

Unconscious 321

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But he still held onto her wrist, his grip gentle yet possessive, like a child clutching their favorite toy.

Ariana couldn't help but be taken aback by the sudden change in his demeanor, wondering when he had grown to trust her so completely.

Ariana was lost in thought. Theodore's guarded and murderous gaze from a moment ago reminded her of the early days of their marriage.

She remembered the cold, indifferent look that he had given her when he had just awakened from his vegetative state, a look that was mirrored in his eyes once again.

It had been a long time since she had seen that side of him. Most of the time, his eyes sparkled with teasing humor.

Ariana knew that Theodore had a reputation for being cold and heartless, but she also knew that this was just a facade, a carefully constructed mask that he wore to keep people at a distance. In reality, his heart was soft and vulnerable, more so than anyone else's.

But one thing about him was true—he was indeed sharp-tongued.

At the thought of this, she couldn't help but let out a soft laugh, her dimples appearing as she smoothed his hair to the side.

But as she touched his forehead, she felt a sudden surge of heat emanating from his skin.

Ariana mustered her courage and placed her palm on Theodore's forehead once again. She was taken aback by the heat radiating from his skin.

"Theodore, wake up!" she exclaimed, her voice laced with anxiety. "You look like you have a fever or something. I'm taking you to the hospital right now!" She fumbled for her phone, eager to call an ambulance.

However, Theodore's grip on her wrist tightened, preventing her from dialing. His eyes were puffy and his voice was hoarse when he spoke. "No, I won't go to the hospital."

Ariana was taken aback by his refusal. She couldn't understand why he was so stubborn. "Why not?

You can't just stay here like this, Theodore. You'll only make it worse."

As she tried to call an ambulance again, Theodore snatched her phone away from her.

"I'm not going to the hospital," he insisted, his voice barely above a whisper. "I just need some rest."

Ariana had no choice but to bargain with him. "Fine, you don't have to go to the hospital. Just let go of

me and I'll get you some antipyretics."

Ariana could see the doubt in Theodore's eyes as he scrutinized her, questioning the authenticity of her words.

She bit her lip, searching for the right words to assure him. "I'll be back soon. You can trust me."

Ariana's voice was gentle and soothing as she spoke to Theodore. She leaned in closer to him and looked into his eyes, trying to convey her sincerity.

Thankfully, Theodore was not as strong as he used to be, and he released Ariana's wrist without resistance. With a look of uncertainty, he watched her leave the room with his dark eyes, only closing them once her figure had disappeared completely.

Ariana hurriedly searched for Horace's number in the telephone directory and dialed it from the landline. She explained the situation to him in detail.

Upon hearing that Theodore refused to go to the hospital, Horace let out a heavy sigh. "Mrs. Anderson, there's no need to persuade him. He hates hospitals with a passion. He had no choice but to be hospitalized when he met with the previous car accidents. But for an illness like a fever, he will opt not

to go.”

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“But he has a high fever! There will be a problem if he doesn’t seek medical attention,” Ariana

protested, her anxiety growing with each passing moment. She knew that Theodore had not fully

recovered from his last injury, and any additional health complications would only make matters worse.

Horace’s voice was laced with helplessness. “For now, we’ll have to call in a personal doctor. Please

give Mr. Anderson some antipyretics, which you’ll find in the third drawer of the left shelf in the study. If

his fever persists after an hour, do let me know immediately. I’ll arrange for a private doctor to come

over.”

“Okay, I see.”

After she hung up, Ariana quickly retrieved the medicine from the study. She returned to Theodore’s

room and stood by his bedside, watching his chest rise and fall with each breath. She couldn’t help but

feel a pang of worry as she noticed the beads of sweat forming on his forehead.

As she placed the box of medicine on the nightstand, she called out to Theodore, hoping to rouse him

from his slumber. “Theodore, wake up. It’s time to take some medicine and get better.”

As she took out a pill and prepared to feed it to him, she noticed Theodore's body tense up, as if he was bracing himself for something. She tried her best to coax him into taking the medicine, but he remained stubborn and vigilant, even in his sleep.

Ariana's frustration mounted as she struggled to get him to swallow the medicine.

The water was the biggest hurdle, and no matter how much she tried, Theodore couldn't seem to drink it down. She felt helpless and anxious, fearing for his health.

