

Unconscious 541

Chapter: 541

Horace shrugged, understanding immediately what Theodore was insinuating. He picked up his phone and placed a call. After a moment, he had an answer.

“Tietram Media says there’s no cooperation for now,” Horace hesitated before adding, “and Joziah’s on annual leave abroad.”

Theodore let out a chuckle, but Horace sensed something was off and wanted to speak up. Theodore, however, cut him off with a raised hand, clearly impatient.

Horace, normally a talkative man, remained silent to avoid any chance of provoking Theodore. He sealed his lips and made sure to breathe as quietly as possible, fearing that any noise might set off Theodore’s temper.

Theodore’s face twisted in anger as he pulled out his phone and accessed a hidden interface. With a satellite map displayed, he saw a red dot moving in a familiar direction.

Ariana sat in the taxi, her head leaning against the window, consumed by guilt for deceiving Theodore.

She hadn’t intended to go along with Helen’s plan initially, but Helen’s words had taken hold of her mind, casting a spell she couldn’t shake off.

Questions that had previously been ignored resurfaced one after another.

Who was Helen? How did she have such unwavering confidence in Theodore? And why did Theodore, a seemingly cold-hearted person, show such tolerance towards a woman with no blood ties? What was their shared past?

Most importantly, why did Theodore harbor such deep aversion towards children? If he could accept other people’s children, why couldn’t he accept his own?

These underlying issues, though dormant for now, would inevitably lead to conflict in the future.

With the answers seemingly within reach, Ariana couldn't help but want to find out.

The night was shrouded in darkness as the taxi left the bustling city and arrived at the prestigious villa community in Eleymond. Soon, the familiar house came into view, causing Ariana's worries to intensify.

This place held memories of the two months following her marriage into the Anderson family. It wasn't extraordinary, yet it felt like an entire lifetime. It was here that she had met the person she had fallen in love with. She had once believed her life would be stable, but now it felt enveloped in uncertainty once more.

Ariana felt sorry for deceiving Theodore. It wasn't that she didn't trust him, but a relationship with so many unresolved issues couldn't last. The issue of the child was looming, and she needed to find out what lay in his past that he didn't want to talk about. After paying the fare, she stepped out of the taxi with determination.

The wrought iron gate stood before her, closed and silent. A few lights illuminated the eaves, bringing a sense of calmness.

Ariana punched in the familiar password from memory and opened the small gate beside the iron entrance. Despite the familiar surroundings, the absence of the elderly gardener struck her as peculiar; he usually emerged upon hearing any commotion.

Without dwelling on the thought, she wrapped her coat tighter around her and treaded cautiously towards the door. Just as she took a couple of steps, a sudden figure emerged from the other side of the fountain, jolting Ariana out of her reverie.

Drawing closer, Ariana recognized the figure as Helen. Dressed in pristine white sportswear, her hair pulled back in a high ponytail, and a mischievous smile adorning her face, Helen's raised eyebrows signaled her delight. "You are here. It's precisely twelve o'clock. Excellent. I do admire punctuality."

Ariana disregarded her presence and walked past her towards the door.

Chapter: 542

Helen quickly caught up, entered the password in front of her, and forcefully pushed the door open, as if she were the mistress of the house.

“Aren't you afraid of alerting Judy and the others?” Ariana glanced at her coldly.

“Fear not, there’s no one inside the house now.” Helen sneered and went on, “Ever since you moved out, Theodore left too. Soon after, I found myself back in the hospital. Theodore granted all the staff a vacation.”

As Helen's gaze turned frosty, she remarked, “It’s quite absurd, isn’t it? This grand mansion reduced to emptiness due to your absence. You've barely been married for three months.”

The house had been shrouded in silence for an extended period until they arrived.

Helen stood before Ariana, uttering words that held no significance. But Ariana, lacking the patience to entertain idle conversation, brushed Helen’s shoulder aside and proceeded forward with determination. “I have no interest in reminiscing about the past with you. If you don’t get to the point, I shall take my leave.”

