

Unconscious 561

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At dusk, Ariana received an unexpected call from a worried Francis. "Ariana, is Tyler's schedule full recently?" he asked anxiously through the phone.

"What's wrong?" Ariana hesitated for a moment as she checked Tyler's schedule.

Francis explained, "Following the airing of The Sky with Romance, fans of the series are all convinced that the male lead and the male supporting role are a perfect match. Due to pressure from fans of the show, the team decided to change the ending and add more scenes for Tyler. The story will be adjusted to one with dual male protagonists. If Tyler is free, we hope he will join the crew the day after tomorrow."

Ariana was shocked. "How could there be dual male protagonists? And they are a couple? Mr. Salazar, are you sure about that? Even if fans do not like the male and female protagonists as a couple, they should prefer the female protagonist and the male supporting role instead. Anyway, Tyler already has something to do the day after tomorrow!"

In the past few days, Ariana found herself preoccupied with thoughts about Theodore, while Tyler dedicated his time to honing his acting skills under Jayson's guidance. Consequently, Ariana's attention towards current trends waned.

Had it not been for Franc!

Upon ending the call, Ariana logged into the most popular social media platform to catch up on the latest hot topics. It was then that she discovered a variety show featuring both Tyler and Cole had gained significant popularity. information, Ariana would have remained oblivious.

At the bottom of the list, she noticed several hot topics that had been trending a few days ago, but were now starting to fade. These included discussions about the C&T shipping, Cole's eyes, and other related subjects. The number of comments on these topics had already reached the hundred thousand mark.

Intrigued, Ariana clicked on one of the topics and found an abundance of fan-made pictures showcasing Tyler and Cole. Most of these images consisted of screenshots from the variety show, while some depicted their interactions during the promotion of “The Sky with Romance.”

All these pictures were adorned with pink bubbles, and as Ariana browsed through them, a look of astonishment appeared on her face.

So, the fans were shipping Cole and Tyler?

Since their first encounter, Cole and Tyler had shared a strained relationship. Yet, many fans seemed to find their interactions endearing!

Ariana couldn't help but suppress her laughter and silently scoff at the absurdity of it all. Numerous fans even claimed that when Cole looked at Tyler, his eyes radiated love.

This particular comment only fueled Ariana's disbelief. There was no love whatsoever. This fan must be blind. Cole considered Tyler nothing more than an enemy, and his eyes unmistakably reflected nothing but hatred.

The fans of Cole and Tyler were on the verge of madness as they continued to ship their idols. Some individuals even took it upon themselves to meticulously edit scenes from their match and interactions during various activities. Each of their glances and expressions became subject to excessive analysis.

To make matters more ludicrous, an increasing number of netizens began speculating whether Cole and Tyler were secretly in a romantic relationship.

“They are undoubtedly in a relationship. I happen to be part of the production team for ‘The Sky with Romance,’ and I was fortunate enough to witness Cole secretly sharing snacks and food with Tyler,” claimed one netizen.

Rumor! It was absolutely a rumor! Ariana seethed with anger. She swiftly reported the comment. At least Cole had the sense not to ask someone else to steal Tyler's lunch. As for the alleged fact that Cole shared his food with Tyler, come on, that was complete nonsense.

“Really? Help! Cole is so considerate! He is so sweet.”

Ariana scowled at the comment. What the hell? Cole was incredibly overconfident, dependent, and foolish. These delusional fans were too blinded to see the truth. She couldn’t help but comment, “Impossible.”

The popularity of various posts had far surpassed that of the TV shows and the variety show themselves.

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Ariana felt a strange sense of unease. At first glance, it seemed that Tyler was gaining more popularity. All the statistics were rising, and his fanbase was steadily increasing.

However, Ariana couldn’t shake the feeling that this wasn’t beneficial for long-term growth. She distinctly remembered checking the content before the show aired, and there was nothing amiss.

During the show, the interactions between Tyler and Cole were ordinary, and the host focused more on the relationship between the two protagonists, Selene and Cole. How could the fans suddenly ship Tyler and Cole like this?

