

## Unconscious 601

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This time, Sarah planned to release eleven songs. Five of them would feature collaborations with renowned musicians, while the remainder would be self-composed. Sarah had already crafted four demos that required some fine-tuning.

Amused by what she heard, Ariana playfully teased, "Is this the enchantment of love? Your new songs all seem to revolve around matters of the heart. It appears you're quite content with your boyfriend."

The melodies resonated with a tender and affectionate spirit. Sarah blushed and swiftly changed the subject. "By the way, I haven't seen Tyler since I returned. I noticed his name trending for several days prior. He's truly remarkable and has the potential to become the most sought-after star in the future."

Both Sarah and Tyler were Ariana's artists.

Consulting her watch, Ariana shared, "He's currently filming the final scenes of a TV series. It should wrap up today. After that, he'll go straight to the set to shoot a movie. Tomorrow he has to attend a promotional event with the crew of *The Sky with Romance*."

She let out a wistful sigh. "Originally, I was supposed to accompany him, but due to my injured ankle, he'll have to face the crew's challenging dynamics alone. I'm worried about him."

Sarah got to know more about Tyler from Betsy. She knew that Francis and Cole were notorious for making Tyler's life challenging. Nevertheless, the entertainment industry was teeming with a diverse array of individuals. Tyler had to navigate through these trials and learn to stand on his own swiftly.

"Don't fret," Sarah assured her. "I happen to know someone within that crew. I'll keep a watchful eye on Tyler on your behalf." After comforting Ariana, Sarah urged her to go to bed.

Alone in the guest room, Ariana found herself perched on the edge of the bed.

Amidst the calming ambiance, her mind was thrown into disarray once more.

Theodore lingered persistently in her thoughts, refusing to be dismissed.

At this very moment, Theodore might have already discovered her departure from the hospital. Ariana couldn't fathom how he would react to such news.

Unknown to Ariana, Theodore sat within the apartment she had rented, lost in contemplation as his eyes roamed the familiar surroundings.

Theodore wheeled himself through the apartment, careful not to knock anything over with his wheelchair. His arms flexed from the strenuous movement.

Ariana's scent still lingered heavily in the air. Theodore took a deep breath of her scent as he stared at the wardrobe, dresser, and shelf that were now cleared of her belongings.

However, the evidence of her presence was still littered all over the room in the form of half-drunk water cups, haphazardly strewn slippers, and her toothbrush.

Theodore often stayed here because there was no denying their love for each other.

His stuff gradually became more and more present in her life and there was even a space reserved specially for him in her wardrobe. However, now there was a blank space where her beautiful dresses used to hang next to his suits and shirts.

'The room looked and felt so empty as Theodore took it all in. Even the flowers on the balcony hung listlessly from their stems, as if they felt the same emptiness he did.

Theodore gently picked up the clay figurine that sat on the table. He sighed as he flipped the figurine around in his hands. There was originally a partner figurine that paired with this one, but Ariana took hers with her. There only remained the singular, lonely one now.

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The clay figurines were made by Ariana after they admitted their mutual love for each other. She said they were the best she had ever made.

She had modeled her own figurine after herself, and it showed, because it looked exactly like her. Theodore's clay figurine was dressed in a suit, with a round face and pink cheeks. It looked very different from Theodore, but Ariana claimed that it looked like him.

Theodore involuntarily smiled bitterly at the fond memory. He gently touched the clay figurine's face and whispered, "You were abandoned."

Horace stood behind Theodore in stony silence with a deep frown engraved on his face. He watched how deeply Theodore stared at the clay figurine and his gut pinched in sorrow and sympathy for him.

In the past, Theodore only pretended to be limp in public, and the wheelchair was useless in private. However, since the fight that he had with Ariana yesterday, he hadn't even attempted to stand up from it.

Horace still remembered what Ariana said outside the ward. "Since you like to sit in a wheelchair, you can stay in it for good." Theodore looked like he took her harsh words to heart.

It was obvious that Ariana had made up her mind this time.

Otherwise, how could she have left so soon? It seemed that reconciliation was out of the picture this time.

Horace wished he could help Theodore in his grief but he didn't know how. Only Ariana could mend his broken heart.

