**Starco: Why it's Justified**

Hey, if you've made it this far then you're either genuinely curious, looking to sink your teeth in for some epic trolling or like myself you're just trying to convince yourself that your ship willhappen at some point in the future (don't get me wrong I believe it will, but I like to write, so forgive my diatribe). Now please do bear in mind that what I'm about to say is in no way 100%, but it is based on experience, psychology and potentially sources depending on the direction I take, and that I'm not looking for replies involving any form of slander, if you have a genuine criticism and you can phrase it without sounding like a twat then please do so I genuinely welcome the exchange.

Okay, so, Starco. 90% of us want it. My first point in this really starts on this particular statistic. There's a reason so many of us want Starco, and it's nothing to do with "oh it's the leads they'll end up together" or "they look so cute together dawww". A huge amount of it is psychological in origin and a lot of us don't even realise that's the case.

Now, expanding on that point because I'm sure a lot of you probably just asked "wtf is this dude on about", humanity as a collective has some pretty specific goals when it comes to romantic interactions, it's evolutionary, bred into us through our genes to enable our species to propogate, defend our young and in general survive. Sure these things are taking a backseat these days since modernisation has taken a lot of the evolutionary response requirements away, but it takes far longer to edit those expectations out of our DNA, and points 1 and 2 are very much coded into us.

So, what do we look for in our romantic relationships?

**1. Physical Attraction -** I know, shocker right? Now I'm not saying you have to be salivating over your partner on a constant basis (Star… stop taking Marco to Hekapoos dimension), but physical attraction tends to form one of the most important foundations of a relationship. Without it, there is no chemistry, there's no physical lust (and lust is important in creating the hormonal changes that creates spousal love in a human being, this links to the desire to protect as well as nurture).

The biggest thing to remember here though, is that without the attraction, romantic love doesn't have the foundation it needs to take off. Sure twenty years down the road you might look at your partner and think "she's lost a little something", but the love remains nonetheless since it was created with this building block. Marco and Star, both exhibit this, Marco in his response to Stars outfit for BMB, and Star when Marco wears his suit in BBTBC, other instances include the adult Marco and Stars reaction to that (and a reasonable inference that this is what Marco will look like in 16 years time) and Star stating Marco has never looked cuter in his beret. Point being, we've got physical attraction.

**2. Trust -** while physical attraction may form the initial building block of a relationship, the next block is trust. You are not only trusting yourself to open up to this particular person, to let them in and get to know you better, you also have to trust them, not just to do the same but also to trust that they care about you and that they wouldn't hurt you. Trust is something that Starco has in abundance, they both know that no matter what happens, they will always be there for each other, to watch each others backs in a fight or simply to be a shoulder to cry on in times of hardship. Neither of them would ever have to ask for help from the other. There is one scene in "Monster Bash" that perfectly sums up this statement in my opinion, when the monsters start disappearing Star simply yanks Marco and says "Marco I need you", no answer required. She then asks Tom for his help, who subsequently gets annoyed when he can't sneak off and cuddle and doesn't help until later when he's realised he was being a bit of a prat.

Now you could argue that that was simply because Marco is her squire and she was giving a command, but no, that's not their relationship dynamic as a general rule, especially by the end of 3A. Star has issued a command before, in "Sweet Dreams" where she commands Marco to watch her sleep, but hey I can see why Marco was reluctant, it's a little odd. Point is she only did it when he expressed concerns at the inappropriateness and that's fair as far as I'm concerned.

You know who doesn't get this level of trust? Tom. She doesn't tell him that she's turning into a giant golden butterfly and stealing hot dog trucks on a whim, which is something you should be able to tell your partner since they're generally the closest person to yourself. She even tells Marco not to tell Tom, but is perfectly fine with Marco knowing and helping. A small amount of context to this, do you have any idea how terrified somnambulists are? They go to sleep every night and don't know where they're going to wake up or what they may do, it's scary man. How the hell do you think a 14 year old feels finding out she's pulling crazy stunts like that? Terrified I suspect, you'd think Tom would be her first stop for some reassurance, but no, Marco and Eclipsa run that show.

Honestly a lot of people have made a big deal out of this point in regards to Jarco, and Marco breaking that trust because he was hurting Star. That doesn't count, because Marco had no idea how Star felt, and I think we all know that if he realised that he was hurting Star in any way he'd have gone to hell and back to try and fix it. Star knows that deep down. Same goes for Star not being honest with Marco, Star was attempting to be a great friend, whilst at the same time preserving Marco's happiness with Jackie, that takes a huge amount of self control! Which just goes to show how much she valued the trust Marco had in her. The only reason she confessed was because she thought there was a very good chance she might not even survive Toffee's return. Fact is, she told him the truth when she knew it would no longer make a difference since she would be gone, she protected him until the last moment, but couldn't leave him without being honest.

I guess the **tldr** version of this point would be, without trust there's no long term relationship, you need to be able to rely on your partner for help, no matter what happens (and in Stars world that's saying something).

**3. Exposure and Familiarity -** This is a major point what with 3A having finished recently and Tom mentioning that he's barely seeing Star. Exposure breeds familiarity, the more time we spend around a person or have frequent contact with increases the chances that we'll like, accept and eventually fall in love with them. Now I know we all know people where this causes the exact opposite don't get me wrong, but we already know there WAS an attraction on Stars part towards Marco, and they spent nigh on every day together. Now Marco, after a few months on Mewni has finally got it through his thick skull that he has feelings for Star, again, they're spending a lot of time together since he's her squire.

