

Unconscious 681

Chapter: 681 “No.” Sarah recoiled, inching further away on the couch.

“As an agent, it is my duty to take care of my artist’s emotional realm so that future disputes do not arise. Therefore, I must prepare the groundwork for public relations,” Ariana declared, righteousness ringing in her voice, leaving Sarah no choice but to reluctantly surrender her phone.

Ariana opened their digital dialogue and found herself astounded.

As she scrolled through the messages, it became apparent that Aziel had shown great concern for Sarah’s well-being. He inquired about her meals, her slumber, and her activities. He even offered to cook for her or take her out, his gestures brimming with genuine care.

But Sarah’s responses were cold, her rejections sharp and cold as ice, claiming to be engulfed in work and desiring solitude. In addition, Sarah did not respond very often, giving the impression that she was ignoring Aziel.

Eventually, Aziel ceased his invitations altogether, opting to share his own life updates and plans instead. Yet, his messages were met with a deafening silence from Sarah.

Ariana reached the end of their chat history.

Aziel’s last voice call was declined by Sarah. He then sent a text message explaining his impending week-long business trip to vie for a crucial project. He also expressed a desire to have a serious conversation with Sarah after his return.

True to form, Sarah failed to respond. But late the next night, after Aziel had left on a business trip, she sent him a message. “Let’s break up.”

And from that moment on, silence reigned in their thread, with no further messages from Aziel. Ariana let out a helpless sigh as she read through the chat records between Sarah and Aziel.

“So, it was you who broke up with him without any discussion,” Ariana remarked sarcastically, unable to contain her disappointment. “Aren’t you a bit cruel to him?”

Sarah remained silent as Ariana swiped her phone screen and continued, “He mentioned going on a business trip to discuss important matters. Why did you choose such a crucial moment to break up with him? What did he do to offend you?”

Aziel was unable to return immediately, forced to deal with pressing work matters. It was an agonizing situation for him.

“He didn’t offend me,” Sarah replied with a pout, shrugging her shoulders. “You saw how I treated him before, not replying to his messages. That’s why he wanted to have a conversation with me and he was implying he wanted to break up, right? So it doesn’t really matter if I was the one who brought it up in the first place.”

Sarah’s indifferent attitude and her words filled Ariana with a sense of anger. She wanted to defend Aziel. Frowning, she spoke up. “So, you are aware of how coldly you’ve treated him all this time, Sarah. Have you had a change of heart? Even if you have, this isn’t the right way to handle it. I believe Aziel deserves better. If you don’t love him anymore, you should just tell him directly. Is it fair to torment him like this?”

Ariana tried her best to soften her tone but couldn’t entirely suppress the harshness in her voice. Furthermore, from Ariana’s perspective, Aziel had treated Sarah exceptionally well. He had taken great care of her. If they were to break up so abruptly and inexplicably, it would be a loss for Sarah herself.

Ariana looked at Sarah, hoping she would provide a reason, but Sarah remained silent, refusing to offer any explanation.

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After a moment of silence, Sarah reached for a pack of cigarettes, rose from the sofa, and turned away to smoke. Even just observing her back, one could sense the frustration emanating from her.

After what felt like an eternity, Sarah delicately flicked off the ash from her cigarette, her voice hoarse as she uttered, “Anyway, I think it’s time we end things.

We're just not right for each other. Consider me heartless, if you will. And if any disputes arise in the future, simply claim it’s my personal problems and don’t involve him.”

Ariana absorbed these words, a peculiar unease washing over her. Once she managed to collect herself, she couldn’t help but notice that something was amiss.

Normally, even in her impulsive moments, Sarah was never the type to play recklessly with someone else’s emotions. Ariana revisited their past conversations, her eyes coming to rest on the apology message Aziel had sent Sarah.

The timestamp indicated it was the day they were discharged from the hospital following the accident.

It was after receiving that unexpected apology message from Aziel that everything took a wrong turn.

Ariana couldn't help but recall the events of that fateful day.

The vulgar words, the violent actions, the unsettling DVD, and the horrifying ordeal Sarah had almost endured. The memory sent shivers down Ariana’s spine.

Looking up at Sarah, Ariana mustered her courage and cautiously inquired, “Sarah, is it because of that night?”

Sarah’s body immediately tensed up, her silence speaking volumes. Even her smoking came to an abrupt halt, while the falling ashes from her hand danced their way to the ground. The once-quiet room now seemed suffocatingly still, infused with the lingering scent of tobacco. Sarah’s fragile figure appeared on the verge of shattering with the slightest touch.

