

Unconscious 781

Chapter: 781 Theodore, his emotions palpable, broke the silence in a measured tone.

“Yes, she was. After she succumbed to the effects of the drug, Darian publicly declared her death from a severe illness. Within months, he married Sharon. Meanwhile, she... Languished in that place, year after year, until her last breath.”

Feeling Theodore tremble ever so slightly, Ariana enveloped him in a comforting embrace.

Theodore’s gaze remained fixed on the image on the tombstone, lost in thought.

During those years, Darian’s men heavily guarded the entire manor.

There was no escape for Aimee. Meanwhile, Theodore, only five years old at the time, was forbidden to see her. Nonetheless, the young Theodore managed to clandestinely visit her by slipping through a discreet hole in the wall. Aimee, robbed of her sanity, would still give him morsels of food upon his arrival.

She at times would lovingly caress his face one moment, only to push him away the next, her arms holding her head in terror as she begged him to stay away.

Those scenes were etched into Theodore’s memory, vivid and haunting. “Then... How did she die?” Ariana asked cautiously, her voice laced with trepidation. Theodore, returning to the present, let out a pained sigh. “She took her own life!”

He lowered himself, resting his head on Ariana’s shoulder, as if finding solace in her embrace. A long sigh escaped his lips as if his sorrow-laden heart had finally found a momentary respite.

Comforting him with her embrace, Ariana whispered soothingly, “Everything will be alright. The past is behind us now.” “Yes,” he responded with a somber tone before continuing, “You’ve been curious about Marley, haven’t you?” Ariana couldn’t help but feel surprised when Theodore mentioned Marley in such an unexpected circumstance.

She gazed at him with a blank expression as he straightened up and forced a bitter smile. "Marley is my... half-sister," he revealed.

The words hung in the air, and Ariana's mind struggled to comprehend the sudden revelation. Hadn't Marley been the girl of his dreams? How could she suddenly become his sister? The weight of this new information was hard for Ariana to digest. Based on Marley's photos, she estimated that Marley was

probably around six years younger than Theodore. But at that time, Aimee had been imprisoned in the manor by Darian. How could she have gotten pregnant?

If Marley truly was Theodore's sister, why had she lived in that small town and met such a tragic fate? Ariana found it difficult to wrap her head around it all.

Sensing her shock and confusion, Theodore intended to explain, but as he was about to speak, a wave of pain gripped his brain, causing him to falter.

At that moment, Theodore saw Marley appear before him again, consumed by hatred, and she spoke to him in a spiteful tone, declaring that he would never deserve forgiveness.

Subconsciously, Theodore tightened his grip on Ariana's hand. It felt as though the blood in his veins turned to ice, freezing him in place as if he had fallen into an icy cave.

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Ariana noticed something was amiss with Theodore, reminiscent of when he had experienced a relapse of his illness. Immediately, she grew anxious and held his hand firmly.

"What's wrong? Theodore, are you okay?" she asked, her voice cutting through his daze and bringing him back to reality. He shook his head, managing to shake off the unsettling sensation.

She refrained from further inquiry, concerned that any word she uttered might be the catalyst for his impending nervous breakdown.

Earlier, Ariana had been drenched in sweat as she searched everywhere for Theodore. The dampness clung to her now, causing a slight chill, and the rain poured down with increased intensity.

Theodore removed his coat and draped it over her shoulders, his voice gentle as he said, "It is time for us to return home." With a nod, Ariana made her way towards the entrance of the cemetery, accompanied by Theodore.

Horace awaited them at the entrance, and after Ariana entered the car, Theodore engaged in a conversation with Horace near the vehicle. Their words were indistinct to Ariana's ears. Seated inside the car, her attention was drawn to three black cars parked at the entrance.

An uneasy feeling washed over Ariana as she speculated that she might once again be under surveillance or that someone might be pursuing Theodore.

Regaining her composure, she examined the cars more closely and discovered that their license plates belonged to Eylemond's, not Mistlyn's. Relief flooded through her, as she surmised that these individuals were likely here for the cemetery visit.