Regardless, Ariana had no intention of joining them. She sincerely hoped that Cole would keep his distance from Tyler. She quickly located the main part of the variety show to watch, determined to uncover the problem.

As she watched, it became apparent that post-production had been tampered with in the official broadcast. The subtitle special effects and frequent close-ups of their eyes exaggerated the indescribable atmosphere between Tyler and Cole. Anyone who enjoyed shipping could easily detect something suspicious between them.

The same was true for their other interviews and joint activities. Whenever Cole answered a question, he deliberately mentioned Tyler and cast knowing glances at him. It was evident that Cole was riding on Tyler’s coattails.

Ariana was furious. Cole, this shameless fool! It was utterly revolting how he paired himself with Tyler for the sake of fame. In a fit of anger, Ariana created five additional accounts and engaged in arguments with those shippers.

Regrettably, she was vastly outnumbered and quickly overrun. As her inbox flooded with unread messages, Ariana logged off, somewhat intimidated.

Those shippers were indeed crazy. No amount of frantic clarifications on her part swayed them. Instead, they rose in numbers to argue and even berate her.

Once her anger subsided, Ariana reached out to Tyler to hear his thoughts on the issue.

Tyler remained silent for a while, seeming to struggle with his words, before finally muttering, “Actually, | had a feeling this was happening... And it just leaves me... disgusted...”

Poor Tyler! Ariana could comprehend how he felt. Tyler had no romantic interest in boys, yet he was subjected to Cole’s “loving” stares continually.

“| suspect this is a plot by Cole’s team to latch onto your fame.” Ariana wasn’t bragging. Cole’s popularity was a pale shadow

compared to Tyler’s. The Sky with Romance only garnered attention because of Tyler’s established fame.

“But they did it without leaving any trace. | can’t afford to lose my cool over a few seemingly affectionate words and gestures deliberately framed as intimate before the cameras,” Tyler said in a low and depressed tone, as if he would shed tears at any moment. “I did my best to avoid it, but the fans grew even more excited, and even...”

“Even what?” Ariana clenched her teeth, finding it hard to suppress her anger. “They even wrote boys’ love stories about Cole and me.”

Tyler’s voice had dropped to a whisper, but Ariana caught every word. She sighed, preparing to respond, but Tyler cut her off, “Ariana, don’t read those stories. They’ll taint your eyes.”

"I know, I know. I won't read them." As she tried to soothe Tyler, curiosity got the better of Ariana. She looked up these stories and read a few lines before quickly shutting it. Good heavens... The opening "Ariana, are you feeling alright? You don't seem yourself," Tyler, picking up on the sound of her retching, asked with concern.

"I'm fine. I just overate at lunch and... I'm pregnant." Ariana massaged her forehead, steering the conversation back on track. She voiced her apology, "I'm sorry, Tyler. I overlooked the online trends recently and didn't catch this sooner. But you..."

Chapter: 563 She hesitated for a moment, "Are... are you absolutely certain you're into girls?"

"Of course!" Tyler sounded a touch defensive. "I'm one hundred percent sure I'm attracted to girls. Plus, Cole doesn't like boys either. He tried to date Selene before.

It's just him messing around, which is seriously annoying."

"That's a relief. Anyway, all those things on the Internet are fake. Don't pay attention to them. Now, the most important thing is to focus on your movie and prepare for the shooting. I'll take care of everything else." Ariana felt a sense of relief as she heard his words.

Having reassured Tyler, she hung up the call and called Francis next.

"Mr. Salazar, after giving it some thought, we've decided not to accept the last-minute change to the ending. As per our contract, Tyler will allot three days to film the original script and won't partake in any additional arrangements."

Ariana didn't beat around the bush. She trusted that Francis would grasp her intentions.

Sure enough, Francis got anxious. "Ariana, would you reconsider? The pairing of Tyler and Cole is creating quite a buzz. If we change the ending to accommodate their pairing, it will undoubtedly attract a huge fanbase."