Overwhelmed by Sarah’s vulnerable state, Ariana’s heart ached, and she instinctively wrapped her arms around her from behind. The moment Ariana’s embrace enveloped Sarah, she felt a solitary tear cascade down her arm.

Then, Sarah's body trembled ever so slightly, tears streaming down her face as she let out a sob-filled voice, "Ariana, I can't help but feel that I'm not worthy..."

Ariana's heart bled for Sarah, consumed by a feeling of overwhelming sorrow. She firmly turned Sarah's face, cradling it gently with both hands and spoke with utmost seriousness. "I will not tolerate your self-deprecation, my dear. You are a force to be reckoned with, and admired by many. What distorts your perception of yourself? Is it the haunting memories of that fateful night?"

At the mere mention of that night, Ariana felt Sarah's tremors, and without hesitation, she enfolded her in a tight embrace, offering solace. "Don't worry, it is all in the past. Those responsible should face the consequences, not you. You are blameless. That night holds no power over you. Theodore has obliterated the damning video. Everything will be fine."

Sarah couldn't hold back her sobs, burying her face in her hands. "But I cannot simply move on. Paranoia grips me relentlessly. I confine myself indoors, afraid to venture beyond my doorstep, even for a simple takeout or interactions with men."

Sarah's meltdown revealed the agonizing toll her existence had taken.

She lived in constant fear, plagued by sleepless nights and an inability to concentrate. Though she attempted to lose herself in composing music, the images of that dreadful night played on an endless loop in her mind.

Seeing Sarah's anguish, Ariana gently patted her back, her eyes glistening with tears. "I even unconsciously shy away from Aziel's closeness. I am terrified of him as well!"

Sarah's voice trembled as she confessed her deepest fears. The pain in Aziel's eyes weighed heavily on her heart, but she found herself unable to bear his physical proximity.

Nestled against Ariana's chest, Sarah despaired, her voice laced with hopelessness.

"I don't know how to face him. It feels helpless. Perhaps the only choice left is to sever ties with him!"

Ariana, at a loss for words, held Sarah tightly, regret coursing through her veins for not staying with Sarah after that fateful day. Although she failed to see Sarah in person after Sarah's hospital treatment, Sarah sounded normal on the phone, leading Ariana to believe that she had recovered.

As such, she failed to notice the lingering trauma Sarah endured.

But dwelling on the past served no purpose. After Sarah had calmed down, Ariana spoke softly, seeking understanding. "Does Aziel know the extent of what you've been through?"

Sarah shook her head, her voice barely above a whisper. "I dared not reveal it to him. I feared he would view me as tainted if he knew."

"How could he!" Ariana's anger surged, her grip on Sarah's arm tightening as she spoke with unwavering resolve. "Moreover, you are not tainted; it is those two criminals who committed that heinous act against you."

Sarah acknowledged that, but she could not let go of the damage that had been done to her.

She sat in a haze, her words tinged with sadness. "I am a single mother in my thirties, burdened by the knowledge of being deceived by a man!"

She took a deep breath, her hands covering her face. "To make matters worse... Compromising images of me were once released online!" Yet, what of Aziel?

Sarah's heart constricted at the thought of him, her gaze filled with despair. She continued, her voice laced with anguish, "But Aziel is in his twenties, full of potential, an accomplished entrepreneur with a promising future, blessed with charm and good looks that can get him any girl he desires. Why would he desire a broken woman like me?"

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Sarah's decision to end her relationship with Aziel left Ariana torn between anger and sympathy. She empathized with Sarah's pain but couldn't help feeling sorry for Aziel as well, seeing him as a somewhat pitiable figure.

Aziel, seemingly oblivious to the reason behind the breakup, was caught off guard and dumped unexpectedly. Yet, Ariana sensed his genuine affection for Sarah, which made the situation even more complex.

Seeking to console Sarah, Ariana spoke with heartfelt conviction. "Age is just a number, my dear. Whether you're thirty or forty, you remain the epitome of beauty in my eyes. I refuse to believe that Aziel would let go of you for such a reason. Hasn't he already taken into account the difference in years between you? Doesn't he know about your past and the experiences that have shaped you? If he truly minded, he wouldn't have been with you in the first place. Aziel isn't an immature soul. I bet being in a relationship with you was a carefully weighed decision for him. Perhaps these concerns don't even register in his heart."