This particular point is important because exposure breeds feelings. Star may very well have salted the earth that was her crush for Marco after he left for Earth, who knows (though we all know it was like 3 weeks, so.. you know, not buying it), but he's back, and whilst Tom probably has dampened the feelings that Star had for Marco, their continued spending of so much time together is a sure fire way of reigniting them, especially with Tom not around. After all, if you've had a crush on someone, but never realised it through a relationship (and therefore always had the what if), the chances are high that you'll crush on them again, especially if you already know them inside and out like Star knows Marco, there's nothing more for her to learn about him and she liked/loved him anyway.

**4. Personality and Character -**Research on the personality factors that attract us to others (and others to us) has identified two personality factors that are considered across the board desirable: competence and warmth. Competent people, that is to say intelligent and socially skilled, are considered more attractive. Kind people with a warm personality are also more attractive. Warm and wise is a winning pair in the mate selection tournament.

Now, I wouldn't exactly say Marco is wise per se, but he is warm, he can be competent, and he is definitely kind. Tom is also warm.. if you like marshmallows on the quick, but he is intelligent, and I'd say more socially skilled than Marco, but he's lacking the kindness.

There are other factors to consider too, Marco and Star just mesh well together, Star finds her balance in Marco and vice versa, they're not so much opposites as 2 sides of a whole. They complement each others qualities. Marco would never have been anything more than the safe kid in school if it weren't for Star, now he fights monsters and doesn't bat an eyelid, and he loves it. **BUT**it's where they're the same that really matters here, they are both strong and independent, they can both handle themselves in dangerous situations, they're affectionate and supportive to each other, they would give up everything for each other and they each believe in the other above anything else and that kind of belief is very powerful.

**5. DIP DOWN -**Yeah I know this is the odd one out. Nothing to do with romance and why really, but a personal addition because I feel it needs mentioning. I have a theory that the magical ability of a user is directly linked to the power of their emotions at the time of casting. I base this theory on no scientific evidence bar what we've seen with our own eyes. Now.. Love/hate are the same emotion physically, science has proven this, the same centres of the brain are active when experiencing either emotion and our autonomic responses are also identical.

Why am I pointing that out? Because I feel it's important to give 2 sides of a coin here, since I'm about to delve into love, there's also an equal chance a hateful spell caster can be just as powerful (see Ludo, emotions, wand use lol).

So, where do I draw this evidence from. We all know Star's first case of dipping down came about when Marco was about to read her journal entry titled "my thoughts on Marco". She didn't even think she just did it after trying for hours. The key that opened that closet was heart shaped, remember this. We also have the whole of series 2 where the wand is acting up, if Star is sad or downtrodden the spells she casts are… well crap, for lack of a better word. In "My New Wand" it only starts responding properly once Marco was in danger, reflecting Stars emotional state regarding him and her heartbreak at the thought of him being hurt or worse. We see this several times throughout the season, where the wand only works properly when Marco is involved somehow.

We then have the opposite, Stars own spells turn against her when she is negatively affected by Marco (i.e. she sees him with Jackie having fun). We can reasonably infer that emotional states have a profound effect on the spells a user casts, the strength of the emotion playing into the strength of the spell in question. Jealousy nearly got Star killed when her void portal went into reverse and started trying to suck her in instead, and jealousy is a powerful negative emotion as we know.

Still not convinced? I know, it's a tough sell, but it's what I believe. However one more point if you'll indulge. I refer to the episode with Baby, the ever hungry, ever interested tiny flying cat. Now, we see initially the wand is working, however Stars spell casting not withstanding, it isn't doing quite what she wants it to do, a simple "move" spell (I doubt she actually knows one to be fair her magic is just… out there). Then as she starts to get worried and experience negative emotions the wand starts using its green energy and making some rather ridiculous piles of effluent on the pedestal. Star fails the test, and Baby tells her so.

"But, if I fail I'll have to leave"

"That's not my problem".

Take note. Star will have to leave if she fails. She'd have to leave Marco, forever. What happens next? She casts her spell once more, and the most beautiful piece of magic I've seen in the show occurs, resulting in a perfect apple appearing in front of Baby's face. Baby herself states that whilst undisciplined, her magic skills are far beyond Moons own at that age. Her emotional fondness for Marco and not wanting to lose him resulted in a spell that was far beyond what Baby thought she was capable of.

Those are my main points. In my opinion the reason we ship Starco as a fandom so hard, is because we see a relationship that SHOULD be. Not because it's a trope, or it's obvious that's the endgame or anything like that, but because the characters belong together and deep down we instinctively see that. They are the optimal pairing, out of the "harem", in terms of romantic/platonic qualities and long term relationship survival. We see that in their relationship on screen, and I think this is why Starco shippers fight so hard (and needlessly aggressively in most cases) to other ship supporters, because we're coded to see the interaction there and approve of it (yeah I know not all of us, but there are a wealth of reasons why that may be the case and I am not writing a psychology dissertation on that as well). The writers have done a fantastic job of not only writing the plot arcs as a whole, but developing a fictional cartoon characters romantic sub story so well that we genuinely see it as needing fulfilment, despite the fact no real characters actually exist.

In summary, psychologically speaking Marco has a lot more going for him than Tom currently does, and story arc wise it would be incredibly unwise of the writers to not have Starco become canon, after investing the time and effort into establishing the characters compatibility in all the areas I've mentioned and more it would really be a donkey punch to just have it ripped away as if it all meant nothing. Friendship is great, and those values should always be espoused, but if the show wanted the endgame to be friendship they wouldn't have written it the way they would have. Instead what they've been building to I think was mentioned recently in "Lava Lake Beach"

"Being in love with your best friend is great"

And with that heartening quote from a disheartening moment, adieu.