The ringing of the phone in Horace's pocket broke the silence in the room. He took out his phone and answered it. He listened to the voice on the other side of the phone for a few seconds before his expression turned cold.

“Okay, I know. Keep investigating.”

After hanging up the phone, Horace took two steps forward and said, “Boss, the results of the investigation came out.” Theodore turned his head slightly, listening for more.

“The fire broke outside the door of the private room where you were at the time.

There were many flammable substances such as oil found at the scene. Obviously, someone had started the fire on purpose.” Although Horace usually had the face of a gentle and honest man, he spoke these words with a chill that was only present when

something threatened Theodore’s life. He continued through gritted teeth, “The surveillance cameras on the scene had been burnt, and the car that stopped the fire engine from entering was unregistered.

We can’t find the owner of the car. The day before the fire, the car was still in the metal recycling plant. But...”

Horace paused and surveyed the expression on Theodore’s face, trying to gauge his reaction. “There is a clue that the waiter who lit the fire seems to have appeared in Mistlyn. We are secretly looking for him.”

Theodore sneered, “Mistlyn? It seems that those people can’t wait to get rid of me.”

Horace didn’t dare to say anything, because he knew that the ancestral house of the Fredrick family was in Mistlyn, which was the sphere of influence of Theodore’s grandfather’s family.

Theodore carefully slipped the delicate clay figurine into his pocket and swiveled his wheelchair around to face Horace. With a stern look, he inquired, “What has been happening with my grandfather lately?”

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Horace responded, “There appears to be some news regarding the creation of a will.”

“A will?” Theodore’s brow furrowed in confusion. “What could possibly be wrong with my grandfather?”

After a brief pause, Horace honestly replied, "There are rumors circulating that he is seriously ill."

Theodore's head shot up, anxiety evident in his voice as he asked, "Why is he seriously ill? Has this happened recently?"

"No, no, not at all," Horace hurriedly reassured him. "I have consulted Mr. Fredrick's personal physician, and he assures me that Mr. Fredrick is in excellent health. The false news was deliberately spread by him because he misses you. He hopes that you will return and pay him a visit."

Aldus always enjoyed playing pranks on Theodore. Every so often, news would circulate within the Fredrick family about Aldus falling gravely ill. Aldus was afraid that his beloved grandson would forget about him.

Horace was well aware that Aldus possessed a physical constitution that surpassed that of many young individuals. He often rode horses, spent time with birds, and occasionally ventured across the state. In Horace's estimation, Aldus would live a long life and might even have the chance to witness Theodore's son marrying a woman.

Theodore chuckled. Aldus never seemed to take anything seriously.

"I will return later. However, I fear for Ariana's safety. Please continue to discreetly assign people to protect her," Theodore stated.

Horace nodded in agreement, his brow furrowing. "Alright, I'll do it. But Mrs. Anderson is quite observant. I'm worried she might catch on."

A heavy sigh escaped Horace's heart. If Ariana remained unaware that Theodore had been tracking her phone, they could continue to protect her discreetly. However, the situation had become uncertain.

After a brief silence, Theodore spoke up. "We need to find a way to safeguard her without raising any suspicion. Her safety is our top priority."

Horace understood the importance of ensuring that anyone who came into contact with Ariana wouldn't pose a threat to her well-being.

"By the way, Boss," Horace interjected, "you asked me to retrieve the pill from your coat at the scene of the fire for inspection." Theodore had almost forgotten about it. He asked nonchalantly, "Did you receive the test results?"

Theodore had previously retrieved the pill from Ariana's headboard and he wanted to have it examined. He didn't want her to rely on medication for her recovery indefinitely. He believed it was essential to identify the pill's contents.

"The coat was partially burned in the fire, and the pill was exposed to high temperatures along with other substances in the package. We'll need to separate them to determine its ingredients," Horace explained. "It will take a significant amount of time, but the preliminary tests have shown that several of the ingredients are harmless. This pill may be a health supplement that promotes well-being. However, it will take time to ascertain its specific purpose and the illness it's intended to treat."

Theodore casually nodded upon hearing Horace's explanation. He recalled Ariana mentioning that the pill was a blood-nourishing health product. It appeared that there was no cause for concern.