Sarah wiped away a tear, finding solace in Ariana's words but still enveloped in a somber cloud. "Aziel only saw me as a revered idol he had admired for years. Like any other fan, he only beheld my glamorous facade. But now, being with me in my current state, he will eventually regret it. In that case, it's better to end it sooner!"

Ariana perceived Sarah's tendency to overthink, understanding the significant impact of that night's events on her life and work. Urgently, she continued to persuade, "This situation is not sustainable. I implore you to seek the guidance of a therapist." Prioritizing the aftermath of the trauma was of utmost importance, as it had left an indelible mark on Sarah's life.

Sarah hesitated and showed resistance to the idea of seeking professional help.

Understanding Sarah's hesitation, Ariana reassured her, "There's no shame in it, my dear. Remember when you took Alina for therapy? You told me it had a positive impact, and Alina's condition improved. You see, there's nothing daunting about visiting a therapist. In today's society, everyone grapples with their own set of problems to varying degrees, and it's perfectly alright."

Ariana's tone lightened as she emphasized that seeing a therapist wasn't a monumental ordeal.

Mentioning Alina finally elicited a change in Sarah's expression. A smile graced her face as she summoned the courage within herself.

For Alina's sake, Sarah couldn't allow herself to languish any longer!

Agreeing with a nod, Sarah looked at Ariana.

Ariana, relieved by Sarah's assent, grabbed her hand excitedly.

"Fantastic, let's schedule an appointment with a therapist for tomorrow. I'll tag along with you!"

Sarah nodded and added, "By the way, you mentioned Alina earlier, and it just struck me. Didn't we promise to treat Dr. Chadwick to a meal? We kept postponing it due to your hospitalization."

They had originally intended to express their gratitude to Mitchel together, but Sarah hadn't mentioned it earlier out of consideration for Ariana's hospital stay.

After a moment of contemplation, Ariana realized the significant support she had received from Mitchel and understood the need to show her appreciation. "I'll reach out to Dr. Chadwick and inquire if he's available for dinner tomorrow night. We can express our gratitude then."

Considering the inconvenience of making a phone call, Ariana opted to send a direct message to Mitchel, extending the invitation for dinner. Surprisingly, she received an immediate response from him, accepting the invitation with graciousness.

Ariana had taken the initiative to ensure Sarah's therapy session, and together they ventured to the therapist's den the following afternoon.

While Sarah continued with her therapy session, Ariana found herself waiting outside, battling the boredom that loomed over her. In an attempt to quell her restlessness, she took out her phone and checked for updates on the cast.

But soon enough, her curiosity steered her toward a quest for knowledge about medications, hoping to stumble upon any semblance to the mysterious drug Theodore had been taking.

After a mere hour had passed, Sarah emerged from her session, her countenance visibly brighter. The therapy was gradually leaving its mark!

“How does your spirit feel now? Are we making progress?” Ariana, donning a smile, greeted her.

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“Yes! The doctor suggested I continue attending weekly sessions, and they also prescribed some medications,” Sarah replied, her smile emanating contentment as she reached for her bag. She handed the prescription over to Ariana.

Ariana scrutinized the prescription meticulously. It comprised sedatives and soothing elixirs, but they bore little resemblance to those Theodore took.

Inwardly, Ariana couldn't help but sigh out of frustration.

The parallels between Sarah's condition and Theodore's episodes had caught her attention the previous day, although Theodore's condition was far more dire and alarming.

If Theodore's state truly stemmed from psychological trauma, Ariana shuddered at the depths of his suffering. She found herself both sympathetic and anxious for his well-being.

Her online investigations had proven fruitless, offering no traces of the medication Theodore used. It looked like it wasn't easy to come about.

Furthermore, she had received no updates from Mitchel concerning his investigation.

“So, what occupies your thoughts?” Sarah waved her hand before Ariana, snapping her back to reality. “It's time to get something to bite.”

Sarah appeared to be on the road to recovery, taking back the prescription from Ariana and safely putting it into her bag before they left the clinic.

Ariana nodded unconsciously, falling into step alongside her. Since they had an upcoming dinner engagement with Mitchel, Ariana resolved to talk about the investigation in person.

The designated dinner hour was yet to arrive, so Ariana and Sarah made their way to the reserved restaurant to discuss the menu options beforehand.

Ariana had chosen the venue. The ordinary eatery nestled amidst a bustling locality. Its unassuming interior design welcomed a steady stream of people.