Suddenly, a knock resounded on the car window. Ariana rolled it down and encountered Theodore, who remained stationary, showing no intention of getting inside.

Confusion etched across Ariana's face as she asked, "Aren't you getting in the car?" Theodore shook his head and responded softly, "I still have some matters to attend to. I'll return home later."

Understanding that he needed to resolve the aftermath of the recent commotion, Ariana nodded in agreement. Additionally, remaining at this location for an extended period could result in her falling ill, prompting her compliance.

As the car began to move, Ariana, reluctant to part ways, fixated her gaze upon Theodore, who grew more distant with each passing moment. She kept her eyes locked on him until he disappeared from view entirely.

Once Ariana had departed, Theodore proceeded to approach the black cars bearing Mistlyn's License plates by the roadside. He positioned himself before the leading vehicle and announced, "Grandpa, they are all gone. We can go in now."

On the opposite side, following his removal from the cemetery, Darian found himself thrust into a diminutive, lightless room. The absence of any illumination filled him with an overwhelming sense of trepidation and unease.

He couldn't fathom Theodore's intentions for confining him in this bleak space.

Just moments ago, he had felt a surge of relief at having evaded the clutches of the police during the funeral. However, that sentiment was swiftly replaced by genuine fear.

Darian should have known better than to underestimate Theodore's madness and his capacity for unpredictable actions. In this dire moment, regret consumed him, prompting thoughts on why he had ever married Aimee, that deranged woman. She

had been nothing more than a powerless orphan, devoid of any influence or affluence. Apart from her initial contribution of 800,000, which had jump-started the Anderson family's business, she had made no further meaningful contributions.

The Anderson Group's current stature had been built meticulously by the concerted efforts of both Darian and his father. And what about Aimee?

She possessed no power or support to offer. Once she had exhausted her meager savings, she remained utterly ineffectual in aiding the Anderson Group within the realm of business.

Yet, despite her complete lack of influence, Aimee somehow managed to claim a 30% ownership share. The question of why continued to gnaw at Darian, intensifying his mounting regret and fury.

He had married Sharon with the intention of improving the Anderson Group. Had he made a mistake?

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No, he hadn't.

Darian felt his anger reaching a boiling point.

It was all her fault! Everything was because of that crazy woman, Aimee!

And she was being unreasonable herself. Despite her insanity, she adamantly refused to give up her shares. That's why he had her Locked up! Wouldn't it have been better if that crazy woman had simply handed over her shares earlier? The thought nagged at him.

And Theodore, oh, he was undoubtedly a son of a bitch.

If it weren't for the fact that he had Anderson blood in his veins, Darian wouldn't have tolerated Theodore's presence for a second.

This ungrateful person had benefited from the Anderson family and then turned against them when they needed him the most. If only Darian had known, he would have strangled Theodore on his sickbed!

Darian's anger consumed him, and he vented it by kicking the walls in frustration.

Just as he released his pent-up rage, the door swung open abruptly, and two imposing bodyguards stormed in. Instantly, fear gripped Darian, causing him to freeze in place. "I didn't do anything!" he shouted desperately.

But his words fell on deaf ears as the bodyguards ignored him and whisked him away.

Darian trembled uncontrollably, overwhelmed by his terror. He believed Theodore was going to end his life, so he shouted in a frenzy, "Let me go! I'll give you everything! Don't kill me, don't kill me!"

His pleas for mercy echoed desperately, only for him to realize that he had been taken to the funeral site.

The guests had already dispersed, and Theodore was nowhere to be found.

Instead, an old man with snowy white hair stood solemnly before the coffin.

The bodyguards didn't subject Darian to any further actions; they simply held him down, keeping him in place. When Darian caught a clear view of the old man's face, his eyes widened in utter shock.

It was a face he had seen countless times on the news.

It was none other than Aldus from the prestigious BRD Group-the

Fredrick family, a family of immense wealth that even the mighty Anderson family couldn't compare to.

With a surge of adrenaline, Darian mustered every ounce of strength to break free from the grip of the bodyguards. He crawled and rolled his way towards Aldus, wearing an ingratiating smile. "Mr. Fredrick, how did you end up in such a place?" Aldus remained silent, his gaze fixed on Darian with an icy coldness.