Ariana paused and turned to face Helen, awaiting her next move.

Though displeased with Ariana’s dismissive attitude, Helen’s smile widened as she contemplated the forthcoming revelation. She walked toward Ariana with an air of confidence. “Let us proceed. I shall guide you to a place where everything shall become clear.”

As they ascended to the fourth floor, Ariana hesitated. Were they heading towards the end of the corridor?

As anticipated, Helen reached the room at the corridor's end before Ariana. She cast a cold glance at Ariana and spoke, her words dripping with disdain. "Why do you linger there? Come here. Don't you yearn for the truth? Or have you lost your nerve?"

Ariana snorted and strode forward. Helen continued to goad Ariana persistently, successfully pushing her buttons. It must be acknowledged that Helen possessed a knack for provoking her.

The thick wooden door loomed before them, tightly shut. A lavender-hued door token dangled from its handle.

"The answer you seek lies just beyond this door," Helen stated. Her voice, bewitching in its tone, held a tantalizing promise. "Push it open, and you will have your answers."

Ariana paid little heed to Helen's words, her rationality still intact. She remembered Judy's warning, cautioning her against entering this room. It was a forbidden domain.

"Why are you hesitating? No one is here, and no one will know of our intrusion."

Helen attempted to persuade her, her hand resting on the doorknob. "Open it. Don't you yearn to understand why Theodore shuns the idea of having a child? The answers lie within this room."

Under Helen's enchantment, Ariana's mind grew increasingly muddled. She felt an insatiable curiosity for the unknown, yet also a fear of what revelations she might 'uncover.

With a turn of the doorknob, the closed door swung open, propelled by either Ariana's strength or Helen's influence.

Ariana found herself engulfed in an abyss of unending darkness, creeping in with a creak.

Helen's triumphant smile emerged as she flicked the light switch, illuminating the room in its entirety.

Ariana squinted uncomfortably, gradually discerning the room's layout.

Unexpectedly, it was a space fit for an ordinary girl.

Chapter: 543 Immaculately clean and imbued with a faint warmth, as if the room's owner still resided there.

The furnishings in the room were simple and warm, with a predominant blue color scheme. There was a light-colored sofa, floral curtains, a cello in the corner, and several dolls, crystal balls, and young girls' comic books neatly arranged on the shelves. At the head and end of the bed, there were dolls adorning the space.

Ariana meticulously observed each corner of the room before her gaze settled upon the cloakroom. There were two rows of pristine white wardrobes, with over ten doors in all, waiting to be explored. Driven by an inexplicable curiosity, Ariana found herself drawn to open the wardrobe.

To her astonishment, the wardrobe contained an assortment of brand new dresses, each exuding a distinct air of luxury. Some of the dresses still had their tags attached, indicating their recent acquisition. It was evident that these dresses had been carefully chosen and acquired over the years.

Helen approached Ariana, her expression marked by a mixture of complexity and intrigue. She directed her attention towards the dresses, her words tinged with a hint of melancholy. "Every year, for Marley's birthday and various other special occasions, Theodore personally selects one of Marley's favorite garments and arranges it here."

She continued, her voice carrying a weight of nostalgia. "These wardrobes simply cannot contain them all, and as a result, many have been relocated to the attic after meticulous organization."

"Who is Marley?"

Ariana's memories stirred as she pondered the information Judy had shared shortly after her arrival at the Anderson mansion. According to Judy, Darian, Theodore's father, had only two children—Theodore and Jasper.

With Jasper being brought back to the family when Theodore was twelve years old, Ariana deduced that the girl named Marley couldn't possibly be a relative of Theodore.

This realization left her with burning questions: If they were not related, why did Theodore exhibit such care and concern for Marley? How was it that she could live here? Could she be his first love?