“Mr. Salazar, Tyler is not interested in being part of a coupling. He is solely focused on his acting career.” Ariana’s resolve was unshakeable. If Tyler’s fame hinged solely on a pairing with Cole, it would be a disaster. She wouldn’t permit Cole to leverage this for his own popularity.

“Alright. Please inform Tyler to prepare for the final scenes in the coming days.” Francis had no choice but to back down due to the contractual obligations and Ariana’s influential background.

Although he didn’t say anything harsh, he harbored a sense of grudge. It was clear Ariana had foiled his chances of making more profit. Even after disconnecting the call, he was still upset.

“I did tell you she wouldn’t agree.” Jasper, comfortably sitting in a leather armchair, sounded overly confident. “Maybe it’s time you gave my proposal a thought, Mr. Salazar?”

Ariana spent the entire afternoon browsing the Internet, attempting to clarify that Tyler wasn’t interested in boys and that his relationship with Cole was solely professional. However, she was overwhelmed by the persistent shippers.

Shortly after, Betsy also joined the online fray. The two of them even established a separate fan group solely for Tyler, already boasting twenty members.

Their numbers may have been small, but each had multiple alternate accounts —

Betsy alone had over ten. Meaning, they had over a hundred accounts collectively, and they stood their ground fiercely against the shipper onslaught.

By evening, however, all their accounts were flagged for disrupting the online community.

Biting the bread angrily, Ariana cursed in her heart and shut down the computer.

“Ariana, it’s useless. We’ll have to escalate this to the company.” Betsy’s face turned red as she passionately declared with a decorative sign on her forehead that read “Win for sure”. It was clear that she was still caught up in her emotions and hadn’t yet calmed down enough to argue rationally.

"I've forwarded the request to our public relations team, but it's yet to get a nod."

Removing a similar bandana from her forehead, Ariana rose from her chair, her legs protesting from the prolonged sitting. "Enough for today. We'll revisit this tomorrow."

Chapter: 564 Time to call it a day."

When Ariana returned home, she was determined to take good care of her baby. She immediately ordered a delicious and nutritious meal. Just as she was about to indulge in it, she received a phone call from a fancy restaurant, reminding her not to forget her reservation for tomorrow night.

Caught off guard, Ariana inquired, bewildered, "What reservation?" "You and Mr. Anderson have a table reserved at our establishment tomorrow evening," the attendant replied courteously.

Suddenly, it dawned on Ariana that tomorrow was her birthday. Memories of the last camp trip flooded her mind, when Theodore had promised to make her birthday unforgettable with special arrangements.

"My apologies, but I don't think we'll be dining there tomorrow. Can I cancel the reservation?" Ariana asked, her smile tinged with bitterness.

The waiter seemed taken aback for a moment before responding, "Miss, I just confirmed with Mr. Anderson, and he didn't express any intention of canceling the reservation."

Ariana was puzzled by Theodore's gesture. They had been distant lately, so she couldn't comprehend why he wanted to celebrate her birthday.

"Whatever. I don't want to keep him waiting. Let him know that I won't be coming." After saying that, she hung up the phone. Her mood, which had finally turned better, became bad again.

Staring at the tempting dishes on the table, she couldn't find the appetite to eat. She continuously scrolled through her phone screen, anxiously waiting for Theodore's call, but it never came. She had half-expected him to question her refusal, providing an opportunity to either engage in a verbal duel or find a resolution through a heart-to-heart conversation.

But there was nothing — not even a text. Tears welled up in Ariana's eyes. Falling for him was proving to be a torment.

With tears streaming down her cheeks, she forced herself to eat the meal, reminding herself that she couldn't let her unborn child go hungry. She was determined to bring the child into the world, even if its father didn't share her enthusiasm. She could always make a fresh start with her child.

Not until midnight did Ariana receive a message from Theodore, a simple birthday greeting without any additional words, as if nothing had occurred between them.

It felt like a punch in the air, with Ariana being the only one upset while Theodore didn't seem to take it to heart at all.

Feeling dejected, Ariana ignored Theodore's message but responded to her other friends' texts.

After responding to each message, she went back to the chat with Theodore, but there were still no new messages. She couldn't believe he had gone to bed so early.