Ariana found solace in such humble surroundings, always relishing the simple pleasures of dining in unpretentious establishments.

With an hour to spare, they had ample time to settle in and make themselves comfortable. Surprisingly, as Ariana and Sarah stepped inside, they spotted Mitchel.

A brief moment of bewilderment washed over Ariana as she fumbled for her phone to check the time. It was indeed early. She rubbed her eyes and asked Sarah, "Isn't that Dr. Chadwick over there?"

Sarah too caught sight of him and nodded uncertainly. She said to Ariana, "Could I have mistaken the timing? Why is he here so prematurely?"

As Sarah uttered those words, Ariana confirmed that Mitchel had indeed arrived ahead of schedule.

In the bustling restaurant, he sat alone at an unoccupied table, clad in a crisp white shirt, engrossed in an abundance of medical literature. His fingers danced across the keys of his laptop.

Immersed in his work, he remained oblivious to the incessant ebb and flow of people, his gaze unyielding.

Despite his unassuming attire, there lingered an undeniable air of elegance, setting him apart from the chaos that enveloped his surroundings.

Ariana and Sarah exchanged puzzled glances and started making their way toward him. As Ariana drew closer to Mitchel, her regret about choosing such an ordinary restaurant intensified.

Given that they were treating Mitchel, Ariana couldn't help but feel that they should have selected a place more befitting his elevated status, like a grand ballroom befitting a king.

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At the medical summit, Ariana had gained insight into Mitchel's prestigious position, and it was apparent that someone of his caliber would likely prefer the finery of a high-end restaurant, where elegance and opulence danced hand in hand.

However, as Ariana wallowed in remorse, Mitchel's eyes caught sight of them, and to her surprise, he appeared unperturbed by the choice of venue, gracefully greeting them. He summoned the waiter to take their orders.

"What culinary delights would you fancy?" Mitchel selected a symphony of signature dishes and handed them the menu, his refined demeanor exuding the poise of a regular connoisseur.

With their orders placed, Mitchel tidied up his materials and rose from his seat. "I shall make my way to the self-service area to get a little something. Is there anything your hearts desire?"

Without a moment's hesitation, Sarah declared her longing for a plate of succulent fruits. Mitchel then turned his gaze to Ariana. "The same as Sarah, please." A happy smile graced Ariana's lips as she echoed Sarah's choice.

Mitchel nodded, a gentlemanly gesture, and proceeded toward the self-service area to fetch the fruit.

Sarah's opinion of him had transformed through their interaction.

Savoring her drink, she playfully glanced at Ariana and asked, "So, what do you say about Dr. Chadwick? | dare say he's a remarkable soul, and it appears he holds a special place in his heart for you."

Detecting a tinge of gossip in Sarah's words, Ariana cast a knowing gaze at her and replied, "He is indeed a remarkable doctor."

Sarah persisted, her curiosity alive and burning, "And what of you and Theodore? Has the tempest in your relationship settled?" Lightly nudging Ariana's shoulder, Sarah added with a playful twinkle in her eye, "Once you are freed from the shackles of Theodore, perhaps you should consider the charming Dr. Chadwick. My unwavering support shall be yours!"

Ariana chuckled at Sarah's jest and reciprocated the joke, "Ah, my dear friend, before meddling in my affairs, perhaps you should tend to your own heart's matters first! Aziel returns in two days and his longing for you shall undoubtedly make him come looking for you. It'd be wise to think about how you shall explain things to him!"

Hearing this, Sarah's mood dropped like a falling leaf caught in a sudden gust of wind.

She Lowered her head, slowly sipping her drink as she softly spoke, her words tinged with bittersweet sorrow, "He has remained silent, unresponsive to my messages for far too long. Perchance he has relinquished his hold on our bond and moved on, and won't come looking for me when he's back."

Ariana recognized the depth of Sarah's affection for Aziel, even if Sarah herself had yet to fully accept it. Just as Ariana was preparing to offer words of solace, Mitchel returned, and they instinctively shifted the topic.

During the meal, Ariana began to realize that Mitchel's aloofness was just her imagination. Engaging in conversation, she discerned the peculiarity of his personality-a fascinating blend of emotional detachment and unfamiliarity with social interactions. Yet, amidst his demeanor, she caught fleeting glimpses of bewilderment in his eyes.

But what intrigued Ariana most was Mitchel's manner of speaking. He posed seemingly mundane questions, such as why other doctors would become emotional and moved by thank-you letters from

patients. To him, the profound impact of a thank-you letter; a piece of paper on a doctor's soul was puzzling.