Finally, a wave of determination washed over Ariana. She couldn't stand to see Theodore suffer any longer. Taking a deep breath, she leaned in close and pressed her lips to his, hoping the water she had sipped would transfer to his mouth.

Ariana gently fed Theodore the water and slightly rubbed his throat. She felt relieved when he swallowed it.

As she tried to get up, she suddenly felt a pair of strong hands wrap around her waist, pulling her closer.

Ariana said angrily, thinking that he had woken up, "Let go of me, Theodore. I need to get a towel to clean your face."

He didn't respond. His hot and heavy breath fell on her neck.

Confused, she turned her head to look at Theodore, only to find that he was still in a deep slumber.

Ariana tried to extricate herself, but the grip was too strong.

At this moment, she heard Theodore murmuring, "Don't go. Don't leave me."

As Ariana heard Theodore's faint whisper, her heart fluttered with hope. For a moment, she allowed herself to bask in the possibility that he didn't want her to leave him.

But her optimism was short-lived as he uttered the word, "Mom."

Ariana's chest tightened as her feelings were mixed. Part of her wished that Theodore had meant her and not his mother. It turned out that the fever had muddled his mind, and he thought she was his mother.

The next second, Ariana exhaled heavily, grateful for the realization that she could eventually leave without much burden. Though it was a bittersweet realization, she knew it was for the best.

As she gazed at the frown on Theodore's sleeping face, Ariana couldn't help but feel a pang of sadness for him. She knew that he had lost his mother at a young age and the pain of that loss seemed

to linger on even now. Ariana didn't have the heart to ask for more details about it.

She had come to understand that Theodore was a fragile man, much like a child in need of comfort and reassurance. She recalled the time he had requested her to sing a lullaby to soothe him to sleep. He must have missed his mother a lot.

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Despite his tough exterior and seemingly callous demeanor, Ariana knew that Theodore was simply hiding behind a facade. His obedience to those who showed him kindness was proof of his true nature.

After a moment's hesitation, Ariana decided to lie down beside Theodore. She knew she needed to calm him down, and she was willing to do anything to make him feel better.

With a soft pat on his back, she hummed the lullaby to him. She didn't feel embarrassed this time. As the melody flowed from her lips, she felt a sense of peace come over her. She watched as Theodore's face relaxed. She could feel the tension leaving his body as he drifted off to peaceful sleep.

As she lay there, supporting her head with one hand, Ariana couldn't help but study 'Theodore's features. He was undeniably handsome, with perfectly chiseled features that made her heart skip a beat. She loved the way his eyes crinkled at the corners when he smiled, and the way his mouth

curved upward in a mischievous grin.

She had never been so drawn to a man before. It wasn't just his good looks, though; it was something deeper, something she couldn't quite put her finger on.

With a heavy heart, Ariana's fingers traced the curve of her stomach as she allowed herself to daydream about her unborn child.

She couldn't help but wonder about the tiny life that grew inside her. Would it be a boy or a girl? Would it have her fiery spirit or would it inherit Theodore's dominating nature?

A smile tugged at her lips at the thought of her baby having Theodore's striking looks. She could imagine their child with his father's chiseled jawline and those captivating eyes that held a world of mysteries. But she couldn't help but worry about their child's temperament. She couldn't bear the thought of having another scheming and sharp-tongued personality in the family.

The bittersweet reality hit her hard. The birth of their child meant that she had left this city and started anew. Her memories would remain behind as a reminiscence of the life she once had.

Ariana's heart was heavy with a sudden pang of melancholy, but she quickly shook it off. Dwelling on the future would only distract her from the task at hand.

She rose from the bed with careful, measured movements, ensuring that Theodore remained sound asleep.

As she tiptoed toward the kitchen, Ariana's mind was preoccupied with what to cook for Theodore. She decided on a light, easy-to-digest porridge, and some fresh vegetables, but the question of whether there were any fresh ingredients in the fridge lingered in her mind.

Just as she was about to leave the room, Theodore's voice broke the silence, calling out a name that Ariana didn't recognize. "Marley," he murmured, his voice barely audible.