The mere possibility of Marley being Theodore's first love left a bitter taste in Ariana's mouth. If Marley truly held a place in his heart, then Theodore would never forget her. This would explain why he kept the room locked, refusing entry to anyone else.

Ariana's complexion grew paler as these thoughts swirled in her mind. Sensing her distress, Helen couldn't help but smile, a hint of mischief in her eyes. "Theodore's mother has a devoted maid named Marianna," she began, her voice laced with intrigue. "Marianna has been by his side for many years, raising him practically as her own child. Their relationship is far from ordinary."

A pause followed, as if Helen relished the anticipation. "Marley is Marianna's daughter," she finally revealed, her fingers delicately grazing the beautiful dresses before her. "Tragically, Marley's father passed away in a car accident shortly after her birth. Due to Marianna's close ties with Theodore's mother, Marley has resided here since childhood and even possesses her own room, making her a true member of the Anderson family."

"So Theodore and Marley aren't siblings?" Ariana asked, her voice steady.

Helen, her smile undeterred, swiftly responded, "No, they are not siblings in the conventional sense. Their connection runs much deeper. In Theodore's heart, Marley represents his first love, a love untouched by impurity." Helen's lips curled, and her white teeth peeked through. "Growing up together, their bond is unbreakable. Marley possesses a gentle spirit that surpasses any words used to describe her beauty. Even Theodore's mother holds a deep fondness for her."

"So what?" Ariana's gaze flickered coldly. Unfazed by the lack of reaction, Helen pursed her lips and pressed on, determined to elicit a response. "Don't you feel any

sorrow, Ariana? If Marley had not met her untimely demise at the age of fifteen, you would not have found yourself married into the Anderson family."

"That is all in the past, is it not? I am Theodore's rightful wife now. The past cannot be altered." Ariana sneered, her voice dripping with defiance.

No matter the depth of her sadness, she refused to reveal it to Helen. She knew very well that Helen wanted her to be sad, but she would not give her that satisfaction.

"No, the past can never truly be left behind. And Theodore's love for Marley has softened him. When it comes to her, he is not as cold and ruthless as he once was,"

Helen persisted in provoking Ariana. She didn't come here to engage in idle conversation, but to compel Ariana to give up.

Regardless of how much Helen may have despised Marley, the reality remained that the deceased could not be brought back to life, and despite her efforts, the past could not be changed. However, the situation with Ariana was different. Helen was uncertain about the tactics Ariana had employed to truly win over Theodore's heart.

Chapter: 544 As a result, Helen was resolute in bringing Theodore and Ariana's relationship to an end.

"After Marley's death, Theodore has never been close to any woman, nor has he ever contemplated marriage. Do you genuinely believe that he will fall in love with you? Don't harbor such illusions. It's all a lie."

Helen's emotions grew increasingly unstable, and the jealousy in her heart ignited like a spark igniting a wildfire. She found herself in an uncontrollable situation, and her patience wore thin. "I suggest you leave Theodore. Your relationship with him will never have a future. If Theodore hadn't been in a vegetative state due to his accident, Uncle Darian wouldn't have permitted you to marry into the Anderson family. Theodore would have never married you in his entire life."

According to Helen's account, Marley and Theodore had grown up together and no one could step in.

However, Ariana found herself skeptical. While she was unaware of Theodore's past, she possessed an intimate understanding of his character. He was inherently aloof, seemingly indifferent to matters of the heart. How, then, could he have experienced such a profound first love?

If indeed such a love existed, Ariana pondered why it had never been mentioned during her time spent in this place. "Helen, enough with the fabrications," she retorted, her voice laced with disbelief. "If what you say is true, why has Judy never mentioned it?"

"Are you being naive, Ariana, or merely deceiving yourself?" Helen jeered, her face contorted with disdain. "Judy is nothing more than a servant. Even if she possessed the audacity to gossip, she would never dare to do so in the presence of her masters."

Also, Judy came here just six years ago. The information she imparted to you was nothing more than hearsay."