The press conference of The Sky with Romance was a bustling affair, with a multitude of attendees brandishing photos of their beloved idols.

The host valiantly held his ground on the stage, striving to maintain order amidst the fervent fans. But their enthusiasm proved overpowering, transforming the stage into a colorful tapestry of flowers and gifts.

Meanwhile, backstage, Tyler diligently prepared his responses for the impending questions that awaited him on stage.

Cole, however, sat stoically, his expression devoid of emotion. He disregarded the problems at hand, making no effort to prepare answers. His face remained impassive as if carved from stone.

Laughter and banter filled the air among the crew members and actors, creating a cool atmosphere. An assistant approached Tyler, presenting him with a box of cookies, and he graciously accepted it, his smile radiating warmth.

“Be careful, those cookies are packed with calories. You wouldn't want to plump up!” Cole sneered, his voice dripping with sarcasm.

The assistant felt a twinge of embarrassment. She had intended to give Cole some cookies as well, but now she hesitated, unsure of how he'd react. It was common knowledge among the crew that Cole and Tyler didn't have the best rapport, and the assistant couldn't comprehend why the fans shipped them together.

“I have no interest in indulging. Just give them to others,” Cole declared, masking his fondness for desserts, unwilling to show his weakness in Tyler's presence.

The assistant chuckled awkwardly. “Understood, Mr. Dixon. I'll check if anyone else would love to try these treats.”

Tyler set down his script and reached for a cookie, his hunger amplified by the early morning journey from Eylemond without any sustenance.

With visible discontent, Cole observed Tyler relishing the food. “Don't think your popularity exempts you from taking care of what you eat. Indulging in such delights will surely make you gain weight!”

Tyler cast a fleeting glance in Cole's direction and replied, “No matter how much I eat, my body will remain unaffected.”

Cole's unhappiness grew, for he was prone to putting on weight effortlessly. He was convinced that Tyler's statement was purposefully crafted to provoke him.

Before he could voice his displeasure, the stage manager appeared, diverting his attention.

"I have some news to share. Miss Cicio has encountered an urgent matter and won't be able to participate in today's promotional activities. Consequently, the two-person interview featuring the lead actors will be revised to include both of you."

Tyler's countenance darkened. He couldn't shake the feeling that it was more than mere coincidence that they were repeatedly paired up for interviews.

"Prepare yourselves. You can make your way to the stage now," the stage manager announced briskly, wasting no time. A makeup artist was summoned to touch up Tyler's and Cole's appearances, after which they were promptly ushered onto the stage.

Tyler couldn't help but feel a sense of revulsion, yet he plastered a smile on his face as the cameras trained their lenses on them.

He had done his utmost to avoid raising suspicions, but Cole persistently gravitated towards him, purposefully uttering ambiguous remarks. Cole went so far as to claim that he was familiar with Tyler's particular routines and interests!

Onstage, Cole was a stark contrast to his backstage persona, presenting Tyler with candies and playing along with the charade.

Cole's hypocrisy gnawed at Tyler's insides! It even caused his fists to clench involuntarily.

Unbeknownst to Tyler, Cole himself harbored an aversion toward their orchestrated camaraderie. He despised the fans' obsession with their perceived bond, but it heightened his popularity. His company compelled him to engage in these contrived things for that!

Not only did he have to memorize Tyler's idiosyncrasies and preferences, but he also had to keep a constant eye on him, employing various tactics to fuel the fans' shipping desires.

He even created a secret account to glean insights into their fans' preferences.



He was even forced to read a lot of his and Tyler's fanfictions. Little did he anticipate the explicit and sometimes obscene fanfictions would make his cheeks flush.

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Though he frequented nightclubs, he never expected to find himself blushing due to fictional stories!

Cole understood that fans harbored fantasies about their on-screen chemistry.

However, what puzzled him was his consistent position as the subordinate in most fanfictions.

He towered over Tyler in stature and strength, so logic dictated that he should assume the dominant role!

Suffused with thoughts of Tyler, Cole began to question his sanity!

After the interview, Tyler and Cole exited together. Just as they reached the door, a staff member called out to them. "Tyler."