He was Like a robot trying to learn about the human culture so he could blend in.

Ariana couldn't help but Laugh as she inquired, "Dr. Chadwick, do you have any hobbies that stir your soul?" Mitchel pondered for a moment. "I do find fun in the realm of TV movies and series."

Ariana was startled by his unexpected response since she had assumed that someone consumed by the world of medicine would have little time for pursuits beyond the confines of their profession.

And then Mitchel uttered words that struck Ariana like a bolt of lightning, "I have watched the miniseries in which you graced the screen. | recognized you the moment | saw you at the hospital."

At that moment, Ariana pieced everything together.

Could it be that Mitchel's willingness to aid her from the very start stemmed from more than chance?

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"Dr. Chadwick, do you really ever sit down and enjoy a good television drama? | tune in to the 8 o'clock show. I've been watching it," Sarah said, enthusiastic to start a conversation about TV dramas.

Sarah and Mitchel found an unexpected shared passion. They had a love of soap operas and other dramatic television shows.

"As the plot thickens, | can't help but be enthralled by the remarkable personalities of the main characters," Mitchel expressed, his enthusiasm mirroring Sarah's.

"Absolutely! | think so too! But alas, such dashing and exceptional men exist solely within the realm of TV dramas!" Sarah sighed wistfully, her thoughts seemingly drifting to someone as she downed her glass of wine.

Their conversation shattered the previously reserved ambiance, leading Sarah to order another drink.

Ariana hesitated, contemplating whether to intervene, but considering Sarah's fragile emotional state, she allowed her the indulgence.

Regrettably, Sarah possessed a low tolerance for alcohol, and before long, she slumped onto the table, unconscious!

Asigh escaped Ariana as the scent of alcohol wafted from Sarah. She gently covered her with a coat before shifting her attention to Mitchel.

Despite heavy drinking, Mitchel displayed no signs of inebriation. Ariana hadn't anticipated his impressive alcohol tolerance. Observing his apparent sobriety, Ariana pondered whether to broach the subject of the medication.

"I've made some intriguing discoveries regarding the medication you provided me with last time," Mitchel unexpectedly remarked, wiping his hands and proactively initiating the conversation.

"What have you found?" Ariana's interest was piqued, and her senses heightened as her back straightened involuntarily. Eagerness and nervousness danced within, anxiously awaiting Mitchel's revelations.

"The medication bears the name Azamentum," Mitchel disclosed, unraveling the enigma surrounding its identity.

"Azamentum?" The name was an unfamiliar tapestry, intricate and perplexing. Ariana's brows furrowed as she attempted to understand its name.

"In essence, it's a pharmaceutical remedy targeted at alleviating mental disorders," Mitchel elucidated in a matter-of-fact tone.

Ariana's heart sank at the revelation. The puzzle pieces fell into place; the symptoms Theodore exhibited during his illness aligned eerily with manifestations of PTSD.

"What specific condition does this medication aim to address?" Ariana probed, her hopes flickering in the darkness, yearning to uncover the medication's purpose.

Mitchel shook his head, disappointing Ariana's expectations. "I'm afraid I don't possess that knowledge yet."

Ariana felt lost again. How was that possible? Shouldn't they have a clear understanding of the medication's target?

Mitchel continued, unveiling another layer of complexity, "Azamentum is a proprietary creation of Mercy Hospital, withheld from the public market. Acquiring some internal information on it necessitated certain clandestine measures, consuming a considerable amount of time."

Ariana had not anticipated the intricate web surrounding a mere vial of medication. It also wasn't something she expected to have to do with Mercy Hospital.

On top of it all, the mention of Mercy Hospital roused a clouded state in her mind.

Mercy Hospital was also the facility where Helen was treated. But Theodore had unfettered access to BRD Group's private hospital, which exclusively treated a select group of A-listers and the ultra-wealthy.

Though the Anderson family possessed prominence, they were far from attaining the stature that warranted access to Mercy Hospital. Yet, somehow, Theodore had secured their proprietary product?!

Chapter: 687 Now, Ariana's memory resurfaced, recalling instances at Mercy Hospital where the doctors showed all their respect to Theodore. Theodore's ties to Mercy Hospital raised eyebrows!

Ariana's mind turned into a Labyrinth of confusion as she grappled with the tangled mess before her. It was as if a whirlwind had swept in, bringing together a motley crew of unrelated individuals and circumstances.