Ariana's grip on the doorknob faltered as she hesitated before turning back to the bedside. Theodore's chest rose and fell rhythmically, his peaceful slumber undisturbed by her presence. She imagined his faint murmur, a figment of her exhausted mind.

Frowning, Ariana rubbed her temples, acknowledging the heavy weight of fatigue that had been pressing down on her for days. Her mind was playing tricks on her.

With a soft sigh, she leaned over and tucked Theodore in, ensuring that he was warm and comfortable before making her way out of the bedroom.

The kitchen greeted her with a stark reality—the fridge was practically empty. She rummaged through the meager contents, finding only a few eggs, potatoes, and some vegetables. Ariana surveyed the spotless stove.

Perhaps it was the housekeeper's tardiness or the overwhelming demands of Theodore's day that left him with no time to eat.

With a resigned sigh, she took out all the ingredients. Her mind began to race, conjuring up a recipe on the fly.

Meanwhile, in the bedroom, Theodore tossed and turned, consumed by a restless slumber. His breathing became labored as he was plagued by vivid, unsettling nightmares.

A part of him wanted to fight his way back to wakefulness, but a more profound desire for solace took over. In his dream, he found himself transported back to his childhood, cocooned in the gentle embrace of his mother's lullaby.

But soon, the comforting illusion shattered, giving way to a surreal vision of a young girl clad in white, frolicking merrily in a meadow as lush and green as emerald. She looked back at him, her infectious laughter ringing through the air.

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Theodore's dreamscape was awash with vibrant blues—the sky stretched out endlessly, while the clear waters of the lake shimmered invitingly. It was as if he had been transported back to a time before life had become so complicated and before pain and resentment had taken root in his heart.

As he trailed after the girl in white, her laughter echoing in his ears, Theodore felt a profound sense of contentment. For a moment, he forgot all his worries and surrendered himself to the simple pleasures of the present.

But beneath the surface, a gnawing emptiness persisted, a reminder of something he had lost. Still, he could not help but admire the girl's unbridled joy, and he wondered if this was what paradise looked like.

They strolled through the verdant meadow, the grass brushing against their ankles until they reached a bridge. Just as Theodore was about to follow the girl across, his heart seized with terror—the serene landscape had been transformed into a perilous trap. The girl, oblivious to the danger, continued to move forward, inching closer to the gaping chasm that now loomed behind her.

“Marley!”

Theodore's heart plummeted as he watched the girl slip over the edge of the cliff, her form shrinking into nothingness. A sickening sense of weightlessness consumed him, and he reached out frantically, desperate to save her. But his grasp met nothing but air, and he was left to witness her tragic fate.

The dream world that had once been so idyllic now fragmented into jagged shards, piercing him with a pain so intense it felt like suffocation. At last, the agony jolted him out of slumber, his body drenched in a cold sweat.

He gasped for air, his chest heaving as he tried to shake off the remnants of the nightmare. With trembling hands, he wiped his forehead, forcing himself to take deep, calming breaths.

Why did he dream of this same nightmare again? Theodore's mind searched for an answer, but it was as if his memories were shrouded in a thick fog. All he could recall was a sense of feverish delirium before everything went black.

He lifted the covers and sat up, his gaze drawn to an empty cup resting on the nightstand.

A frown etched itself onto Theodore's face as he tried to retrace the events that had led him to this moment. He had never used this cup before. So why was it here?

As he mulled over it, the sound of clang and sizzling wafted through the air, indicating that someone was in the kitchen.

A sudden intuition struck him—could it be Horace?

Theodore couldn't bear to think of what kind of disaster Horace might be causing in the kitchen. With a resigned sigh, he rubbed his temples and resolved to intervene before it was too late.

He made his way out of the bedroom, settling into his wheelchair and rolling through the brightly-lit apartment. The aroma of food wafted through the air, making his stomach grumble.

As Theodore turned the corner and entered the living room, he caught a glimpse of a lithe figure moving gracefully in the kitchen.

He could hardly believe his eyes—it was Ariana.

The mere sight of her stirred something deep within him, banishing the pain and weariness that had plagued him just moments before.

In that fleeting moment, he was struck by a powerful yearning, a desperate wish for time to come to a halt so that he could bask in the pure joy of this encounter.

Unbeknownst to Ariana, she was being observed by a pair of intense eyes. She was a blur of activity,

donning a crisp apron and wielding a knife with expert precision as she prepared a meal.