It dawned upon Darian that Aldus might have witnessed the entire funeral spectacle. He hastily said, "I apologize for the disturbance caused by my disobedient son. I have severed all ties with him. He is an unfilial son, I humbly request your assistance. If you are willing to save me, I am prepared to exchange all of Anderson Group's stocks for it!"

However, Aldus continued to regard him with a frosty stare, as if peering at a lifeless being. He said slowly, almost chillingly, "The unfilial son you mentioned, does it refer to my grandson, Theodore?"

"Grandson? What do you mean by that, your grandson, Theodore?" Darian asked in disbelief.

He was utterly flabbergasted, suspecting he was a victim of an auditory illusion.

Chapter: 784 If indeed Theodore was Aldus' grandson, that would render Aimee...

"No, that's simply not possible." Darian's eyes widened in shock at Aldus. He managed a forced smile and retorted in a shaky tone, "Mr. Fredrick, you do have a twisted sense of humor. Are you trying to joke? Theodore is clearly my son."

"I've severed my connection with you," came Theodore's chilling voice from behind. He gradually closed in on Aldus, delivering a cold stare at Darian. He clarified, "My mother was the legitimate daughter of Aldus Fredrick."

Upon hearing Theodore's declaration, Aldus' eyes flickered momentarily. He glanced at the lifeless body in the coffin, his eyes glinting red. In the past, Aldus had arranged for Aimee to marry into a family that offered him a valuable business alliance.

Yet Aimee, a woman of independent will, refused to barter herself for commercial gains, choosing to elope with her personal belongings instead.

This move infuriated Aldus. He refrained from pursuing her, expecting that the hardships of the real world would serve as a Lesson. Having been pampered since childhood, Aimee was unaccustomed to adversity.

Aldus was confident she would return home once she experienced the harsh realities of life. However, Aimee never came back.

The realization triggered panic within Aldus. He exhausted every resource to locate her, even assembling a dedicated search party, but all efforts proved fruitless.

By the time he received any news about her, it was too Late.

"I spent over a decade in search of her. If it weren't for your cruel confinement, I would have found her!" Tears streamed down the face of the magnate, his expression mirroring the marks of time and grief.

In this moment, he was merely a father mourning the loss of his daughter.

The greatest regret of his life was his failure to reunite with her.

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The thought of Aimee enduring each agonizing day, crying out for his help, was unbearable!

It was already too late when 17-year-old Theodore approached him. Aimee and Marley were no more, and his only grandchild had been manipulated and mistreated by the Anderson family.

The rage Aldus felt at that moment was enough to annihilate the Anderson Group, send them to their doom, and reclaim Theodore.

But Theodore rejected this course of action.

From an early age, Theodore witnessed the cruel and ruthless nature of humanity. He had been biding his time in the shadows, devising his elaborate plan of vengeance. He was determined to make them pay, slowly smothering them in their self-created trap.

This was why Aldus resisted obliterating the Anderson family. Instead, he began secretly grooming Theodore, even allowing him to oversee the Fredrick family's business operations. All their efforts were aimed at this day, a day of retribution

Darian stared in disbelief at Theodore and Aldus. Finally comprehending that this was no farce, he collapsed onto the ground, incapable of accepting this truth.

It was inconceivable that he was just a hair's breadth away from inheriting a colossal fortune!

Why hadn't Aimee informed him?

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Aldus, looking at the body within the coffin, clutched his chest, overwhelmed by remorse. His hands trembled as they rested on the coffin, and his voice choked with regret, "My Aimee is merely expressing her wrath by running away from home after Learning that | arranged a marriage. | apologize. | was wrong, horribly wrong."

Suddenly, the intact body in the coffin began to rapidly decompose.

Theodore understood that it was a natural phenomenon occurring due to sudden exposure to air after being sealed for many years.

In Theodore's mind, this was a sign. It was as though Aimee had heard everything and finally found peace.

Overcome with grief, Aldus staggered, collapsing onto the coffin, his cries cutting through the still air. He sobbed, his voice breaking as he pleaded, "Aimee, | am sorry. | failed you. Return to us, please!"

