

## Chapter 697 Sullivan's Explanation

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Tillie's words stopped Loraine in her tracks, her mind reeling from the logic presented.

When had she ever acted as a barrier to the Solar Company lending the surgical robot to the Cruz family? She had no relationship with the company whatsoever!

It was true that through her connection with Marco, she had received contact information for Sullivan, a member of the ninth-generation robot's development team, but their exchanges had strictly pertained to the robotic technology.

She had never dared foster a deeper relationship or partake in any form of "obstruction."

A silence enveloped Loraine before she finally spoke, her voice tinged with icy resolve. "The inability of the Cruz family to secure the surgical robot has nothing to do with me."

Tillie's scoff was filled with scorn. "Don't feign innocence. If you have no connection, why then seek Miss Ariadna not once, but twice? Would you have me believe this is mere happenstance?"

Loraine's laugh was tinged with disbelief, her words dripping with mockery. "Perhaps the Solar Company learned of the Cruz family's penchant for intimidation and thought it wise not to engage."

Tillie's belief that Loraine was the cause of the Cruz family's inability to secure the robot grew, and her response was filled



with indignation. "With the power of the Cruz family, the Solar Company would jump at the chance to align with us. Had you not interfered, why would they reject such a golden opportunity?"

Her confidence in her deductions was unshakeable as she continued, "You first showed up when Miss Ariadna was only just admitted here. How soon after old Aldo's surgery did that occur? Despite our efforts to negotiate, the robot remained beyond our reach!"

The more Tillie considered the situation, the more firmly she believed that Loraine had orchestrated the entire affair. "You knew of Miss Ariadna's condition and planned everything in advance! How else could we encounter you again today? Such coincidences do not simply occur!"

Hearing Tillie mention her grandfather's name, Loraine's face hardened. "I won't engage in this frivolous argument filled with baseless claims. Your family's issues are not my concern, nor do I wish to involve myself. Leave now."

Tillie's eyebrow arched in triumph. "Feeling a touch of guilt? Hand over the surgical robot without delay. Don't wait to anger the Cruz family. When blame falls, you won't withstand the repercussions!"

Loraine's fury grew as Tillie persisted, causing a scene in the doorway. Concerned that the uproar might disrupt Marco's rest, she reached her limit. Her patience exhausted, she snapped, "Enough! I'll contact the Solar Company and ask if I had any role in hindering the loan to your family."

Without further ado, she withdrew her phone and dialed Sullivan's number, her actions decisive and final.

But as she dialed, a pang of regret washed over her. Had she allowed her emotions to cloud her judgment? Sullivan was undoubtedly occupied, and with the time difference, she might



be intruding upon his routine. The realization that her impulsive act could potentially disrupt his day settled in.

The thought to disconnect the call flashed through her mind, but before she could act, the line connected – far more swiftly than anticipated.

Loraine was momentarily disconcerted, unaware that Sullivan, intrigued by Marco's evident fondness for her, had been keenly attentive to her movements.

His voice, filled with zest, came through. "Oh my God, is it really Loraine calling? Are you extending an invitation to your wedding with Marco?"

Caught off balance by his teasing, Loraine managed an awkward cough. "No, Dr. Palmer. Might you have a moment? There's something I need to discuss."

A feigned sigh of disappointment flowed into a cheerful response. "Of course, I'm here. Go on; tell me what's on your mind."

Switching to speakerphone, Loraine addressed Tillie, her voice steady. "This is Dr. Sullivan Palmer, an integral part of the ninth-generation robot's development team. I trust you're familiar with him?"

Tillie's nod was accompanied by a complicated look. During their quest to borrow the surgical robot, the Cruz family had conducted comprehensive research. Sullivan's name emerged as a pivotal figure, but his noted aversion to authority and adherence to his unique principles had kept them at bay, reaching only his assistant. Loraine's direct interaction was a surprise.

Wasting no time, Loraine detailed the matter at hand, her words clear and concise. "Dr. Palmer, has the Cruz family





sought to borrow the ninth-generation robot from your team?"

Sullivan's voice was contemplative as he answered, "It appears so; it rings a bell."

Loraine pursued her inquiry, "And did I, in any way, hinder the Solar Company from lending the robot to the Cruz family?"