"Then how did you know? What connection do you have with Theodore and Marley?" Narrowing her eyes suspiciously, Ariana couldn't help but wonder if Helen was merely attempting to assume Marley's role. After all, according to Helen's description, Marley had a fondness for white dress, a preference that Helen always seemed to indulge. Such thoughts swirled within Ariana's mind.

Helen lifted her head haughtily and spoke with an air of superiority. "I was Marley's only true friend during her time alive. It was her dying wish to find a cure for my congenital heart disease."

Ariana's laughter escaped involuntarily, tinged with a sense of disbelief. "So, Theodore cares for you so deeply solely due to Marley's dying wish?"

With a pitiful gaze fixed upon Helen, Ariana couldn't help but pity her. "You are merely basking in Marley's glory."

"shut up!" The remark struck a nerve, causing Helen to wince in pain as her expression contorted into a scowl. "Even if I hold only a small place in Theodore's heart because of Marley, it is still better than being in your place. At least within Theodore's heart, I am Helen, not someone else's substitute."

Ariana's wariness surged, her voice now laced with caution. "What exactly do you mean by that?"

Helen snorted and began to recite, "Do you like blue, spicy food, horror movies, puppets, rock and heavy metal music? Your favorite band, The Death-bound birth."

“What? Do you want to say that I’m a substitute for Marley?” Ariana was furious.

“Come on, there are so many people who like these things in the world.”

Helen produced a photograph from her pocket. It was a group photo featuring Ariana and Jasper, but it appeared to be a fresh copy with a pristine edge, freshly printed.

In the image, Ariana wore a white dress, her face adorned with a sweet and innocent smile as she gazed towards the camera, cradling Jasper in her arms. The photograph clearly captured a moment when Ariana had recently fallen deeply in love with Jasper.

Ariana vividly remembered that the original version of this photo had been torn to pieces and discarded in the trash can. How had Helen managed to obtain it?

Chapter: 545 “Where did you find this photo?” Ariana inquired, her gaze fixed firmly on Helen.

She couldn't help but feel a surge of anger, knowing that Helen had gone as far as hiring a private detective to tail her and pry into her private life. Regardless of her normally composed temperament, she felt a volcano of emotions ready to erupt.

“It's of no importance where I found this photo. Just tell me if Theodore saw it or not,” Helen retorted, her confidence evident as she waved the photo in front of Ariana.

“What does it matter now? It’s all in the past. He doesn’t care,” Ariana replied, her voice tinged with frustration. She distinctly remembered telling Theodore that he didn’t have to worry about her past with Jasper after he’d caught a glimpse of the picture through a crack in a book.

Helen’s smile took on a mysterious quality. “Oh, really? Have you ever considered that perhaps what Theodore values differs from what you believe? If you don’t trust me, you can go to his study and find out for yourself.”

Ariana kept reminding herself that Helen's words couldn't be trusted, yet she couldn't resist the urge to enter the study on the third floor.

Two rooms in the Anderson house were off-limits without permission: Marley's bedroom and Theodore's study.

Under the gentle glow of warm yellow light, Ariana's face was bathed in its halo, her mind lost in a whirlwind of confusion. Her thoughts were a jumbled mess, and her brain felt like a rusty machine, churning out pain with every turn.

Helen's words and Theodore's past continued to consume her thoughts.

Even though she knew it was a trap waiting for her, she couldn't help but dive headfirst into it, desperate for the truth. Slowly pushing open the study door, Ariana stepped inside and flicked on the light.

This marked her second venture into the study, still haunted by the memory of Theodore scolding her the first time she mistakenly entered.

She didn't browse through the books and collections; instead, she followed a peculiar intuition that drew her closer to the desk. Finally, her gaze fell upon a photo frame, likely the very thing Helen wanted her to discover.

In that moment, panic coursed through her veins. With bated breath, Ariana approached the desk, her steps heavy, fixating on the photo before her.