Maybe he was still working. Huh, it seemed like his work was more important than her!

In a fit of anger, she found herself furiously tapping on her screen. Eventually, she fired off an irate message, "Don't you have anything else to say to me?"

Ariana had waited so long that she began to believe Theodore had fallen asleep.

Finally, his indifferent reply came, "It's late now. You should go to sleep. Don't stay up late."

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Anger surged through Ariana, quickening her heartbeat. She sat upright on the sofa and knocked forcefully on the wall twice, but received no response.

She read Theodore's last message repeatedly, sinking deeper into a state of depression and anger. Tears streamed down her face once again.

Ever since she had been with Theodore, Ariana suspected she suffered from tear-incontinence. Anything related to Theodore would unleash an uncontrollable wave of emotions within her, rendering her delicate. Both joy and sorrow became magnified with ease.

Sobbing, she typed out her frustrations, "If you don't want to explain, then let's end it"

She typed it, and then deleted it, repeating the process over and over. Each variation of the words carried the same meaning, yet she hesitated to send the message. Fear gripped her, fearing that if it were to be sent, their relationship would truly come to an end.

In the end, Ariana painstakingly deleted each word in the input box, one by one. She had never felt so humble before. The other party didn't take her seriously, but she still cherished this relationship. Ariana finally grasped the irrationality that love instilled in people.

She vigorously wiped away the tears on her face, angrily tossing her phone aside before retiring to bed. As usual, she took her medicine to protect the baby before settling down.

On the other side of the wall, Theodore gazed at the top of the chat box. It displayed that the other party had been typing for quite some time. Eventually, the chat box fell silent, and the other party ceased to respond.

He took a drag from the cigarette, flicked the lighter twice, and brought the flame to the tip, casting a flicker of light upon his fingertips. The smoke curled and veiled his face, leaving only the faint glow of the cigarette in the surrounding darkness.

As the cigarette burned down to its end, the room plunged back into complete obscurity. Theodore remained motionless in his chair, his mind consumed by a sense of stillness. Retrieving the last cigarette from its case, he lit it with a steady hand, seeking solace in the grip of nicotine. Only this could provide respite, paralyzing his frayed nerves.

Amidst the faint glow, he exhaled the smoke with an indifferent expression, resembling an emotionless sculpture. It was as if his soul had long abandoned his body, leaving behind only raw instinct.

Before long, the final cigarette waned and died out. Theodore silently surveyed the enveloping darkness, finding himself caught in another illusion. A girl in a white dress materialized before him, emerging from thin air. Her figure grew increasingly distinct, as if she truly stood before him.

"Marley..." Theodore's voice emerged low and hoarse, beckoning the white-clad girl.

She tilted her head and smiled, but her countenance soon turned ferocious.

"Theodore, you don't deserve happiness. Those who love you will inevitably depart from your side."

"She said she would stay with me forever," Theodore countered. His hands clenched tightly upon his thigh, battling against the surging desire for destruction that he had long suppressed. The prospect of a life without Ariana seemed unimaginable, threatening to tip him into the depths of madness.

Yet, Marley persisted, her words dripping with cruelty. "That's a lie. Sooner or later, she will abandon you. No one can endure your presence. You are a devil! No one loves you. Can't you see the pain you inflict upon her? One day, she will leave you!"

This time, Theodore chose silence. Slowly, he rose from the wheelchair and made his way, one deliberate step at a time, towards the head of the bed. Marley trailed behind him, speaking resentfully. "You should have died in that car accident. Why are you still alive? Everyone who crosses your path deserves death. You fall in love with her, but she too shall meet a wretched demise!"

Theodore paid no heed to her venomous words, refusing to turn back. With trembling hands, he retrieved a bottle of medicine from the bedside table, withdrew two pills, and swallowed them without hesitation.

The world around Theodore suddenly hushed, and the illusory figure dissipated. He sat on the edge of the bed, his forehead cradled in his hand, his eyes closed. His hands continued to tremble, a result of the overwhelming desire to destroy that emanated from the depths of his heart, mingled with uncontrollable excitement.