Sullivan's surprise was palpable. "What an odd question! Certainly not!"

Understanding dawned, and his tone turned earnest. "The ninth-generation robot remains a work in progress. In principle, we don't lend it unless essential. You received it due to your favorable standing with the Solar Company. As for the Cruz family..." He hesitated, his voice resolute. "Their influence holds no sway over us. If they have falsely accused you, we are even less inclined to grant their request."

His words subtly conveyed the Solar Company's allegiance to Loraine. While she found Sullivan's assurances slightly embellished, she chose not to linger on them.

The impact on Tillie was immediate. The realization that she had unjustly accused Loraine, and possibly antagonized the Solar Company, hit her hard. Her face drained of color.

It was then that a frail yet irritated voice drifted in from the other end of the corridor, punctuating the tension. "Tillie! What are you doing here?"



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## Chapter 698 Ariadna's Attitude

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The arrival was marked by Ariadna, leaning on a nurse for support. Her eyes, red with fury, contrasted with her pallid face. Though she walked, her appearance was that of someone breathless and devoid of vitality.

As the scene unfolded before her, Ariadna's fragile frame trembled, her chest heaving as if she were on the brink of collapse.

Tillie, alarmed by Ariadna's apparent distress, hurried to her side, her voice tinged with panic. "Miss, why have you ventured out here?"

But Ariadna's hand forcefully brushed her away, her expression icy as she snapped, "Had I stayed away, would you have persisted in humiliating the Cruz family here?"

Had it not been for her attendants alerting her, she would have remained ignorant of Tillie's conduct.

A guilt, born of the burdens her illness imposed on others, already weighed on Ariadna; to see Tillie act in such a manner in her name intensified her torment. Her eyes brimmed with tears.

She knew Tillie meant well, but this behavior was inexcusable. Was her sickness a license to impose on others?

Tillie's realization of her misstep struck suddenly, and guilt washed over her. She halted her approach to Ariadna, standing



uncertainly, her eyes imploring Loraine silently.

Loraine found herself at a loss for words.

Recent events had strained any goodwill towards Tillie, yet Loraine recognized Ariadna's innocence in the matter.

Ariadna's frailty, verging on collapse, melted Loraine's reserve. She guided Ariadna to a chair in the corridor, concern softening her voice. "Must you really let anger overcome you in your current state?"

Ariadna's eyes, reddened and weary, welled with tears, her lips quivering. "I'm sorry, Loraine. I was unaware of what Tillie would..."

A sigh escaped Loraine as she tenderly touched Ariadna's hair. "This isn't your doing."

During their exchange, the Cruz family's attendants had dispersed the crowd, leaving only Tillie, Loraine, Ariadna, and the hospital director.

Ariadna's eyes met the director's, her face shadowed by remorse. "I ought to have handled this more responsibly and not have been a burden. My apologies."

Harlem, the director, waved her concern aside, his voice gentle. "It's alright. You bear no blame."

Compassion stirred within him for Ariadna. Despite hailing from the privileged Cruz family, she displayed none of their haughtiness and instead emanated warmth and kindness. Her choice of a resolute servant like Tillie seemed logical.

Loraine sighed. It was clear now that Tillie's misbehavior was her own, not reflecting Ariadna's influence.

In Ariadna's delicate demeanor, as vulnerable and pure as a



white rabbit, Loraine found her resentment towards Tillie abating somewhat.

Witnessing Ariadna's frailty, Loraine's concern was evident in her voice. "Is your illness truly that grave?"

Ariadna's lips parted, giving way to a weary smile. "It's manageable. I've grown accustomed to it. Tillie is simply overwrought."

Tears welled in Tillie's eyes as she suddenly fell to her knees, clutching Loraine's thigh, her voice desperate. "Miss Torres, I misjudged you earlier; I'm so sorry! But Miss Ariadna is innocent. I implore you, please help her! Without the surgical robot, the doctor says she cannot be operated on, and she has but three months to live!"

A wave of sympathy washed over Loraine, only to recede when Tillie pressed her advantage. "Miss Torres, I confess my behavior was inappropriate, but I acted out of love for Miss Ariadna. If you truly value her, you must lend us the surgical robot!"