The pot beside her was a symphony of steam and savory aromas, tantalizing Theodore's senses and beckoning him closer. Just as he was about to make his presence known, Ariana turned around, and their eyes met.

"Oh, thank goodness you're up!" she exclaimed, relief washing over her features.

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She put down her tools and hurried over to him, her eyes shining with genuine concern.

She bent over him, her expression grave as she reached out to assess his condition.

Theodore felt her fingers brush against his forehead, and a shiver ran down his spine.

Her scent was intoxicating, and he found himself entranced by her every movement. For the first time, he understood the depth of her kindness and compassion, and a deep sense of contentment settled over him.

It was at that moment that he realized he would stop at nothing to keep her by his side, to cherish and protect her for all eternity.

Ariana heaved a sigh of relief after feeling Theodore's forehead and confirming his fever had subsided.

She then frowned when she noticed he was in his thin pajamas and said firmly, "Wait for me."

With that, she hurried into the cloakroom to retrieve a coat for Theodore to wear.

She helped him put it on while muttering, "It wasn't easy bringing down your temperature. Yet, you still don't try and keep yourself warmer when you get out of bed. You'll feel uncomfortable again if your temperature climbs higher."

Theodore kept quiet, but his eyes were fixed on Ariana.

She didn't notice that he had been staring at her the whole time. She pushed his wheelchair to the dining table. There were already three dishes there.

After ensuring Theodore was comfortable, Ariana walked into the kitchen and took out two more dishes before setting the table for their meal.

"There were only these in the fridge," she said casually as she set the table. She then pulled out a chair opposite him and sat down as she chided, "You're an adult, but you still can't take care of yourself. You didn't even ask others for help or go to the doctor when you're sick. And even your fridge is empty!

Besides, where are your rehabilitation equipment? I bet your legs haven't recovered because of your

stupidity.”

Ariana felt thirsty after scolding him. She picked up her glass and sipped some warm water. Suddenly,

she realized something was wrong. Why wasn't Theodore rebutting her?

In the past, he would have been sarcastic and argued with her. Did he become mute?

Ariana raised her head and met Theodore's eyes. She was caught off guard by his gaze and was

stunned.

She didn't know how long he had been looking.

Ariana flushed. She touched her cheeks subconsciously to check if there was anything on her, which

amused Theodore.

Ariana flushed a deeper red. She took a spoonful of potatoes and shoved it onto Theodore's plate. "Eat

up!" she ordered.

Theodore grinned slightly as he picked up the spoon and tasted the congee. "Not bad. Your skills are

good," he complimented her sincerely.

Ariana was a good cook. During her studies abroad, she had to cook her meals whenever she was free

as she couldn't get used to the local food.

However, she felt conscious when Theodore praised her sincerely.

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She almost buried her face in the bowl as she murmured, "You seem alien to me after having a fever."

"What do you mean?" Theodore asked as he looked at her patiently.

Ariana weighed her words and said slowly, "It's just your words seem kinder now."

As soon as she finished her sentence, she sneaked a peak at him for fear she had made him angry.

Instead, Theodore laughed. "Then you should pray that I stay sick."

Ariana blurted out, "That's not necessary. Although you are always moody, I still hope you can be

healthy and happy."

Both of them were momentarily stunned by her words. Ariana wanted to slap herself because what she

said was like a confession!

"I'm full. Eat up. Otherwise, the food will not be as good when it turns cold. I'm heading back. I need to

bring the artist to the crew at nine o'clock tomorrow morning," she said hastily, intending to flee. She

hurriedly took two bites and prepared to leave.

Theodore asked, "Nine o'clock? Why is it so late? The first shoot for a new play typically begins early,

before ten. The makeup should begin at eight o'clock. Did you get the timing right?"

"Yes, I'm sure it's nine. It's impossible for me to get it wrong," Ariana replied, with her confidence dwindling.

She was certain at first, but Theodore's words aroused her suspicion. She took out her phone and checked the message to confirm the time.

The following day in a temporary shooting studio at a film and television center...

An endless stream of staff and extras were coming and going around the set, transporting groups of costumes and props.

Some famous artists were sitting at a corner of the set, surrounded by their assistants and agents.