Hearing the name, Cole instinctively turned his head and asked, "What?"

"He forgot his pen." The staff member handed over the pen with a smile, playfully winking at Cole. "Seems like you two get along well."

With an embarrassed smile, Cole couldn't help but think their relationship was far from good. This staff member was seeing things.

His head had turned involuntarily because of a conditioned response. Lately, he had been hearing a lot about Tyler.

Cole intended to take the pen, but Tyler swiftly extended his slender hand, revealing a small black mole on his index finger. During his observations of Tyler, Cole had taken note of it.

His gaze followed the pen, and Cole locked eyes with Tyler.

Tyler shot him a disgusted look, believing Cole was still pretending to get along well with him. He disdainfully dropped the pen into his coat pocket, then turned around and hastily left.

Driven by instinct, Cole trailed behind him. Unbeknownst to them, the staff member behind them discreetly snapped a few photos of their backs and posted them online with the caption, "I ship them."

Realizing he was being followed by Cole, Tyler deliberately took a few detours, eventually leading Cole to an empty storage room. Abruptly, he pulled Cole inside and delivered a swift punch to his stomach.

Cole had no time to react to the sudden attack. Pain coursed through him, and though he tried to resist, he found himself pinned against the wall by Tyler's strength.

Tyler was undeniably powerful. Cole widened his eyes as he struggled.

"Let go of me!" Cole seethed with anger, attempting to push Tyler away. His teeth were clenched, and the back of his hands displayed prominent blue veins.

Finding Cole's reaction rather stupid, Tyler grew bored and abruptly released his grip, causing Cole to collide with the wall.

"Fuck! Don't think | won't beat you," Cole fumed, his anger escalating. He hadn't expected Tyler to be stronger than him. It was shameful!

Tyler appeared slender, but his arm muscles were surprisingly robust. In addition, he towered over Cole in height. When Cole first caught sight of Tyler secretly practicing outside the rehearsal room, Tyler had been half a head shorter. What had Ariana been feeding him?

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Tyler issued a warning with a snort, “We both know what your team is up to. | suggest you stop while you still can. My patience has its limits.”

“What do you mean? Explain yourself clearly.” Cole tried to stop him, but Tyler forcefully pushed his hands away. “Don’t touch me again.” Tyler turned his face slightly, his tone icy.

Cole suddenly felt indignant. “Who said | want to touch you?! | hate your guts.”

“Good.” Tyler disregarded him and left.

Watching Tyler’s retreating figure, Cole clenched his fists and struck the wall, only to be met with a jolt of pain.

It was all Tyler’s fault! Cole seethed with dissatisfaction, yet amidst his anger, he realized he wasn’t as furious as he had anticipated.

Strangely, the way Tyler had pressed him against the wall just moments ago reminded him of a scene from a fanfiction he had read a few days ago.

His heart inexplicably raced. Tyler exited the event venue, slipping into the designated car via the back door.

His assistant sat opposite him and handed him a black backpack. Pulling out a few foreign textbooks, Tyler began to study. He had made a vow that even while pursuing his artistic career, he would not let his education suffer.

An hour later, the car pulled up at the predetermined location in Eleymond.

Ariana was waiting for him on the first floor, seated in a wheelchair. Noticing her bandaged ankle, Tyler asked with concern, “It seems rather serious. Are you sure you don’t need to go to the hospital?”

He was aware of her injury from the previous day, but due to his work commitments, he hadn't been able to visit her.

"I'm fine. I merely sprained my ankle while descending the stairs. Despite all the bandages, it's a minor injury. A couple of days' rest will have me back to normal."

Wary of causing Tyler any unnecessary worry, Ariana kept the truth from him, merely stating that she had tripped and fallen and not mentioning the incident with the fire.

Tyler voluntarily took over the task of pushing her wheelchair. "If changing the dressing is a hassle for you, I can assist."

"I'm good. I'm currently staying at Sarah's house. She can help me if I need anything."

"That's a relief." Tyler let out a sigh.

"Is everything going well today?" Ariana asked, turning towards him.