The image portrayed a radiant girl, her smile as bright as a sunflower. Dressed in white, she playfully contorted her face for the camera. A sweet and innocent grin adomed her youthful countenance, possibly in her early teens. Had she been a few years older, she would resemble the girl in the photo alongside Jasper.

How could this be? Was it all a mere coincidence?

Ariana felt an overwhelming sense of frustration. Just last night, she had embraced and kissed Theodore, like any ordinary couple. Yet now, he felt like a distant stranger, as if she had never truly known him, and their love seemed nothing more than a cruel joke.

Weakened, Ariana leaned against the back of a chair, her strength ebbing away. Tears welled up in Ariana's eyes, yet not a single drop escaped. She mustered a forced smile.

In the end, she seemed to have overestimated her own endurance. Everything was unbearable for her. She remained seated, lost in her thoughts for what felt like an eternity.

Was she truly just a replacement? Ariana refused to accept such a notion. Initially, she had been against Theodore, but as they grew to know and trust each other, her feelings changed. If he had only been kind to her because she resembled someone else, he could have shown that kindness from the start, allowing her to fall for him without hesitation.

Chapter: 546

All of a sudden, Ariana found Helen had led her astray. Didn't they talk about having children initially? Could Theodore's aversion to parenthood be connected to Marley?

Disappointment engulfed Ariana once more. It suddenly dawned on her that when they had returned to the Edwards' house, Theodore had become moody after seeing a photo of her and Jasper in her room.

At that time, she had assumed his change in mood was due to his discomfort with the picture of his wife and her ex. Feeling guilty, she had even sent him some late-night snacks into his room as a peace offering, which only angered him further.

Now, the truth laid bare. His distress had never been about her. All his care and tenderness had been reserved for another girl who held an irreplaceable place in his heart.

Like a naive fool, she had believed she had acquired a treasure that others envied, holding onto it with all her might. Little did she know that it was all a fabrication, spun by the hunter to lure her into a cunning trap.

Helen stood at the doorway of the study, her gaze fixed upon Ariana, who appeared lost in her own thoughts. A mocking expression appeared on Helen's face. "Now you finally understand, you're nothing more than a despicable substitute. Theodore doesn't love you at all, which is why he won't allow you to bear his child."

Ariana suddenly lifted her head, her eyes filled with a cold, unwavering stare fixed on Helen. "I refuse to believe it. This must be a lie."

Helen felt a pang of annoyance. How could Ariana be so defensive?

"Stop deceiving yourself. Even if I wanted to deceive you, the evidence in those photos cannot be fabricated." Impatience laced Helen's words as she continued, "Theodore has always held a special place in his heart for Marley. It's highly unlikely that this sentiment would change, regardless of how much time passes. He keeps her photographs in prominent places, ensuring they remain within his constant view, simply because he doesn't want to forget her. Let me think..."

Pausing briefly to consider, Helen clapped her hands lightly as if an idea had just struck her. "There are also pictures of Marley in Theodore's office. If you don't believe me, you can go and see for yourself. Although you probably won't be able to enter his office. Theodore detests uninvited guests the most."

Ariana could no longer bear the suffocating atmosphere and rose from her seat, making her way towards the door, desperate to escape this place.

"Be sensible and leave Theodore on your own accord. Don't let him deceive you,"

Helen urged, her face adorned with an innocent smile. She extended her hand to halt Ariana's departure. "It's becoming tiresome, you know. If Theodore finds out that you're pregnant, can you even begin to imagine his reaction?"

"If I am just a substitute, you should be happy. Why are you always against me?"

Ariana halted abruptly, her smile transforming into something enigmatic. She turned around and asked, "Or could it be that you're afraid of something?"

A momentary tenseness washed over Helen's expression. She furrowed her brow and responded resolutely, "I was Marley's best friend when she was alive. No one has the right to replace her and take her place in Theodore's heart. I will look after Theodore on behalf of Marley, and you need not interfere. I've been by Theodore's side the longest and understand him the most!"