Lost amidst this intricate web, Ariana found herself at a loss on how to navigate the situation.

Just as she was entangled in her thoughts, Mitchel interjected once more, his tone serious as he said, "Unraveling the specific symptoms this drug targets will take time, but its primary ingredients, cyproheptadine II and cyproheptadine III, possess a calming effect."

Mitchel continued, his words carrying weight, "Although we are currently uncertain about the precise ailments this medication aims to address, similar drugs are typically employed to combat common illusions or hallucinations induced by toxic agents in the market."

Illusions or hallucinations? These words caused Ariana's heart to skip a beat as she thought back at Theodore's peculiar state during his illness.

No matter how much she called him, he remained motionless. Could it be... that he was trapped in a realm of hallucinations? This realization stirred up a whirlwind of emotions within Ariana, leaving her in a state of profound perplexity.

Curious, Mitchel inquired, "Who is the intended recipient of this medicine?"

His question interrupted Ariana's train of thought. Ariana glanced at Mitchel, her heart filled with hesitation.

Mitchel assisted her to figure out the origin and components of this medication. While it was Logical that he deserved to know, considering Theodore's current condition and the strained relationship between the two, she couldn't overlook the fact that Theodore had previously Lashed out at Mitchel.

Even she ignored their grievances momentarily, Horace's reluctance to divulge any information and Theodore's avoidance of the matter also played a part in Ariana's internal struggle.

After wrestling with her thoughts, Ariana shook her head and replied, "I apologize, but | cannot disclose that information at this time."

Mitchel refrained from pressing the matter further, simply nodding in acknowledgment. "Respecting patient privacy is an admirable trait. I just wanted to caution you that medications of this nature often carry side effects and the potential for dependency and addiction."

It dawned on Ariana why Horace had mentioned Theodore's addiction issues. It seemed he had been reliant on this medication for quite some time.

Concern etched on her face, Ariana couldn't help but ask anxiously, "What happens if the patient stops taking the medication abruptly?"

"Abrupt cessation of this medication can trigger mood disturbances such as extreme shifts in personality, paranoia, and irritability."

Mitchel's response was disconcerting. Receiving this answer, Ariana's mind immediately connected Theodore's erratic behavior and peculiar displays. After a brief pause, she tentatively ventured, "Could the withdrawal reactions from the drug be responsible for extreme possessiveness or controlling tendencies?"

Pondering for a moment, Mitchel nodded in contemplation. "It is indeed plausible. Ordinary individuals may experience some negative and eccentric emotions and desires, but they typically remain within manageable boundaries. However, the

components of this medication disrupt self-control, eradicating emotional boundaries and amplifying existing negative emotions.' As Mitchel spoke, Ariana began to piece together the puzzle.

Theodore's automatic response in the hospital when he retrieved the medication hinted at a long-standing reliance and the likelihood of numerous side effects.

And when Horace saw this medicine, he repeatedly implored Theodore not to take it, indicating that they were already aware of its severe adverse effects and that Theodore had already developed a dependence and addiction to it, so he was very likely to be withdrawing from it now.

Could Theodore's previous behavior, his surveillance methods, control desires, and extreme actions all be attributed to the medication, causing him to lose control completely?

And judging by Mitchel's tone, the side effects of this medication should be highly dangerous. And yet, Theodore never truly harmed her.

Chapter: 688 Perhaps... he was also struggling to maintain control over himself.

As Ariana pondered this possibility, memories of Theodore's restrained and disciplined gaze flooded her mind, causing her hand to involuntarily clench.

Theodore had been fighting to suppress the effects of the medication, but what had she done?

Ariana was consumed by overwhelming regret. If only she had known about these circumstances earlier, she wouldn't have reacted so strongly when she discovered Theodore was monitoring her. Nor would she have uttered those harsh words, unknowingly hurting Theodore during those moments.

And now, she had no idea where he was. Could it be that he had secluded himself, out of fear of losing control, to confront these emotions alone?

The more Ariana contemplated this, the more profound her sorrow grew, weighing heavily upon her heart.

She should have noticed earlier, and she should have remained by Theodore's side, providing him with companionship during this challenging time.

Ariana found herself completely consumed by feelings of remorse, only snapping back to reality when Mitchel called her name twice.

"Sorry, I was Lost in thought," Ariana apologized, her head lowered.

