something. Sarah is just an unpopular singer now. If she becomes famous again, then she's lucky. If she doesn't, then she's simply not destined to be a popular singer.

Elva is the most important artist in the company right now."

Ariana tried to protest, "Even if Sarah is unpopular right now, the program team shouldn't be using dirty tricks like that to crush her even more. She hasn't done anything wrong. Why..."

“Cut the crap. I don’t want to hear anymore.” Donna interrupted her in a sharp voice. “You’re Sarah’s agent, but the power to make decisions is in the hands of the company and you have no control over that. I hope you understand that. If you think they’ve been unfair to Sarah, then after she’s eliminated from the show and comes back, we can arrange for her to be a spokesperson for Harenin Foods, the snack brand, as compensation.”

Hearing this, Ariana hung up the phone, and held her head in her hands.

She had never heard of Harenin Foods. It must be some kind of cheap brand. If Sarah became the spokesperson, it would make her some money, but it wouldn’t be helpful for her music career.

Just then, Betsy shouted from inside the room, “Ariana! Come and look at this

Chapter: 145

Ariana walked in and Betsy handed her the laptop. “A lot of people online are mocking Sarah. That post that said she was putting on airs has resurfaced and people are talking about it again.”

Ariana glanced at the laptop, before opening her phone to read the comments.

“What happened to Sarah? She used to be normal but now she’s trying to act like a fool to attract people’s attention.”

“Why doesn’t she go into acting? She’s good at it.”

“I used to think her songs were good, but now I’m disappointed.”

“There was a rumor that Sarah puts on airs and looks down on the other artists. I didn’t believe it at first but now it seems like it could be true. Otherwise, the program wouldn’t have been so cautious with her scenes.”

“I have a friend who works in Guava Broadcasting. The staff don’t think very highly of Sarah. I guess the program team was worried that something might happen, so they cut her scenes.”

“There must be some big news. They wouldn’t have cut Sarah’s scenes for no reason.”

“Could it be that there’s a hidden story about her divorce with Lynch?”

People began a discussion about what trouble Sarah could be in, some people suggesting drug abuse.

And some people even talked about the issue between her and Lynch again. It was getting out of control.

Ariana knew that if this continued much longer, Sarah’s reputation would be totally destroyed, and she might be eliminated from the program after the first round of public performance.

Ariana put down her phone, her head in her hands. She felt a huge sense of guilt.

She couldn't let Sarah get eliminated like this. Sarah was so talented. How could her talent be wasted?

Ariana felt to blame for all of it. If it weren't for her, Jasper wouldn't be making things difficult for them.

If Sarah had a different, more experienced agent, today would have gone very differently. The program team certainly wouldn't have bullied them so mercilessly.

Theodore's face flashed through her mind. She had no choice.

She didn't want to lose her self-esteem, but she really couldn't hold on any longer.

If she didn't ask for his help, Sarah's future might be ruined.

With her phone clenched tightly in her hand, Ariana dialed Theodore's number.

On the top floor of the office building of BRD Group, Theodore sat at his desk, listening intently to the report from Horace.

Since sending Adrian to the western area the week before, Theodore had a lot to deal with in person.

He drummed his fingers on the desk, his face expressionless.

"There's an impromptu meeting at three pm. Tomorrow's dinner party has been postponed..." said

Horace with no pauses.

The phone vibrated on the desk. Theodore turned lazily and glanced at it. It was a call from Ariana.

Chapter: 146

He finally cracked a smile, albeit a cold one. It had been almost two weeks since he had heard from

her. This woman finally called him.

Since leaving for Ivebridge, she hadn't texted or called. She had become so bold.

If he hadn't sent someone to keep an eye on her, he would have thought she'd run away.

Theodore pushed the phone away from him.

"Mr. Anderson, why don't you answer the phone?" Horace asked when he caught a glimpse of the

caller ID.

Theodore snorted, "It's too late for her to call me now."

The phone continued to vibrate across the desk. "You didn't contact Ms. Edwards either," Horace

murmured, noncommittally.

Theodore shot Horace a warning glare, and Horace shut his mouth.

The phone stopped vibrating and Horace continued with his report.

A little absent-minded, Theodore wasn't really listening to what

Horace was saying. He tapped the desk more and more rapidly. His impatience was obvious.

Horace had noticed this. He was just wondering how long Theodore would last. Maybe the next call?

Theodore fiddled with the pen in his hand, his eyes fixed on the phone which was vibrating again.

It was obvious that Theodore really wanted to answer the phone but had to stay arrogant. Horace found this charade very amusing.

Five seconds later, Theodore finally picked up the phone.

Although his expression didn't change, it was obvious he was anxious.

Horace snickered.