Ariana grew weary of Helen's incessant references to Theodore. She pressed her fingers to her ears, displaying impatience. "Young lady, who do you think you are?"

Just because you were Marley's friend, does that grant you the right to become his mistress? Don't forget, I am Theodore's lawful wife. I can take care of my own husband. I don't need you telling me what to do."

"Ariana! Shame on you!" Helen's emotional defenses crumbled in that moment. She still couldn't accept the fact that Theodore had married Ariana. Legally, they were married, and she was the outsider.

"Even if you hold the title of Theodore's wife, what does it matter? He doesn't love you. It is I who deserve to spend the rest of my days with him. I don't require him to return my affection like you do. All I long for is to be by his side."

Ariana's countenance darkened upon hearing these words. Her response was laced with icy coldness, "How do you know what I said to Theodore in private?"

A sense of pride enveloped Helen as she replied haughtily, "Naturally, it was Theodore himself who told those details to me. Perhaps you were unaware. He can be quite bothersome at times, venting his frustrations on me. I know all the conversations you two have had."

Chapter: 547

Ariana's heart sank as her grip tightened, a mixture of hurt and embarrassment flooding her being. The realization that he would trivialize their relationship in the presence of others pierced her deeply.

Dismissing the moment with a derisive snort, Helen reveled in her triumph over Ariana. Ariana took a deep breath, striving to regain her composure. Silently, she made her way towards the exit. "Where are you going?" Helen regarded her with an odd mixture of curiosity and disdain.

Ariana turned back, offering a gentle smile. "Naturally, I am going to find my husband. I cannot simply accept your words. I must confront him about this."

Helen was unable to keep her composure upon hearing this. She grabbed Ariana's hand and asked in a stern voice, "What do you want to ask? Do you want to humble yourself?"

Ariana shook off Helen's hand and said coldly, "It's none of your business."

"What about the baby? Are you ready to put his life on the line? What will you do if Theodore forces you to abort the baby once he learns of its existence? Theodore will never let you give birth to his baby. He doesn't love you at all!"

Glaring at Ariana, Helen provoked her with the cruelest words.

"If Theodore really does that, it would be the proof that I was wrong. I will only accept my fate and leave with my child." Ariana didn't want to talk to Helen anymore, so she just strode away.

Seeing Ariana leave, Helen felt extremely nervous. She couldn't let Ariana leave like this.

Biting her nails nervously, Helen checked the time on her phone. When she looked up again and saw Ariana who was about to go downstairs, she smiled. However, her smile looked forced and weird.

Ariana walked quickly. She didn't want to stay here a second longer. She regretted coming here and having listened to Helen's absurd remarks. It was clear that Helen was in the wrong frame of mind.

Sighing, Ariana pulled out her phone, determined to call Theodore. She felt it was best to discuss with him directly. Only then would she know whether she should give up on Theodore or not.

When she was about to dial Theodore's number, she heard rapid footsteps behind her. There were only two people at the house tonight, she and Helen. So that must be Helen's footsteps.

Ariana suddenly had a bad feeling and was suddenly on her guard. Her first instinct was to hold on to the railing of the stairs to stabilize herself. Helen rushed behind Ariana and grabbed Ariana's other hand.

"What do you want?" Ariana asked nervously, while holding the railing tightly in case Helen suddenly pushed her down in an act of madness.

She had the feeling that Helen wouldn't let her go easily tonight.

Noticing that Ariana was protecting her belly, Helen said in a mocking tone, "Do you think I would try to hurt your baby? Don't worry, I'm not stupid. This child is what stands in the way of your relationship with Theodore."

Helen was convinced that as long as the child was alive, Theodore would definitely hate Ariana.

Although Helen said so, Ariana didn't relax her vigilance. She stared at Helen and asked, "Then what do you want?"

Chapter: 548

"It took me a lot of effort to convince you to come here. Do you think I will let you go so easily?" As Helen spoke, she stood at the foot of the stairs to block Ariana's way.