Mitchel didn't mind and simply replied, "Actually, the mental side effects are not a major concern. They will fade away once complete withdrawal from the medication is achieved. The real issue lies in the combination of cyproheptadine II and cyproheptadine III sedatives, which can accelerate the development and onset of numerous dormant diseases."

Upon hearing this, Ariana's heart tightened immediately, and she nervously asked, "What does that mean?" Could it be that Theodore's body would also experience complications due to this medication? Worrisome thoughts flooded Ariana's mind, causing her to feel a sense of fear as a cold sweat unknowingly broke out.

"If the patient is in good health, there should be no issues," Mitchel explained briefly. "But if the patient has a benign tumor, taking this medication could accelerate its transformation into a malignant one.

The same applies to other underlying conditions. One should always consider the patient's health when using this medication."

Ariana immediately pondered whether Theodore's body harbored any other problems, although she couldn't be entirely certain, which only added to the chaos of her emotions.

"Dr. Chadwick, I am truly grateful for all your assistance. If there is ever anything I can do to help in the future, please let me know, and I'll do my utmost." Ariana suppressed her tumultuous emotions and conveyed her gratitude to Mitchel.

Mitchel, however, simply waved his hand indifferently and replied, "No need. I agreed to assist you because I am also intrigued by this matter. Neurology happens to be my area of expertise, and these medications possess research value as well."

"Neurology?" Ariana was slightly taken aback. She had always assumed his specialty lay in orthopedics or surgery, considering

he had been her attending physician for quite some time.

"Indeed," Mitchel nodded. "I hail from Ivebridge originally. I came to Eleymond this time for a treatment project concerning a rare genetic brain disorder. Presently, I am engaged in researching surgical strategies. This particular ailment is highly unique, with no documented cases before, so in order to enhance the success rate, I need to gather similar cases from hospitals across various locations. The hospitals in Eleymond serve as the final stop in my plan."

As Ariana listened to Mitchel, she found herself awestruck. Her understanding and admiration for his profession as a doctor had reached new heights.

Being a doctor wasn't just demanding, with virtually no holidays throughout the year, but surgeries alone could last for several hours.

Doctors often had to work overtime in the dead of night to save lives. Among all the professions Ariana knew, doctors had the highest cases of death resulting from overwork.

She had always held a deep admiration for the medical profession.

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Doctors like Mitchel, who genuinely cared for each patient and demonstrated earnestness and responsibility, had established a shining image in her mind.

Furthermore, he possessed the appearance of a wealthy gentleman who could effortlessly lead a prosperous life within high society. His every gesture and movement exuded an extraordinary family background.

To her surprise, this affluent young master, while most rich heirs squandered their family fortunes, dedicated himself to curing diseases and saving lives. He even invested a significant amount of time and energy into researching for his patients.

Compared to the rich heirs Ariana was acquainted with, her respect for Mitchel was far greater.

Ariana's gaze then fell upon the thick files that still lay beside Mitchel, and she recalled seeing him engrossed in reading materials when they arrived. Unable to contain her curiosity, she casually inquired, "So, before we came in, you were sitting here alone, going through materials, jotting things down, and researching this case?"

"No, not that." He spoke with remarkable frankness as he opened the notebook positioned next to him and slid it across the table to Ariana.

Ariana glanced down and immediately froze.

Displayed on the screen was a paused scene from a TV drama, accompanied by a document formatted as a standard thesis- Thoughts After Watching the TV Drama Country Love.

Ariana was dumbstruck. The glorious image of the angel in white that had just materialized in her mind seemed to have developed a fracture. She turned her head to once again observe the stack of thick materials beside Mitchel.

Initially assuming them to be complex medical references, she now realized that they were, in fact, analyses of the plot and characters from the TV drama Country Love.

Why would a doctor choose to study this? Even if he desired to transition to the film and television industry, he certainly wouldn't select such a poorly crafted drama for analysis, would he?

To her dismay, she observed that Mitchel appeared unfazed. He seemed oblivious to her astonishment. In a sudden realization, Ariana comprehended why those around her cast odd glances at Mitchel. Although she couldn't fathom the reason behind Mitchel's interest in this subject, she refrained from further inquiry out of respect.

Ariana discreetly took a sip of her drink, attempting to conceal her embarrassment, and with a newfound curiosity, she diverted the conversation, "Considering your exceptional expertise as a doctor, why not conduct research on medical cases at Mercy Hospital?"

Furthermore, Mitchel had previously mentioned that he utilized his connections and resources to investigate this medication. Since he had access to Mercy Hospital's internal research materials, he must have a way in if he desired to work there.