"What's the matter?" Theodore asked abruptly, his tone cold.

Ariana hesitated before answering, "I'm in trouble."

Theodore frowned. He stayed silent for a few seconds and then asked, "Was there something wrong

with the program recording?"

He tried to keep his tone softer.

At the mention of this, Horace opened his phone to check the trending topics and showed Theodore.

After a quick glance, Theodore knew what had happened. He also knew that Ariana was in a very helpless position.

But he was still unhappy with her for waiting so long to call.

Chapter: 147

"I really have no choice. Could you help me this time?"

Her voice was low and hoarse. Theodore could picture her, looking dejected, her shoulders drooping.

He snorted gently and asked in a calm tone, "How do you want me to help you?"

"I was hoping you could ask \$J Entertainment to stand up for Sarah and get the program team to post the full video of her performance," she said in a soft tone with expectation.

Theodore gazed out of the window. After a long silence, he asked something off topic. "If nothing had happened, would you have contacted me before the program is over?"

Ariana was stunned. "No, why would I call you if nothing happens?"

This made Theodore angry and he sneered into the phone. "The program team didn't break their contract. You should have known to make additional rules when you signed it. Now something has happened, and you have to suffer. You can't blame anyone else."

Ariana stammered, "I have no experience, but I'll pay attention to that in the future. Can you..."

Theodore interrupted her coldly, "I told you I wouldn't interfere or help you. So you have to figure this out by yourself. If you can't, then all I can say is Sarah got unlucky..."

He paused, as he realized she seemed to start crying on the other end of the phone. Before he could correct himself, she hung up the phone.

This was the first time anyone had hung up on him.

Looking at the phone in disbelief, he asked Horace, "Is she crazy? How dare she hang up on me?"

Theodore was offended, but when he thought about Ariana sobbing, he couldn't help but feel his heart tighten.

He stood up and stared out of the window. That was the only way he could feel less depressed.

Before long, he felt confounded.

It was not okay for him to lose control of his emotions because of Ariana.

With this thought in mind, he calmed himself down.

He turned back around to Horace. "Who is the chief director of the variety show that Sarah is on?"

Without hesitation, Horace answered, "It's Josh. He's in charge of Guava Broadcasting's variety shows.

He's very experienced."

"Do a careful investigation on him and give him a warning when necessary," Theodore instructed.

"Yes, sir," Horace replied respectfully, but he snickered in his heart. Theodore shouldn't have been so mean to Ariana since he was going to help her anyway.

When he left the office, Horace closed the door carefully and sent a message to Adrian as he waited for the elevator. "Changes are about to be made in the company."

*

After hanging up on Theodore, Ariana wrapped herself tightly in her quilt and let the tears stream down her face.

Chapter: 148

She didn't want to cry, as she felt it was like admitting that she had lost, but when she played back Theodore's cruel words in her mind, she couldn't hold it back.

After some time, she slowly lifted herself up. Her eyes were red and the pillow was damp with tears.

It was getting dark now, but she felt much better after crying for a while. She took out a tissue and wiped away her tears.

She knew that, although Theodore's words were harsh, he was right.

If she had more experience, she would have added more clauses to the contract and this would never have happened.

Besides, Theodore had no obligation to help her clean up her mess. They had been on opposite sides from the beginning, and only after finding a common enemy had they come to the same side.

Even disregarding all the external factors, there was still an insurmountable gap between them.

She should stop having such selfish thoughts and getting carried away with unrealistic ideas.

It was indeed true that the one who fell in love first was doomed to lose.

They were not destined to be together. Theodore was like the bright moon in the sky, while Ariana was like a moth. She would die if she pursued light.

Already feeling low, this realization was the last straw for her.

She really was nothing to him.

Throwing her phone on her bed, she tried to get herself to start thinking logically again.

She should never have let herself get affected by Theodore. From now on, no matter what he said or

did, she would try and stay calm. Neither happy nor sad.

And she should thank him for not helping her, avoiding another chance for her to fall in love with him

even more.

And the baby...

Ariana stroked her belly. It was the first time she had not felt confused.

A child who was not loved by their father would grow up in a family without love.

She shouldn't be so selfish to have this baby, just because she would love it. ©

Perhaps, she shouldn't have agreed to marry Theodore and accepted artificial insemination in the first

place just for her revenge plan.

She definitely shouldn't keep the baby.

At that moment, Ariana finally made the decision to terminate the pregnancy, as soon as the matter

with Sarah was resolved.

The next morning, she was awoken by a knock at the door

Betsy's excited voice called from outside, "Ariana! Something unexpected has happened!"

Chapter: 149

Ariana in a half-asleep daze, opened the door to see Betsy's face, lit up with excitement.