Tyler thought about punching Cole before leaving, feeling guilty as he scratched his nose. He regretted his impulsiveness because Cole was a petty person who would definitely seek revenge later. It was very annoying. If he had held back and not hit Cole, he would not have gotten himself into trouble. After all, Cole wouldn't dare do anything to him on camera. And once the play was over, he wouldn't have any interaction with Cole.

"What's the matter? Has Cole caused trouble again?" Ariana inquired, noting Tyler's troubled expression.

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"No, everything went well. Cole is still the same as before. He can't do anything to me." Tyler feigned an air of nonchalance, dismissing any hint of the earlier incident.

Ariana chuckled at Tyler's statement. "Indeed, he seems to enjoy causing you trouble, as long as he doesn't cross any lines." Tyler nodded in agreement. "Don't worry. I'm fine."

In the hotel's top-floor meeting room, Jayson rose to welcome everyone. The room was filled with actors and actresses that the team had decided to collaborate with in the future.

He took the initiative to introduce everyone.

A combination of casting calls and industry recommendations had yielded the array of talent in the room. All the actors were carefully chosen, and none of them were backed up by certain investors.

Whether they were newcomers or seasoned actors who had long strived for success without much fruition, they all mingled freely, devoid of the hierarchical seniority commonly found in other major directorial crews. No one was throwing their weight around.

Ariana found a seat and quietly observed her surroundings. The actress playing the leading role piqued her interest. The young woman, a newcomer herself, bore a striking resemblance to her. Jayson had voiced his appreciation for the short film, and thus the leading lady was cast with Ariana's likeness in mind.

In the script, there was a role for a deranged serial killer. Ariana initially presumed Jayson would opt for an older male actor for this role. However, surprisingly, the part went to a young man in his twenties. Despite his refined, almost delicate appearance, he exuded an aura of charisma during the script read-through, hinting at the strong acting skills necessary to convincingly portray the psychopathic character.

It was undeniable that every actor held their unique significance. Jayson indeed had a keen eye for talent. Noticing Tyler comfortably integrating with the new crew, Ariana sighed with relief. As they engrossed themselves in the script reading, she navigated her wheelchair outside, desiring some fresh air.

Ariana had always assumed that Theodore made maneuvering a wheelchair look easy and seamless. However, it wasn't until she found herself in one that she understood how challenging it could be. Even a simple carpet or a small threshold was enough to nearly cause her to topple over.

The hotel, boasting five stars, provided not only accommodation but also hosted various banquets and meetings.

While exploring the top floor, Ariana admired the various paintings that adorned the walls. After a while, her hands began to ache from handling the wheelchair, so she instinctively pressed a button, causing the chair to accelerate and subsequently get entangled in a carpet.

Before she could recover her balance, she found herself lunging forward. In that crucial moment, someone caught her just in time.

Pale with fear, Ariana clutched the man's sleeve and tried to regain her footing. As she looked up to thank her rescuer, she found him to be a familiar face. She exclaimed, "It's you, Dr. Chadwick!"

Mitchel wore a serious frown, resembling an elderly scholar deep in thought.

"Where is your husband? How could he allow you, a pregnant woman with a mobility issue, to roam around here?" Embarrassed, Ariana found Mitchel's straightforwardness unchanged.

Preferring not to discuss her personal affairs, she offered an excuse, "I just stepped out for some fresh air. I didn't expect the difficulty of maneuvering a wheelchair."

"Did you come here alone?" Mitchel assisted her back into the wheelchair and readjusted its settings. "If you're not familiar with the wheelchair, it would be safer to control it manually."

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"I understand, thank you." Ariana gave a polite smile. After considering for a moment, she added, "I'm here with friends. They are currently occupied, so I'm just killing time."

Following a beep, the wheelchair's settings were reset. Mitchel took a step back and suggested, "Give it a try."

Fumbling for the button, Ariana chose the “automatic drive” mode. The speed of the wheelchair noticeably slowed down, now resembling a regular walking pace.

“Thank you, Dr. Chadwick.” Ariana appeared like a child who had just been gifted a new toy, her eyes sparkling with fascination. Even though the manual mode was safer, she found the automatic mode more appealing because it was less taxing.

Mitchel responded softly before glancing at his wristwatch.

Noticing this, Ariana paused in her exploration of the wheelchair to ask. “What brings you here, Dr. Chadwick?”