Ariana sensed something was wrong and tried to free her wrist from Helen's tight grip. However, Helen's fingers were like pincers, gripping her wrist so tightly that Ariana thought she might bleed at any moment.

"There's no way I'm letting you get back into Theodore's life so easily!" Helen roared. Her face was ferocious and her eyes were wide open. She looked less like a human being and more like an angry ghost.

"Are you crazy?" Helen's demeanor completely freaked Ariana out. What did Helen want to do. While Ariana was struggling, the pearl bracelet on her wrist broke, leaving a red mark on her wrist and scattering the pearls all over the floor.

Ignoring the pearl bracelet, Ariana let go of the handrail and tried to pull Helen's fingers with the other hand in order to free her wrist.

How on earth could someone with heart disease have so much strength? The sound of a car suddenly came from outside, and both Ariana and Helen stopped. "Let go of me. Someone is coming," Ariana said angrily.

The light in the hallway in front of the villa was turned on and they heard someone enter the password for the front door. Someone was about to enter.

Unlike Ariana who was nervous, Helen was totally relaxed. She was actually smiling as if she was expecting this. She said to Ariana gently, "I've told you that I know Theodore better than you do."

After saying this, Helen immediately put on a frightened expression and shouted, "Ariana, no!"

Helen grabbed Ariana's hand and made it appear as though Ariana was trying to push her down the stairs. She then let herself fall back and tumbled down the stairs.

The staircase of the Anderson family mansion, built from unyielding marble, bore witness to Helen's shriek and subsequent tumble. She landed on the railing, her silence rendering it unclear whether she was unconscious or worse.

The sudden incident left Ariana in a state of shock. She stood at the top of the stairs, ready to help, but saw Horace quickly rushing in to check on Helen.

As she looked around, she noticed Theodore sitting in a wheelchair with a sad expression, gazing in her direction.

Ariana suddenly snapped back to reality as Theodore's icy gaze bore into her, like a sharp, piercing jolt.

She looked at her still outstretched hand and couldn't stop it from trembling.

This was likely the scenario Helen desired, Theodore witnessing her “causing”

Helen's fall.

Ariana tried to find the words to explain, but Theodore silently observed her, offering no opportunity for her to speak. At this moment, she felt like a criminal on trial, any attempt to say anything was futile.

A bitter smile graced her lips as she rasped, “Why are you here?”

Chapter: 549 Theodore retorted, “What about you? Why are you here? Weren’t you supposed to be asleep?” His eyes were sharp. His primary concern wasn’t the cause of Helen’s fall, but rather, why Ariana had lied to him.

Ariana was left speechless. Her lie had been exposed, and there was no hiding or disguising it anymore. The truth was that she had lied to him.

While all this was happening, Horace quickly called for an ambulance and grabbed a first aid kit to gently bandage Helen’s wound.

As Helen closed her eyes and collapsed, a noticeable gash appeared on her forehead from the railing’s impact. Hidden wounds on both sides of her face were now bleeding, while her white coat became stained with blood, creating a disturbing and gruesome scene.

Ariana found herself unable to witness Helen’s condition. At this moment, she grasped the full extent of Helen’s ruthlessness — not just towards others, but towards herself. To fulfill her objective, Helen had been willing to gamble with her own life.

The room was steeped in silence, only broken by Horace’s composed call to the ambulance. Ariana remained frozen at the top of the stairs, wordlessly watching the scene unfold.

The wail of the approaching ambulance broke the silence. The paramedics rushed in, quickly assessing Helen’s condition before carefully transferring her onto a stretcher and out of the villa.

While being transported on the stretcher, Helen managed to reach out and grab Theodore's sleeve as they passed by.

Helen, who had passed out, woke up. She looked pained and struggled to catch her breath as she weakly called out, "Theodore..."

Theodore only glanced sideways as they passed him, his face obscured by shadows. He uttered in a low, steady voice, "Helen, go to the hospital first." "Theodore..."