Chapter: 566 As the drug took effect, the fierce intensity in his eyes gradually waned, and he regained his composure.

Theodore glanced at the time; it was already two o'clock in the morning. He presumed Ariana must have retired to bed by this hour.

Without hesitation, Theodore rose from the bed and made his way to the adjacent room. He pressed the password into the keypad, and the door unlocked.

The room remained silent, as if she was sound asleep.

With expert ease, Theodore entered the bedroom. Ariana lay asleep in a disheveled posture. Her face was flushed, and the quilt was discarded on the floor.

He lifted the quilt and carefully tucked her in. Seated on the edge of the bed, he gazed at her in tranquil silence for an extended period, and then tenderly kissed her lips.

'As dawn approached, Theodore prepared to depart. Before leaving, he noticed a medicine bottle on the nightstand. Curiosity compelled him to examine it further.

Upon inspection, he discovered it contained vitamins.

He recalled seeing this bottle when she returned from the hospital after her physical examination. Had she been taking them for so long?

Apparently, it was a different bottle this time.

Theodore meticulously perused the medicine information imprinted on the bottle, but found nothing amiss. Indeed, it was simply a vitamin supplement. Satisfied, he returned the bottle to its place, stood up, and departed.

However, when he reached the door, he hesitated and retraced his steps. Extracting two pills from the bottle, he secreted them in his pocket.

A resounding clap of thunder reverberated through the spring sky. The wind billowed the curtains, creating a rustling noise. Ariana stirred from her slumber, her eyes fluttering open.

She rubbed her nose and detected a familiar smoky scent, still in a daze. Shaking her head, she concluded that she hadn't fully awakened from her sleep and promptly dozed off once again.

The following morning, Ariana accompanied Betsy to the airport to greet Sarah.

Betsy was brimming with excitement, eagerly anticipating the reunion with her long-lost friend. Her enthusiasm surpassed that of everyone else.

At approximately nine o'clock, they caught sight of a familiar figure emerging from the exit. Sarah appeared with a large suitcase, donning a denim dress, a mask, sunglasses, and a hat.

Betsy rushed forward and enveloped her in a tight embrace, exclaiming loudly how much she had missed Sarah. She was shorter than Sarah. Sarah held Betsy in her arms and spun her around.

Considering Ariana's pregnancy, Sarah refrained from repeating the gesture with her. She removed her mask and planted a kiss on Ariana's cheek, leaving behind the imprints of her red lipstick.

Consequently, two crimson marks were left on each of Ariana's cheeks. Ariana had no choice but to put her mask back on.

"What's inside are all gifts for you," Sarah generously stated, patting the enormous twenty-eight-inch suitcase.

Chapter: 567 Betsy expressed surprise, asking, "Sarah, where is your personal luggage?"

“Don't worry. I sent it back by post,” Sarah reassured her. She gently caressed Betsy's plump face and lovingly remarked, “Betsy, why do you keep getting cuter?”

Betsy couldn't escape Sarah's grasp. Her face crinkled and contorted as she struggled to speak. “Sarah, are you implying that I've gained weight?”

“Not at all. You're adorable. Girls are lovelier when they have a little chubbiness,” Sarah responded with a mischievous smile.

Observing their playful interaction from the side, Ariana also chuckled and felt a sense of relief. Judging by Sarah's demeanor, it appeared she had been enjoying herself lately.

Ariana contemplated separating the two, but her attention was momentarily diverted by a hickey on Sarah's neck, concealed beneath her hair. She was taken aback and exclaimed, “Sarah... Your neck...”

Sarah couldn't bear Ariana's gaze because she didn't have a clear conscience. She pulled up her collar and said nervously, “I was bitten by mosquitoes...”

Her voice was so low that Ariana had a hard time hearing what she was saying. As a woman with a husband and a close friend who liked to share porn novels, Ariana had quickly seen through Sarah's lie. Her story of having been bitten by mosquitoes was bullshit.

Ariana was alarmed. For an artist, having a secret date could have a major impact on their career. When Ariana was about to further question Sarah, a fan recognized Sarah and excitedly came to ask for her autograph.