“I’m attending a medical summit,” he replied.

Understanding this, Ariana nodded. “Then you should hurry along. I’m perfectly fine.”

After considering for a moment, Mitchel proposed, “Would you like to accompany me? You seem rather unoccupied.”

“I’m not sure that’s a good idea. I wouldn’t want to intrude.” Ariana was indeed feeling bored, but she didn’t wish to cause any inconvenience.

“It’s nothing serious, just a simple meeting that’s taking place in the hotel’s back garden,” Mitchel clarified. Ariana contemplated for a bit before succumbing to her curiosity. “What will you discuss at the summit?”

“Different medical professionals will be presenting recent case studies and experiences. For example, Dr. Chavez who specializes in cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases, and Dr. Padilla, an expert on rare diseases. There will also be representatives from the field of human transmission studies and other areas, including Dr. Ruiz and Dr. Natt—” \_

“Dr. Ruiz is attending too?” Ariana’s heart fluttered with excitement. Debora Ruiz was an expert in child psychology, and Sarah had always hoped to involve her in Alina’s case, but there had been challenges. This was an unexpected opportunity!

Mitchel mentioned a number of people, and they were all substantial contributors to the discipline.

“Dr. Chadwick, are you sure this isn’t an exclusive meeting that not just anyone can attend?” Ariana couldn’t help but be astounded. It wasn’t every day that one could gather such an illustrious ensemble for a mere meeting.

Mitchel, as cool as a cucumber, responded, “Oh, it’s just a casual meeting for the free flow of ideas. Nothing too fancy, | assure you.”

“But won’t it be a hassle for you? My legs aren’t exactly nimble.” Ariana was torn, afraid of becoming a burden to Mitchel.

“Do you want to go?” Mitchel cut to the chase.

Caught off guard by his straightforward question, Ariana replied in a hushed tone, “Yes, | do. I’d love to meet the child psychologist, Dr. Ruiz.”

“If that’s what you desire, then you should go.” Mitchel pushed the wheelchair forward.

The hotel’s rooftop garden unfolded before them, a sprawling oasis in the sky, guarded by uniformed waitstaff at the entrance. Journalists swarmed the scene, adding a touch of spectacle to the affair.

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Two reporters attempted entry but were swiftly rebuffed by the unyielding waiter, lacking the coveted invitation cards. “Can | really enter? Without an invitation?” Ariana looked at Mitchel with concern, contemplating retreat.



“Don’t worry.”

With a gentle nudge, Mitchel guided her to the front of the waiter, brandishing the electronic invitation. With warmth and grace, they were ushered inside.

However, Ariana found herself mistaken for Mitchel’s spouse. “Welcome, Mr. and Mrs. Chadwick!”

Ariana rubbed her forehead, about to set the record straight. But Mitchel interjected, “She’s under my care, merely accompanying me.”

The waiter cast a sympathetic glance at her legs, his face transforming with an instant surge of pity that left Ariana both speechless and amused.

The hall was not teeming with attendees, but those present were distinguished figures whose names were synonymous with influence and could only be watched on TV.

Unlike a starchy business banquet, this gathering exuded a relaxed aura. Conversations bubbled within small clusters, fostering an air of conviviality.

Extravagant attire or pricey jewelry was not obligatory. Rather, the emphasis was on appearing presentable and commanding respect.

For instance, Mitchel opted for a simple suit and shirt today, eschewing a tie. As he had said, this was a casual gathering where he genuinely sought to learn.

When she entered the hall, Ariana noticed that many of the attendees were drawn to Mitchel and exchanged greetings with him. He stood out as the youngest among them.

Thanks to him, Ariana was able to interact and collect business cards from the titans of industry.

Communication flowed smoothly among these cultural luminaries. Upon discovering Ariana’s association with Mitchel, their countenances shifted to seriousness. They expressed curiosity about her

condition, scanning her for a glimpse. Yet, upon learning it was a mere ankle injury, their sympathy overflowed.

Ariana found herself both amused and unsurprised. It seemed that geniuses could only see things related to academic issues!

During her hospital stay, she had regarded Mitchel as an ordinary doctor. But now, in this meeting, she began to comprehend that his identity was anything but ordinary.