"Grandfather, please bear up. | believe mother's desires have been fulfilled. You must look after yourself." Theodore tenderly supported Aldus, his face mirroring the pain of the elder man

Darian observed this heartbreaking tableau as if caught in a surreal dream. Frozen for a moment, he finally sprang into action, rushing forward to grasp Aldus's Legs, his words tumbling out in a panicked rush, "Mr. Fredrick, my heart belongs to Aimee. The villainous Sharon drove a wedge between us, pushing Aimee to the brink. I'm still in love with her."

Turning towards Theodore, Darian implored, "Theodore, we share blood and you could not deny our bond! Please tell your grandfather that Aimee and | truly loved each other."

"Get away from us! You're not fit to speak her name!" Aldus violently rejected Darian, his voice dripping with anger. "My daughter will no longer be connected to the disgraceful Anderson family. I'm taking her to rest in the Fredrick family cemetery. Also, Theodore will sever all ties with the Anderson family. Henceforth, he will be known as Holden Fredrick, and you shall be a stranger to him!"

“No, Mr. Fredrick, you must hear me out. It’s all a grand misunderstanding.” Darian’s desperation grew, and his regret became a heavy burden. He felt like a caricature of a man caught in a dramatic farce.

“Silence! I have no desire to hear your explanations.” Propped up by Theodore, Aldus stood tall, his gaze sternly fixed on the man begging at his feet. “Rest easy; today you will go unscathed. But the day of reckoning will come. Just wait and see!”

Helpless, Darian watched them depart. He had never imagined the seemingly vulnerable Aimee to be the heir of the prestigious Fredrick family.

He remained in the torrential rain, his face ashen and consumed by regret. Everything he had would be gone. He was doomed. The rain intensified, and Theodore guided Aldus away, leaving only after ensuring Aimee’s remains were properly cared for. Back home, Ariana sat by the window, a bundle of nerves, worried sick about Theodore.

The relentless rain showed no signs of abating.

After what felt like an eternity, Ariana finally caught sight of a familiar car in the distance, and a wave of relief washed over her.

The apartment didn’t have underground parking, so Theodore had to walk a short distance in the pouring rain. Despite carrying an umbrella, he was drenched.

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Just as Theodore was about to knock on the door, Ariana pulled it open, ushered him inside, handed him a dry towel, and pointed to fresh clothes set aside. “Finally, you’re back. Go take a hot shower and get dry. We can’t have you catching a cold.”

Theodore glanced at the neatly folded clothes on the sofa and made a wry joke. “I half-expected you to have discarded all my belongings.”

Ariana, who was about to towel-dry his hair, snorted and tossed the towel onto his head. "Stop playing the victim. You've been over while I was gone; didn't you notice your things were untouched?"

Caught red-handed, Theodore blushed slightly. Ariana couldn't help but suppress a chuckle at his flustered reaction.

Feigning irritation, she nudged him towards the bathroom. "You're not as sneaky as you think. Who do you think took the Little figurine from my desk?"

Halted at the bathroom entrance, Theodore ducked his head, his expression sheepish as he mumbled, "I thought you might never forgive me; I wanted to leave a memento."

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Upon hearing this, Ariana looked at him and asked with a teasing smile, "So, if I don't forgive you, you're never going to seek me out again?"

The idea was inconceivable! Theodore silently protested. He would never let her go, even if it killed him. Even if Ariana despised him, he would make sure she stayed with him.

But he chose to keep those thoughts to himself for fear of scaring Ariana, only looking at her, his voice tinged with regret, "I apologize for my past mistakes."

His pitiful demeanor softened Ariana's heart, and her anger almost dissipated. She guided him into the bathroom, not directly accepting his apology. "First, get cleaned up and put on dry clothes. We'll discuss the rest later."

While Theodore showered, Ariana finally had the chance to check her phone.

As she had predicted, the news headlines had erupted. Among the trending topics, a term stuck out prominently: scandals of the wealthy elite! The patriarch of the Anderson family was exposed as a despicable scoundrel!