Sarah gave Ariana a look that needed no explanation to be understood. Then, Sarah cleared her throat and turned her full attention to the fan, signing autographs as if nothing had happened.

Sarah's schedule was no secret. Many fans in the airport area had found out about her flight, so they came to wait for her at the airport. As more and more fans arrived, there was a real traffic jam at the airport. To avoid any inconvenience, security quickly evacuated Ariana, Sarah and Betsy through the VIP passage.

The company had sent a car to pick up Sarah at the airport. When the three women exited the airport, they were amazed to find that the car was already surrounded by fans.

“What should I do? Fans are so crazy.” Betsy was helpless and she tightly held on to her luggage for fear of having it stolen.

Sarah pushed her sunglasses to the bridge of her nose and said calmly, “Betsy, put your luggage in the car first. Ariana and I are going to carry out plan B.”

“Got it!” Betsy made a military salute and did as Sarah said. “Hey, what’s this plan B you are talking about? And how come I don’t know about it?” Ariana was confused. But before she could

ask more, Sarah had already taken her away.

The two women walked around the main entrance to the airport and came to a hidden path on the other side. At the crossroads, there was a familiar off-road vehicle parked. It was Aziel’s car and Alina was sitting in the back seat. As soon as Alina saw Sarah and Ariana, she greeted them with the toy in her hand.

“Aziel, aren’t you supposed to be in Ivebridge?” Ariana asked in surprise to the man sitting in the driver seat.

Aziel coughed a few times while stealing a glance at Sarah. Then, he answered Ariana’s question. “I happen to be on a business trip to Eleymond.”

Ariana didn’t notice that Aziel was glancing at Sarah and she thanked him sincerely, “Thank you for helping us out today. You don’t come to Eleymond a lot by the way.”

Chapter: 568 “Yeah! You don’t have to thank me. It’s my pleasure,” Aziel replied with a sincere smile.

Ariana felt even more embarrassed. Aziel was really a kind person and he was a loyal fan of Sarah. He always helped her without ulterior motives.

“Ariana, let’s get in the car and leave the airport first,” Sarah suddenly said with a gleam in her eyes. Without waiting for Ariana’s response, Sarah quickly got in the car and sat on the back seat. Ariana joined her in the car.

It had been a while since Sarah and Alina had seen each other and they had the chance to reunite today. They had been chatting a lot in the car. Ariana was still curious about the hickey on Sarah's neck, but since they were not alone in the car, she had to hold back her questions.

After a while in the car, Ariana felt something was wrong. Alina was naturally distant towards people. Although Alina didn’t openly push her away, Ariana could tell that Alina was just being polite to her.

However, Alina seemed very close with Aziel. For example, at one point during the ride, Alina blurted out, “Lollipop.” Before Ariana could answer, Aziel took a lollipop out of the armrest and gave it to Alina.

Alina took it and thanked Aziel.

Ariana nudged Sarah and asked in surprise, “Since when did Alina get so close to Aziel?”

Sarah smiled awkwardly, “Before when I was too busy with my work, I often asked Aziel to take care of Alina.”

“You know it’s not good to bother strangers all the time...”

Ariana said in a low voice. Before she could finish her words, she was suddenly interrupted by Alina. Alina said in a clear voice, “Uncle Aziel is not a stranger.”

Ariana paused and looked at Alina with her eyes narrowed.

Without looking up, Alina pinched the toy and suddenly added, “Mommy said that.”

The entire car fell into silence.

It was not until then that Ariana noticed that Aziel's collar was pulled up as if to cover something. She suddenly thought of the red hickey on Sarah's neck and looked at Sarah with wide open eyes. "You..."

Sarah put her hands together and said earnestly, "I'm sorry. We're together!"

Shortly after, they arrived at Sarah's new residence. After the unsettling incident with Alina, Sarah had made the decision to move to a secluded and upscale community to seek refuge from the prying eyes of the media, a place where the relentless harassment of the paparazzi would hopefully be kept at bay. The dwelling she now called home was a charming two-story duplex, boasting a cozy and minimalist interior design.