There were also two large machines being carried into the central control room.

Meanwhile, Francis was sitting comfortably in his seat, drinking coffee. He wore a beard, which made him look very wild. His skin was rough and tanned, and he was wearing sunglasses. He looked like a tough guy, and many didn't dare to approach him for fear of causing trouble.

However, when he talked, his voice didn't match his appearance. For instance, he was talking to Cole

in a gentle tone, “Don’t worry. Your aunt Donna has told me to take good care of you. I would do the director of the Anderson Group a favor. We will cooperate more often in the future.”

“Thank you, Mr. Salazar. It’s my first time acting, so I still have much to learn. I’m sorry if I am a bother to you,” Cole replied politely.

He played along with Francis and kept quiet about his aunt’s demotion. It was beneficial for him to be misunderstood by Francis.

Francis was satisfied with Cole’s humbleness and modesty. Everyone liked modest young people.

Besides, Cole had strong backing and might emerge as the top idol in the future. Of course, Francis had to get along well with him.

“Of course, you wouldn’t be a bother. Just ask away if you have any questions,”

Francis replied as he took off his sunglasses and smiled slyly.

“Thank you, Mr. Salazar. Anyway, I’m not the only rookie on the team. It’s also Tyler’s first time. We would both appreciate your guidance. Thank you very much, Mr. Salazar,” Cole replied, feigning humility.

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Francis knew what he was worried about and patted him on the shoulder.

He said complacently, "Don't worry. I know what to do. This rookie needs to learn his place. I'll whip him into shape if he can't play his role well. I informed his agent yesterday that we would gather at nine o'clock. But the actual timing was eight.

Also, I arranged the progress such that Tyler's scene would be shot first. Do you know why I made this arrangement?"

Cole was stunned and soon realized that Francis intended to cause trouble for Tyler!

If a rookie, who hadn't officially started his career and was merely one of the supporting actors, dared to be late for the first day's shoot and make the crew wait for him, he would definitely be taught a harsh lesson.

Cole was relieved that the director his aunt got him treated him well.

He complimented Francis, "Mr. Salazar, you are so experienced. I really admire you."

Francis smiled confidently and said, "If I claim to be the second best in training new actors, no one will dare to be the first."

With that, he glanced at his watch and said, "Look, it's already eight."

He stood up and pretended to inspect the crew. "Is everyone here? Who's the first to go? You can go get your makeup done now," he boomed authoritatively.

The crew exchanged glances, but no one said anything.

Francis had already predicted what was going on and snickered to himself. He pretended to be angry and shouted, "Who is in the first scene? Are the characters ready?"

The assistant producer glanced at the script and said weakly, "The first scene is about the character

Gifford Natt falling in love with the heroine Sheila Lowell at first sight. But the actor doesn't seem to be here yet."

"Who's the actor? Call him over right now!" Francis cried as he flew into a rage, startling all the actors and actresses present.

The assistant producer replied, "His name is Tyler Brewer, a rookie."

Francis scolded, "I knew it! Rookies these days have no respect for rules!"

When he was about to curse, a gentle female voice interrupted him, "Mr. Salazar, don't worry. We were here early this morning."

It was Ariana. She was walking calmly out of the dressing room, and her sudden appearance shocked everyone present.

Francis was stunned. He didn't expect that the arrogant new agent Donna had mentioned before was so beautiful.

He stammered in embarrassment, "You're here already? Why didn't you say so earlier?"

Ariana sneered to herself. Francis was also good at acting. If it wasn't for Theodore's reminder last night, she would have believed his lies.

She pretended as if nothing had happened and chuckled. "I received the notice that we would convene at nine. But my artist was a little nervous since it was his first time acting, so we came earlier this morning. I asked him to rest in the dressing room. We didn't expect the shoot to begin at eight."

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The man responsible for props didn't know the tension between Ariana and Francis, so he said directly,

"It's always eight. It is a rule in the industry where first-day shoots always begin early."

"Ah, I see," Ariana replied. She then shot a glance at Annie Nelson, Francis' assistant, and added, "It appears there was a misunderstanding. That's alright. Miss

Nelson is busy. It would be natural for her to make some mistakes occasionally.

Anyway, it's good that we came early. Otherwise, everyone here would think Tyler was putting on airs and didn't respect the crew."