Ariana's fingers danced across her phone screen, eagerly tapping the captivating headline that had taken the internet by storm. As she delved into the article, a cascade of shocking revelations unraveled before her eyes.

The despicable deeds of Darian, the husband who had resorted to drugging his own wife and subjecting his son to unspeakable abuse, were laid bare for the world to see.

But that wasn't the end of the sordid tale! The story took an even darker turn, exposing Jasper's involvement in a heinous murder plot, while his mother, Sharon, orchestrated the horrific act of hiring men to gang rape the woman close to Darian.

Pictures of Jasper and Sharon getting arrested were also included. The internet erupted with a torrent of comments, each one reflecting the collective outrage and incredulity of the readers.

"The web of deceit and depravity that entangles the affluent is truly mind-boggling!" remarked one commenter, his words laden with horror.

"Wasn't Jasper the charming beau of Brielle? Oh, he is doomed in such a short period of time!" went on another person. "Didn't Brielle display her engagement to Jasper previously? What's keeping her quiet at the moment?" Mockery and disdain flowed freely from the anti-fans who reveled in her apparent downfall.

Among the deluge of comments, some were from individuals who had attended the funeral that very day. They claimed that Darian's atrocities went beyond what was exposed, expressing their frustration over his refusal to confess, despite overwhelming evidence against him.

A particular comment recounted what happened when Jasper and Sharon were being led away by the authorities. In a desperate plea, Jasper asked Darian for help, only to be met with a cold, emotionless gaze.

The person recounted how Darian stood by, wordless and unmoved, prompting Jasper to scold him for his heartlessness and lack of empathy.

Unsurprisingly, all the netizens turned their ire towards Darian, lashing out at him from all corners of the internet.

Darian's past was mercilessly unearthed, including the revelation that the Anderson Group had been established using Aimee's savings.

The consequences of the scandal rippled beyond the confines of the digital world. The stocks of the Anderson Group, recently soaring in value, plummeted at an alarming rate. Several business partners who had once collaborated with the group promptly announced the suspension of their partnerships, leaving the company's future hanging in the balance.

As Ariana immersed herself in the sea of comments, her phone buzzed incessantly, signaling incoming messages from various group chats.

Friends and acquaintances wanted to make sure she was okay.

Chapter: 787 Sarah, struggling to comprehend the magnitude of the story, reached out to Ariana privately for confirmation. Ariana confirmed the authenticity of the scandal. Sarah responded with the word "bastard" and an exploding head emoji.

After responding to Sarah, Ariana sensed a familiar presence behind her. She turned instinctively, her forehead inadvertently meeting Theodore's lips in a gentle collision.

In that brief moment, Ariana's heart quickened its pace, a blush rising to her cheeks. She then stepped back. Theodore's hair was drenched, with water dripping from his angular face to his Adam's apple and then to his clothing. Ariana couldn't help but feel a surge of emotions, her pulse racing.

Acting quickly, she grabbed a dry towel and motioned for Theodore to sit down, gently drying his hair.

Theodore sat there quietly, his arms encircling Ariana's waist, a playful pinch accentuating his words as he whispered, "Seems like you've gained a few pounds. It's not just my imagination, is it?"

Though Theodore thought he spoke discreetly, Ariana caught every word, her eyes rolling playfully as she ruffled his hair with playful exasperation.

Unaware of her response, Theodore's fingers danced along her waist, seeking more than just a casual touch.

Sensing his intention, Ariana swiftly disentangled herself from his embrace, retreating to another sofa, creating a physical divide between them.

Before Theodore could react, Ariana had slipped away from his grasp, leaving him to gaze at her with a forlorn expression.

With seriousness etched on her face, Ariana locked eyes with Theodore, her voice measured and resolute. "Tell me, Theodore. Why did you keep Marley's true identity as your sister hidden from me? Did you find pleasure in watching me fumble in the dark, searching for the truth?"

Theodore was at a loss as to what to say about the suffering that he had been through.