Aziel took Alina to the bedroom while Ariana settled herself on the sofa opposite Sarah, wearing a serious expression. "Tell me, when did it all begin?"

Sarah, overcome with guilt and a tinge of shyness, hesitated before responding, "It all started during the time when I received the performance notice. I found myself confined to my home, grappling with a desperate search for creative inspiration.

Alina's constant presence by my side made it challenging for me to find peace and focus on my work. I was feeling frustrated, desperate even."

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She paused, her voice faltering as she recounted the events. "One day, when I took Alina out for a bit of fun, I happened upon Aziel. There was something about him, something remarkable for someone so young. He possessed an uncommon patience, especially when it came to caring for children. Alina took an immediate liking to him."

Coincidences like these didn't simply materialize. Ariana thought to herself with skepticism. Aziel resided in Ilvebridge, while Sarah resided in Eleymond. They were separated by thousands of miles, yet they claimed it was a chance encounter? Even in novels, things were not so melodramatic. Ariana's thoughts were all over the place.

Observing the blissful yet bashful smile on Sarah's face, it became apparent to Ariana that her friend was undeniably smitten and entangled in the throes of love, unable to extricate herself.

Choosing her words with caution, Ariana asked, "Tell me, Sarah, is your fondness for Aziel solely based on Alina's affection for him?"

Sarah blushed, her cheeks reddening as she hastily responded, "Of course not. Alina may have brought us together, but there are many reasons why | appreciate Aziel.

He has been there for me during my time on the show, offering a helping hand when | needed it the most..."

As Sarah continued to speak, her embarrassment became more palpable, prompting her to cough in an attempt to conceal her unease. "In essence, it is not solely because of Alina's fondness for him. There are countless qualities in Aziel that | admire. He has proven to be an invaluable source of support throughout my journey..."

Hearing Sarah's heartfelt praise of Aziel, Ariana couldn't deny the truth any longer —her friend had fallen in love once again.

Sarah, in every aspect, was a good-hearted and virtuous young woman. However, the fact that she had become entangled in the complexities of romantic love caused Ariana both a headache and a sense of helplessness.

It wasn't that Aziel was lacking in any way. On the contrary, he was an exceptional man. Handsome, talented, and a loyal fan of Sarah's for many years.

But their relationship had progressed at an astonishing pace, leaving Ariana filled with trepidation.

For love to endure, it required more than just initial fiery passion. Ariana feared that once the flames of ardor subsided and both parties regained their rationality, only a mess would remain. She dreaded the thought of two more hearts left broken in this world. Sarah, in particular, possessed the soul of an artist. Every dispute between the two of them had the potential to inflict irreparable damage upon her hard-won career. @

Ariana shifted her gaze toward the bedroom, her voice barely above a whisper as she inquired, "Are you merely toying with Aziel or are you genuinely contemplating marriage?"

A hint of embarrassment tinged Sarah's countenance as she replied, "I have genuine feelings for him. However, my heart longs solely for the intoxication of love, without the binding chains of marriage. Having endured a failed union in the past, the very thought of marriage fills me with fear. If two people truly love each other, why must two souls be shackled by the confines of marriage? Setting aside societal norms, isn't it possible for them to be together, unbound by such conventions?" @

"Yes, you are right, Yet, in the eyes of many, the pinnacle of love finds its culmination in the sacred union of marriage. It serves as a testament to the depth of their connection, a tangible proof of their devotion." With utmost sincerity, Ariana pressed further, her curiosity shining through. "And does Aziel comprehend your longing for love without the confinements of marriage?" Sarah's countenance gradually darkened, revealing that they had yet to delve into this aspect of their relationship. Indeed, during the enchanting honeymoon phase, couples often overlooked the future and focused solely on the blissful moments of the present.

"I can understand that." Suddenly, Aziel's voice emanated from behind, causing Ariana to startle. She swiftly turned around, finding him standing in the living room, unaware of when he had entered or how much of their conversation he had overheard.