Annie was a chubby girl with a round face. When she saw the meaningful look in Ariana's eyes, she looked away guiltily.

Francis cursed thousands of times in his heart. With so many people watching, he could only pretend to chide Annie, "Look how careless you are. Go and buy two cups of coffee as an apology now."

"Sorry, I'll get it right away," Annie apologized to Ariana and hurried off to get coffee. She didn't dare to linger around.

Ariana didn't insist on blowing up the matter. After all, it was their first day.

Francis felt a little embarrassed and urged, "Is Tyler ready? Ask him to come out and prepare for the first scene. Everyone is waiting for him."

"Doesn't he need to put on makeup? He is waiting in the dressing room. Let the makeup artist in first,"

Ariana said and felt a little annoyed by Francis' unexplainable hostility.

Francis sneered, "Are you kidding me? Don't you know the rules? He doesn't get a makeup artist. Only

the main lead does. Well, Tyler doesn't need any makeup. If he wants, you should be able to help him with some simple makeup. When the makeup is done, remember to get him to change into his costume and vacate the dressing room for the hero and heroine."

Ariana pursed her lips unhappily.

Cole snickered when he saw the two crossing fires and blurted out, "It doesn't matter if you don't know the industry's rules. What matters is that you don't know who you are. Hurry up. Many people are waiting."

Suddenly, it all made sense to Ariana. She took a long look at Cole before turning around and heading to the dressing room to call Tyler out.

When Tyler came out, everyone was stunned.

Cole was particularly dumbfounded. Was that still the poor country boy, Tyler?

At this moment, Tyler looked more like a fashion icon in designer wear. His fashionable look replaced his usual depressing form.

His hair was also cut short, revealing beautiful eyes and defined facial features. His features were what

directors adored for the screen.

Cole couldn't believe that this fashionable person in front of him was Tyler. Tyler had always worn dirty clothes and looked ugly. No one cared about his true appearance.

However, his outstanding appearance was revealed after his makeover, and Cole felt an inexplicable sense of urgency. His intuition told him that Tyler would be his strongest opponent in the future.

Tyler's appearance left Francis at a loss for words. The boy standing before him was a far cry from the image of a rough-and-tumble country bumpkin that he had been led to expect. It had to be some kind of mistake.

Frowning, Francis' eyebrows knitted together in a knot of confusion and disbelief.

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He turned to Cole, his voice barely above a whisper as he spoke. "Where did you find this guy to be the villain of this drama? It seems like he's outshining you!"

Cole was just as puzzled as Francis, his teeth grinding together in frustration.

"Maybe his agent helped him switch things up. The first time I laid eyes on him, he was a mess of long, tangled hair and grime. I never would have thought he could change so much after cutting his hair and

changing his clothes,” he muttered.

It dawned on Cole why Ariana was so insistent on signing Tyler, even after their altercation. She had a discerning eye and impeccable taste—he had to admit that much.

Cole was seething with anger, and he regretted making Tyler take this role. Now, he needed Francis to help him take Tyler down a peg or two.

With a sickeningly obsequious tone, he implored Francis to come up with a plan to put Tyler in his place. “You’re a seasoned veteran in this game, Mr. Salazar. Surely you can find a way to make him see reason. He didn’t take you seriously on the first day, and he won’t show you any respect in the future.”

Francis clicked his tongue and said, “That’s tricky.”

Francis let out a weary sigh, his eyes hidden behind a pair of sleek sunglasses. He racked his brain for a solution, his impatience growing with every passing moment.

He couldn’t terminate the contract with Tyler now. Not only would it tarnish his reputation, but it would also result in a significant financial loss. He had no choice but to grit his teeth and find another way forward.

“Where is the changing room?” Ariana’s piercing gaze fixed upon the two men, her eyes as cold as ice.

She didn’t understand Francis’ sudden hostility toward Tyler before this moment.

But now, Ariana quickly deduced that he and Cole were working together to make things difficult for

Tyler and her.

Francis cleared his throat. “Let Tyler get into makeup first,” he grumbled.

Ariana’s eyebrows shot up in surprise. “But I thought you said he didn’t need any makeup?”