"Look!" She held out her phone for Ariana to see.

A video was playing, which showed Sarah's full performance from that day.

The angle was a little strange and the image quality wasn't very clear. It seemed it had been recorded illicitly.

But it was enough to show how good the performance was.

This was just what Ariana needed to wake up fully. She shook Betsy, and asked, "Where did this video come from? The program team made everyone go through a thorough search when they came into the venue. Electronic equipment was not permitted. Who would be able to get around that?"

Betsy replied with a smile, "Someone posted it online along with an article in the early hours of the morning."

She scrolled down to the article.

It looked more like a letter of confession.

It was written by a man under the pseudonym of Sarah's Fan 11029. When he was seventeen years old, his father's business failed and he went into a huge amount of debt from gambling. His mother

ended up ending her own life. The man's miserable home life led him to drop out of school and he was beginning to have suicidal thoughts himself because of it.

That night, he had been drinking and had planned to jump from the eighteenth floor. But just as he was about to, he noticed Sarah on the TV. She was singing her famous song in a show.

He had never thought that a song could return his will to live, but it did. At that moment, he became a fan of Sarah, who was a big star at the time.

He continued being a fan for the next eight years. He explained that he couldn't allow anyone to slander Sarah, as she had saved his life. Her accompaniment had been damaged, and the program team had forced her to change the song. In the end, she chose to sing a cappella. Despite all the difficulties, she had still put on a great performance, and he wanted everyone to know.

At the end of the article, he wrote that the program team had done this maliciously and had edited the content to mislead the audience. He promised that what he said was true and was willing to bear legal responsibility for it.

As she read, Ariana's eyes began to well up with tears.

Despite losing her popularity for five years, there was still someone who would never stop loving Sarah.

She deserved that.

Before becoming an agent, Ariana hadn't paid much attention to the stars, nor the news in the

entertainment world. She didn't understand how fans could be so crazy about celebrities.

But now, she finally understood. She was really moved by it.

"I wonder how he managed to record the whole thing," Betsy murmured to herself.

It was also puzzling to Ariana. But then she remembered the tall, thin man who had been lurking on the

side of the stage that day. Could that have been him?

She dismissed the thought for the time being and continued reading. It seemed public opinion had

changed again. People were back on Sarah's side.

"I hope the program team can explain themselves. Why would they bully Sarah like this? Her

performance is wonderful! Why did they edit it so randomly?"

"I didn't believe it at first but now the evidence is irrefutable. Guava Broadcasting has to give us an

explanation!"

"I feel so sorry for Sarah."

Chapter: 150

“Those who spread rumors about Sarah will get punished sooner or later.”

“How could Guava Broadcasting do that? No matter how creative this variety show is, it won’t be popular now.”

“The program team has to apologize to Sarah!”

The comments went on and on, with fans becoming more agitated.

Soon, the program became the center of the public’s criticism.

In the hotel, Jasper was in a terrible mood. He threw his wine glass across the room. Glass shattered everywhere, red wine dripping down the wall.

“Damn it!”

Ariana must have bribed someone on the program team to let

Sarah’s fan record her performance. Otherwise, why would that video come out at such a convenient time for her?

His assistant didn’t dare to say anything, and just bent down to pick up the broken glass.

Jasper glanced at his assistant, grabbed his coat and left.

As soon as he came out of the hotel, he bumped into Josh.

“Mr. Anderson, thank god. I finally found you. Please help me,” he said, reaching out his hands to

Jasper. Josh was in an awful state, His face was pale and his clothes were crumpled and stained with mud.

Jasper pushed his hands away in disgust. “What are you talking about? I can’t help you.”

“You can’t just turn your back on me! It was you who asked me to do that to Sarah. Now my superiors have started looking into this matter. They will investigate, and find out who was responsible. I will probably lose my job!”

Jasper pushed him away impatiently. “So what? What does that have to do with me? It’s you who did all that.”

Josh continued to plead, “You can’t treat me like this. You’re the only one who can help me. Didn’t you promise that you’d give me benefits if I helped you? I’m not expecting any benefits now, but please at least help me get through this.”

Josh felt so desperate he was about to get down on his knees to beg Jasper.

But Jasper pretended to not know what he was talking about and waved him off. "I have given you money. And I haven't blamed you for not finishing the job properly. Yet you feel aggrieved?"

This rendered Josh speechless. He wiped the sweat from his forehead.

"Get out!" Jasper said, his voice raised. His patience had worn out. He picked up his phone which had started vibrating, got in the car and disappeared.

Josh just stood there, stunned.

His car had broken down, so he had to walk back.

It was a cold winter's evening and he was wearing a thin coat, but he walked slowly, his heart full of fear.