With a slight bow of his head, he reached out to clasp Ariana's hand and explained, "Forgive me... I've kept things from you. Marley's identity was a tangled web of complications. It was a pivotal moment and there was irreparable damage between Darian and me. My mother hadn't been buried yet. I wanted to share everything with you when the things settled."

Ariana empathized with Theodore.

She understood the depth of his sacrifice and the risks he had taken.

Concerned about Theodore's relationship with Helen, she inquired, "What about Helen? Why do you show her such Leniency?" Leniency? Theodore was perplexed, for he believed he had never treated Helen with undue leniency.

Still, he explained, "I am not being lenient with Helen. She was Marley's dearest friend, and it was Marley's wish to help cure Helen's ailing heart. I merely sought to spare her further distress."

Seeing that Ariana was still somewhat displeased, he continued, "I know you prefer not to see Helen, so | made arrangements to keep her at a distance from you."

This explanation assuaged Ariana's unease. Then, a memory stirred within her. She recalled the night at the Anderson family's residence when Helen wove an elaborate tale about Marley's identity, a tale that seemed flawless. Suddenly, something struck her. She looked at Theodore with a furrowed brow and questioned, "Is Helen the daughter of Marianna, the servant at the Anderson family's residence?"

"How did you come to know?" Theodore gazed at her in astonishment. He couldn't recall ever mentioning Helen to her. Ariana comprehended and pressed on, "Is it true?"

Theodore nodded. "Indeed, Helen is Marianna's daughter. When my mother resided in the Anderson family's estate, Marianna was constantly by her side. She served as a housekeeper of sorts, and everyone in the residence took good care of Helen."

Chapter: 788 Ariana's expression hardened as she replied frankly, "Yet, Helen claimed Marley was Marianna's daughter." "What?" Theodore exclaimed, disbelief etched on his face.

"You're surprised, aren't you? This is how she duped me!" Ariana sneered, recounting to Theodore every falsehood Helen had spun, including the fact that Helen had hired a private investigator to trail her.

With a resolute demeanor, Theodore spoke in hushed tones. "Fear not, | shall address the matter concerning Helen."

Hearing this, Ariana felt a measure of relief. The mystery that had plagued her for so long was unraveled, and she chose to trust Theodore.

She gazed at Theodore, her mind teeming with questions, yet she refrained from asking them.

Who was Marley's father? Why did nobody dare speak of Marley in the Anderson household? And why did Theodore and even Horace keep Marley's existence a secret?

She knew close to nothing about Marley.

But when she recalled Theodore's mental breakdown while speaking of Marley, she found herself unable to pose these inquiries. At present, she worried more about Theodore's ongoing dependence on psychiatric medication.

Could his body and soul truly endure the strain it imposed?

Ariana chose not to probe deeper about the medication; instead, she planned to carry out a clandestine investigation. She was skeptical whether Theodore would reveal the truth even if she confronted him.

She let out an internal sigh, albeit tinged with gratitude that Theodore was still among the Living.

Now that the matters concerning Marley and Helen were resolved, their silent standoff ceased. Noticing Ariana gently clutching his hand, Theodore recognized her silent gesture of forgiveness

Awave of relief washed over him as he drew her into his arms and, with a gentle shift, seated her on his lap. Silently, their eyes Locked onto each other, their breaths growing more intimate.

The comforting aroma of Theodore started to engulf her, punctuated by fervent and passionate kisses, leaving Ariana's mind blank.

With great effort, she managed to place her hands on Theodore's chest, though she was too feeble to resist his advances. She gently pushed Theodore away and stated in a monotone, "Wait. | need to share something with you."

He brushed her lips with a soft peck and asked in a husky tone, "What is it?"

As Ariana met Theodore's deep gaze, she swallowed the words lodged in her throat.

She had intended to inform him about her pregnancy once she had clarity about Marley's identity. The unborn children in her womb couldn't wait much longer.

She attempted to articulate, but the courage she had summoned vanished instantly. Theodore had made it clear that he didn't desire children. He had even insensitively suggested an abortion in the event of her pregnancy.

Ariana was caught in an emotional crossfire.

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On reconsideration, they hadn't been in love when he made those statements, but now their love was deep and profound. Had he perhaps changed his stance?