Observing this interaction, Ariana curled her lips in a scornful sneer. It didn't take a genius to predict that Helen would undoubtedly claim that she had pushed her.

1..." Helen said in pain, still clinging onto his sleeve.

"Miss Clarke, we'll discuss it later. Your injuries are severe." It was Horace's voice.

Helen's pain seemed too intense for her to speak clearly. She sobbed intermittently, managing to say between tears, "Theodore, I'm sorry... | couldn't stop her from entering Marley's room..."

At Mercy Hospital. Ariana sat alone on a chair in the waiting area, her head bowed, like a criminal waiting for trial. A short distance away, the relentless glow of the emergency light persisted, with Helen lying comatose in the room.

Agentleman's jacket was draped over Ariana's shoulders, yet she felt a chilling loneliness like a directionless ship lost in the vast ocean.

Chapter: 550

Her fingers gently caressed the cufflink on the suit, soaking in its familiar texture and scent. She knew Theodore was furious. Their journey from the Anderson family's residence to the hospital had been marked by silence, yet he had offered his jacket to her as they got off the vehicle.

At that moment, the emotional release she had been holding in was about to erupt, but it was quickly cut off by his abrupt departure without saying a word.

Tears threatened to spill from Ariana's eyes, but she knew it was useless. They held no power to solve the situation. She vigorously wiped her red eyes and glanced up at Theodore, who was engaged in conversation with the doctor nearby. After a brief exchange, Theodore signed the document, which the doctor promptly carried into the emergency room.

Ariana was filled with anxiety. Did the notice mean that Helen's condition was critical? Had Helen truly taken such a significant risk? It shouldn't be. After all, wasn't it Helen's plan to stage a fall down the stairs? Surely, she would've exercised some restraint in executing the act, considering it was her life at stake. Without it, she would be incapable of challenging Ariana for Theodore's affection.

Ariana found herself lost in contemplation, her lips pressed together tightly. Suddenly, her view of the surrounding light dimmed as a shadow loomed over her.

Raising her head, she found herself locked in Theodore's deep gaze. Their silent exchange stretched out for what felt like an eternity.

"Why did you feel the need to visit the Anderson family's residence so suddenly?" Theodore maintained a composed tone, but his furrowed brow revealed his underlying displeasure.

Ariana felt sad, yet her voice was rigid as she stated, "Helen invited me over and told me all the secrets there. She even led me to that particular room. Also, about her falling down the stairs, if I said I had no part in it, would you believe me?"

"I believe you." Theodore didn't hesitate to answer her question, but his expression remained cold. "I've always known that Helen isn't as innocent as she appears."

Ariana was surprised by his response and her eyes widened. She asked, "If you know that, why do you still treat her so well? Is it just because she was Marley's best friend?"

Theodore's face darkened when he heard the name "Marley". Much like the moment back at the Anderson family's residence when he learned from Helen that Ariana went into Marley's room, he was unable to mask his terrible expression.

As Ariana's eyes welled up, she struggled to keep the quiver out of her voice as she asked, 'Who is Marley? Do you care about her a lot? Why is her room still on the fourth floor? And what do you think of me?' Ariana hoped for more answers from Theodore, but he remained silent.

"So, she truly matters to you." Ariana spoke softly, almost as if she was mocking herself. "You've been lying to me all along, so why stop now?"

It tured out Helen's words held truth. Marley was indeed Theodore's first love.

Ariana was about to cry, so she hurriedly lowered her head. She didn't want 'Theodore to witness her like that. After losing everything, she didn't want to appear a mess in front of him once again.

Ariana was trembling, feeling absurdly foolish. She wanted to ask if Theodore had ever perceived her as a substitute for Marley, but at that exact moment, the operating room lights flickered off.

Anurse gently transported Helen out of the operating room and led her to one of the wards along the corridor. Following closely behind, the doctor approached with medical documents in hand.