Francis waved his hand dismissively, his impatience growing by the second. “Cut the crap. We’re

running out of time here. Just go ahead and get him made up already. Look at him—he’s far too fair

and handsome for the role we need him to play. The character he plays is supposed to be an arrogant,

rebellious rich kid—not some choir boy.”

Ariana wasn’t about to waste her breath arguing with Francis—she knew that he was spouting

nonsense just to cover up his guilt. Instead, she took Tyler by the hand and led him back to the

dressing room.

Francis had sent a young, inexperienced makeup girl named Kelley Lee to assist Tyler. It was clear that

she was new to the job, lacking the deftness and skill of a seasoned professional.

As Ariana watched the girl apply makeup to Tyler's face, she couldn't help but feel a pang of sympathy for him.

Francis had instructed Kelley to make Tyler look as ugly and unappealing as possible, so she had no choice but to use the most garish and vulgar shades in her makeup bag.

Kelley couldn't help but admire Tyler's striking good looks. He was exactly her type —clean-cut, handsome, and refreshingly different from the usual crop of models and actors she worked with.

Despite the director's instructions to give Tyler a rough, unappealing look, Kelley's fondness for Tyler got the better of her. She decided to go all out, creating a full makeup look that brought out Tyler's best features.

She added a touch of eyeliner to make his eyes pop, giving him an air of controlled ferocity that was perfect for the role of the rebellious rich kid.

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Kelley couldn't help but admire her own work as she put the finishing touches on Tyler's makeup. Her eyes sparkled with admiration as she asked eagerly, "Do you mind if I take a photo of you? This is the

first time I've done such a good job, and I just know you're going to be a superstar. Could I get your autograph later?"

Despite her attempts to remain calm, her eyes betrayed her emotion, sparkling vividly from awe.

Tyler was taken aback by her enthusiasm and turned to Ariana, unsure of what to do.

Ariana gave him a nod of approval. "Why not?"

"Thank you!" Kelley exclaimed, her eyes alight with excitement as she pulled out her phone to take a photo. She turned off all filters and special effects, knowing that adding any more beauty to the already-handsome Tyler would only detract from his natural charm.

Kelley was too shy to get too close to Tyler, so she snapped a group photo quickly.

Even as she fumbled with her phone, she couldn't help but notice how incredibly handsome he looked with the rough makeup.

Outside the room, the rest of the crew was equally stunned by Tyler's transformation. His features were even more striking now, and the rugged makeup gave him an air of raw, untamed power.

Francis and Cole exchanged a glance as they looked at Tyler, who had just finished putting on his makeup. They both felt displeased as they took in his ruggedly handsome appearance.

Tyler's features exuded a natural masculinity that would undoubtedly steal the show from the leading actor. Francis shot a frustrated look at Cole. "What are you going to do about it? He's upstaging you, and he's not even the lead!"

Cole's expression darkened as he contemplated Tyler's appearance for a moment.

He eventually came to a decision. "That's the problem. The hairstyle suits him too well. It perfectly accentuates his features."

With a smirk on his face, Cole was convinced that shaving Tyler's head would be the best solution for the role.

Approaching Tyler with an air of superiority, he said, "Hey, you need to change your hairstyle."

Tyler glanced at him with a cold expression and didn't bother to respond, much to Cole's frustration.

"Hey, I'm talking to you! Can't you hear me?" Cole raised his voice, drawing attention from the others in the studio. He then lowered his voice and continued, "Your hairstyle doesn't match the character's aura of arrogance and nefariousness.

You need to ask your stylist to modify it as soon as possible. A brush-cut hairstyle would be more

suitable.”

Kelley, who was carrying the cosmetics case, overheard Cole’s comments and spoke up awkwardly. “I

think the hairstyle is fine. After all, we’re not portraying police or gangsters. A brush-cut hairstyle

wouldn’t be appropriate.”

Cole sneered at Kelley’s lack of experience. “Who do you think you are to judge in front of us? Will you

take responsibility if the result isn’t what we expected?”

Kelley was seething with anger and indignation at Cole’s remarks, but she was too afraid to speak up

against him.

Tyler’s expression darkened as he was about to speak up for her, but Cole beat him to it.

“since no one here can style your hair properly, let my stylist take care of it,” Cole said with a wave of

his hand toward a tall, thin woman in the corner.