Aziel hurriedly approached Sarah, taking her hand and gazing at her with seriousness. "I always understand your fears and respect your thoughts. I don't care if we get married or not. It's your happiness that truly matters. As long as I can be by your side, I'll be completely content."

"Aziel," Sarah's eyes welled up with tears as she was deeply moved by his words.

Although she had been in several long-term relationships before, her heart still fluttered whenever she was with Aziel. She hadn't felt such genuine happiness in a long time.

Ariana was at a loss for words. She felt like the meddling mother-in-law who might be pushing them towards a breakup.

“Don’t worry, Ariana. I’ll maintain a low profile in our relationship. I won’t interfere with Sarah’s career or cause her any trouble. I’ll provide her with full support and protection. My biggest wish is for Sarah to live a joyful life. Being with her is the greatest blessing in mine,” Aziel reassured in a resolute tone, as if making a sacred vow.

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Ariana pressed her lips together, feeling slightly embarrassed. Aziel’s sincere “vow” that he had just proclaimed made her feel like she should grab a Bible and announce their wedding right then and there.

“I’m not doubting your relationship. It’s just hard for me to grasp,” Ariana admitted.

Comparing their relationship to her own with Theodore, it seemed like they were playing house while Sarah and Aziel had already built a strong bond in such a short time.

“You can’t fight destiny,” Sarah sighed.

“If, in the future, Sarah and I were to break up, I promise it would be amicable and without any complications. If you don’t trust me, I’m willing to sign an agreement. I hope you can accept our relationship,” Aziel expressed, hoping for Ariana’s approval.

The more Ariana heard, the more shocked she became. Wasn’t this akin to his agreeing to be Sarah’s clandestine paramour? Aziel’s anxious expression made it clear that he feared her disapproval.

Ariana had been deeply concerned about this relationship from the beginning.

Firstly, the significant age and experience gap between the two worried her. She feared that Sarah would have to constantly reassure her younger boyfriend during her hectic work schedule. After all, Sarah already had the responsibility of caring for Alina, and adding another person to the mix would only drain her further.

The second reason for her worry stemmed from Sarah’s tendency to become infatuated with men easily, based on her past experiences.

Being a famous and captivating singer, she was vulnerable to the allure of deceitful men. But now, it seemed that Sarah had found someone who was more interested in genuine connections than shallow encounters.

Could two people like them truly have a happy ending? Perhaps. After all, when it comes to matters of the heart, lovers always believe their partner is the best.

On second thought, their relationship didn't seem like such a bad thing. Aziel was widely regarded as a young man of high quality—patient, gentle with Alina, and always putting Sarah first. Apart from love, Ariana couldn't think of any ulterior motives Aziel might have.

Furthermore, their relationship had received a stamp of approval from their fans, who eagerly wished to see them as a genuine couple.

Considering all these factors, Ariana no longer objected. She responded in a serious tone, "Alright, but if you two ever decide to make your relationship public, please inform me in advance so that I can handle the necessary damage controls."

Both Aziel and Sarah breathed a collective sigh of relief.

"Am I really that intimidating? I'm just an agent. Even if I don't agree, I can't force you two to break up, can I?" Ariana said, a smile playing on her lips.

"Nah, it's not like that. Sarah values your opinion a lot," Aziel replied. "If you don't agree, she'll end things with me," he added, his head shaking earnestly, yet a soft smile still lingering on his face.

Astunned silence hung in the air. Ariana glanced at Sarah, who mirrored the same surprise on her face. Sarah's heart throbbed with a momentary ache. She hadn't anticipated that Aziel would understand her so deeply. In this very moment, Ariana held a special place in Sarah's heart.

Yet, hearing Aziel speak the truth was difficult for her to accept. It felt like a tightness constricting her chest.

Before Sarah could utter a word, Aziel quietly walked away. It was a gesture both dignified and considerate toward Sarah. Even Ariana, an outsider, found herself speechless in the wake of his thoughtful departure.

The atmosphere grew heavy, and Sarah sank into the sofa, her spirits dampened.

She observed Aziel bustling around the room, tidying up with purpose.