Emboldened by this thought, Ariana once again mustered the courage to speak, but a sudden growl from her stomach interrupted her.

Her face instantly flushed with embarrassment.

Covering her belly awkwardly, she coughed before admitting to Theodore with a sheepish grin, "I'm famished." Theodore gazed at her, chuckling softly before affectionately ruffling her hair and acknowledging, "Yes, I know." In a playful fit of embarrassment, Ariana threw a pillow at his head.

Theodore, however, did not evade it. Standing up with a grin, he announced, "I'm going to prepare dinner." Ariana looked at him in disbelief. "You know how to cook?"

"Certainly, I've been picking it up lately. I've even asked Horace to deliver the ingredients to our doorstep." Theodore seemed well-prepared as he headed to the door to fetch the delivered items.

Ariana, now seated on the sofa, repressed her initial impulse to stop him upon witnessing his newfound confidence.

He wouldn't blow up the kitchen with his cooking exploits, would he?

Ariana watched Theodore carry the ingredients into the kitchen and heard the door shut behind him with a definitive click. So he wished for privacy while cooking?

The sight of the closed kitchen door amused Ariana.

Given that this was likely his first attempt at cooking, she decided to grant him some space, despite her mounting curiosity. Before long, a series of noises from the kitchen caught Ariana's attention while she was engrossed in the television.

's everything all right?" she couldn't resist asking.

'Yes, it's nearly ready."

ALL right.

With a slight twitch of her lips, Ariana refrained from further queries, returning her focus to the television while leaving Theodore to have free reign of the kitchen.

An hour later, Theodore emerged from the kitchen, announcing triumphantly, "Dinner is served."

Ariana was incredulous. Had he actually cooked a meal?

Her gaze darted past him to the kitchen, which now resembled a battlefield aftermath.

Theodore, noticing her gaze, diverted her attention and guided her towards the dining table.

Upon seeing the food displayed on the table, she was taken aback.

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Three dishes and a soup were presented, albeit unseasoned. The soup was an attempt at instant noodles, slightly charred and evidently lacking in water during its preparation

Ariana was overcome with amusement. Indeed, Theodore was a man accustomed to being waited upon, irrespective of his location.

“They seem appetizing,” Ariana mustered the courage to express. Although Theodore maintained a poker face, Ariana couldn’t miss the spark of delight that lit up his eyes. Exhaling deeply, she took a seat and leisurely enjoyed her dinner.

Post-meal, Ariana lounged in the Living room, savoring her juice and observing Theodore tackle the dishes. A tender smile graced her Lips.

In the kitchen, Theodore was a picture of composed concentration, yet his frantic movements and unconcealed furrowed brows betrayed his anxiety.

His rare ventures into the kitchen left him unfamiliar with the chore of dishwashing, adding to his unease. In his haste to finish the task, he resolved to ask Horace to acquire a dishwasher the following day.

Noticing that Theodore had wrapped up, Ariana glanced at the clock, debating whether she should ask him to go back to his own apartment.

Before she could voice her thoughts, Theodore took a seat beside her, announcing, “The main power switch in my place is malfunctioning. It needs to be fixed.”

“Is that so?” Ariana regarded him skeptically.

Theodore met her questioning gaze with a slight nod.

“Mmm,” Ariana murmured her acceptance. Despite her lingering doubts, she refrained from probing further. After all, he frequently came up with varied reasons to spend the night here. She had grown accustomed to it. Moreover, their long separation made her reluctant to bid him goodbye.

She yearned for his company a little longer.

Without any further words, Ariana let him stay and proceeded to take a shower.

On emerging from the bathroom, she found Theodore reclined on the bed, engrossed in a book, entirely at ease.

This sight didn't faze Ariana. They had shared the same bed countless times, after all. She towel-dried her hair, slipped into bed, and nestled up to Theodore.

Instantly setting his book aside, Theodore drew her closer into his embrace, softly inquiring, "What was it you wanted to discuss before dinner?"

Ariana hesitated. Theodore's stance remained inscrutable. After a pause, she revealed,

"Did you hear about Sarah and Aziel?"