"Why should I go to Mercy Hospital?" Mitchel countered. "Mercy Hospital boasts the nation's leading medical team and state-of-the-art equipment. Wouldn't it be more convenient to work

there, alongside a superior team and abundant resources?" Ariana inquired, secretly pondering the fact that many individuals yearned for the opportunity to join Mercy Hospital.

However, Mitchel merely responded nonchalantly, "If Mercy Hospital's medical team were beneficial, this surgery would have nothing to do with me."

Ariana was completely perplexed by his statement. How could Mercy Hospital, renowned for its top-tier team, be useless?

Mitchel, sensing her confusion, cast a glance her way and elaborated, "Mercy Hospital may have a skilled team, but their patient pool is limited to the wealthy and noble. They deal with only a few cases, lacking in research value."

Suddenly, everything seemed to fall into place. Despite the hospital's impressive capabilities, they primarily treated straightforward ailments, with a scarcity of complex and challenging conditions. It appeared Mitchel had a valid reason to bypass Mercy Hospital.

Ariana nodded, feeling a glimmer of understanding.

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Yet, in the back of her mind, she pondered Theodore's situation. If his condition proved intricate, could she request Mitchel to assess him?

But then again, they were clueless about the purpose of Theodore's medication, let alone its treatment.

A sense of melancholy washed over Ariana as she contemplated the dilemma. Unexpectedly, Mitchel interjected, "If you want answers about that medication, consider approaching the influential figures behind Mercy Hospital."

"Ah? What do you mean?" Ariana momentarily froze, failing to grasp whom he was referring to. Ilden from the BRD Group. You know him, right?" Mitchel revealed, "He's the one you can directly ask. Since Mercy Hospital falls under his industry, he must possess insights into their internal research."

His words echoed in Ariana's mind, stirring up a familiar but enigmatic feeling she had experienced upon encountering Holden at the hotel.

Yet, she couldn't quite put her finger on it. Recalling that moment, a disconcerting mix of recognition and detachment enveloped her, leaving her unsettled.

That night, upon returning home, she had contemplated confronting Holden about their encounter at the banquet. Additionally, she desired an explanation for his persistent use of a mask despite Debora's assurance of his unmarred face.

She had even drafted a message in the chat box, but after a brief hesitation, she deleted it all. Who was she to question him? What right or standing did she possess?

Ariana sighed, her thoughts swirling as she thought about Mitchel's suggestion. Perhaps her connection with Holden wasn't as substantial as she had assumed. Would it be appropriate for her to inquire him about the internal affairs of his company?

As Ariana pushed the thought aside and continued her conversation with Mitchel, the night grew late and they decided to leave the restaurant.

Sarah was inebriated, and although Mitchel had indulged in some drinks, he remained relatively sober. Then, Ariana decided to take a cab.

Mitchel helped Ariana in supporting the intoxicated Sarah. The three waited for a cab outside. When Ariana reached for her bag, she was surprised to find it was not with her.

"Hold on, I think I left my bag at the reception. I'll go fetch it," Ariana apologized to Mitchel, who nodded understandingly, assuring her he could manage with Sarah. Ariana hastily retraced her steps to retrieve her bag, while Mitchel provided support to the drunk Sarah outside.

The surroundings were enveloped in darkness, a chilly breeze whispering through the air. Sarah gradually regained consciousness, her intoxicated state causing her to mistake Mitchel for someone else.

“Why are you here?” She wavered, restlessly clutching his arm as she stumbled into his embrace, half-jokingly exclaiming, “You're not here to break up with me, are you? I'm a pitiful mess...”

Mitchel was speechless.

Seeing Sarah's state, it was evident she had mistaken him for another person. If he let go, she would certainly hit the ground, so he fought the urge to.

Sarah heaved a sigh and gazed blankly at Mitchel. “Aziel, you can't break up with me!”

Seeing Sarah drunk and unruly, Mitchel felt a headache rising. He grabbed Sarah's arm to prevent her from falling but kept his distance from her.

He rarely spent time alone with women, let alone a drunken one. He was simply at a loss.

Just then, Sarah looked at Mitchel seriously. Her head was tilted, and she narrowed her eyes while mumbling something unintelligible. Her body swayed uncontrollably when suddenly, she shrieked, “You are not him!”

Mitchel was expressionless when he tried to calm her down, “Miss Flynn, stand still.”