The medical summit buzzed with the presence of industry leaders, creating a slight discomfort for someone like Ariana, who remained relatively unknown amidst the crowd.

Finding solace, she settled quietly in a corner of the hall, her wheelchair serving as her steadfast companion.

After a few minutes, Mitchel skillfully navigated through the crowd, liberating himself from the conversational shackles that bound him.

“Well, you needn’t worry about me. I’ll simply observe from here,” Ariana assured him.

Chapter: 610 “Don’t you wish to meet Debora? Allow me to escort you.”

“Don’t worry. It seems everyone is eager to converse with you,” Ariana remarked, her gaze drifting towards the young men, close in age to Mitchel, who sought his attention.

“They merely wish to engage in discussions. There are others available to address their inquiries.” Without hesitation, Mitchel steered Ariana’s wheelchair across the expanse of the hall.

Ariana’s apprehensions began to wane. Mitchel’s words resonated within her. There were so many big shots present. Those men could talk to other experts.

Contrary to Ariana's expectations, Debora appeared younger in person than she did in the photograph. A vibrant energy radiated from her as she donned a sleek black dress, her brown hair elegantly styled. When she smiled, her warm aura enveloped those around her, even softening the wrinkles that gracefully adorned her eyes.

Upon laying eyes on Ariana, Debora's joy knew no bounds. Fully aware of her presence for the sake of a friend's child, she embraced Ariana tightly. In that moment, a profound connection was established. Debora, who not only gave out her personal phone number, invited Ariana to settle beside her on the cozy sofa.

"Please, tell me more about that child." Ariana began to recount Alina's condition, sparing no detail, including the challenging skin problem that plagued the young girl.

Debora pondered for a while, carefully analyzing the situation. "It may prove challenging to completely cure innate autism, but there is potential for improvement. Moreover, some autistic children possessed exceptional talents in specific areas and could be nurtured and guided."

Considering Alina's musical aptitude, Ariana felt a glimmer of confidence that with the right guidance, a breakthrough could be achieved in Alina's journey.

"As for the skin issue you mentioned, I believe it can be cured with current medical methods, though it will take some time," Debora added. She was quite patient and even warmly extended an invitation. "I will be staying in Eleymond for a week, residing in this hotel. Moreover, my husband will join me on a holiday in two days.

Coincidentally, he specializes in skin and infectious diseases. During his visit, I can request his assistance in treating Alina."

"That's wonderful. Thank you!" Ariana expressed her gratitude, although a sense of guilt lingered within her. "However, I'm afraid we are inconveniencing you. It must not be easy for you to relax," she admitted.

Moments earlier, Mitchel had informed Ariana about the demanding nature of their industry. Debora, for instance, spent her days immersed in the laboratory and consulting room. This summit provided her with a rare opportunity to take a well-deserved break.

Debora smiled warmly and assured her, “No worries, it’s our duty. Furthermore, Mitchel’s parents and I have been friends for many years. My husband and I have always considered Mitchel as part of our younger generation. Mitchel has been on his own for many years. It’s the first time he has brought a friend to seek my assistance. Naturally, I must help him.”

Ariana found herself surprised and unsure how to respond. She had only encountered Mitchel on two occasions, yet he seemed to treat her with a distinctiveness she couldn’t quite comprehend. Before today, Ariana had never considered her relationship with Mitchel to be anything more than acquaintances.

Mitchel looked very cold. He appeared wholly absorbed in his academic pursuits, which explained his meticulous behavior and precise actions. He approached life with a seriousness that left little room for lightheartedness or humor.

Reflecting on their interactions, Ariana realized that she had never witnessed Mitchel’s smile since the day they first met. Even on the rare occasions when he did smile, it seemed forced and artificial, devoid of genuine warmth, much like the mechanical movement of a robot. Regardless of what he said, Mitchel maintained an impassive poker face, making it challenging for others to discern his true emotions.

Initially, Ariana assumed he was a difficult person to connect with, but his unexpected willingness to assist her proved otherwise. Could this be what they called “a sharp tongue but a tender heart”?

“What do you do, Miss Edwards?” inquired Debora, her voice accompanied by a warm smile.