Before Loraine could reply, Ariadna's anger erupted. "Tillie! Loraine is a friend to me, and owes me nothing. How dare you impose a moral obligation on her like this?"

Ariadna's indignation gave way to a fit of coughing, her face paling further.

Loraine hastened to Ariadna's side to aid her. Though Tillie's words did not infuriate her—she had become familiar with Tillie's methods over time—they left a lingering discomfort.

Once Ariadna recovered her breath, she turned her disappointment on Tillie. "So, while I rested, you were bullying others in the name of the Cruz family? In that case, I'll not seek treatment for this illness. Leave my sight!"



Seeing Tillie remain motionless, Ariadna's voice rose. "If you don't go, I'll die right here and now!"

Her words were no mere threat. Given her delicate condition, a strong emotional outburst could indeed have severe consequences. Fearing the worst, Tillie hastily retreated.

After Tillie had left, Ariadna's sniffles filled the room, a sense of abandonment and injustice weighing heavily on her.

This feeling was something she detested above all else. She felt confined and misunderstood, with everyone offering hollow concern but failing to grasp her true desires.

Her first genuine friendship had been tarnished by Tillie's distrust. The desire to live was still there, but the journey seemed ever more burdensome.

Loraine remained at Ariadna's side, a silent pillar of support. After some time, she sighed and gently touched Ariadna's back, her voice soft. "Ariadna, I recognize that Tillie's actions were her own, and not a reflection of you. As for the surgical robot, I must admit, I've borrowed it through Marco before. My connection with the Solar Company isn't as strong as you might believe."





## Chapter 699 Ariadna's Story

Ariadna was quite familiar with the name Marco, and she also knew that he was Loraine's boyfriend.

Her eyes went dim momentarily, and then she broke into a somewhat rueful smile. "I see. It's alright, I didn't want to trouble you in the first place. As for Tillie, she... she's not really a bad person, but I still need to apologize to you."

When she first heard that the ninth-generation robot was borrowed through Loraine's connections, Ariadna had felt a spark of hope inside her. Who wouldn't want a chance at a better life?

But then, it occurred to her that if Marco was the one who had helped Loraine get the robot, it would be difficult for her to ask for his assistance since she wasn't really close to him.

As for her interaction with Loraine, it had only been brief and casual at best. Even if she was willing to do it, Ariadna didn't want to bother her by asking her to seek favors from Marco on her behalf. It would make her feel guilty, especially after the way Tillie had treated Loraine just now.

Meanwhile, Loraine remained quiet for a while. She could feel the distress that Ariadna was going through. Even though she was smiling, her face was pale and desolate, just like the dull white walls of the hospital.

Ariadna's illness was so severe, and amidst the landscapes of her life, white seemed to be the predominant hue.

Suddenly, her first encounter with Ariadna entered Loraine's

mind.

Back then, Ariadna was high spirited and full of aspirations. She spoke longingly about the things she wanted to do and become in the future.

Such a young girl in her teens was supposed to remain vibrant and colorful, not confined to the monotony of a hospital, surrounded by white walls.

A heavy feeling settled over Loraine's mind. She wanted so badly to console Ariadna, but she just couldn't find the right words. After struggling with herself for a moment, she inquired, "Are you sure you don't need my help? If you don't get the robot, you might not be able to survive."

The sound of the word "survive" caused Ariadna's shoulders to slump. Her gaze momentarily lost focus, but she mustered herself and managed a weak smile. "I still have three months... I've earned myself that much," she said to Loraine.

Loraine couldn't fully grasp what Ariadna meant. But all of a sudden, Ariadna sat up straighter, her previous despondency seemingly disappeared and now replaced by a charming dimple in her smiling face.

"Loraine, do you know I'm the only legitimate child of the main branch of the Cruz family?"

Loraine was stunned to hear this. She never knew this fact.

If Grady who was only a member of an extended branch had been under so much spotlight, one could only imagine how much attention someone belonging to the main branch of the Cruz family would garner.

Since Ariadna was the only legitimate heir, then it became clear now why Tillie was so overprotective of her like a hen

guarding her only chick.

"But," Ariadna continued, "since I've had health issues from the time I was young, members of the Cruz family are scared that I might suddenly die one day, that's why they've spent so much money to search for various precious herbs for me. As far as they are concerned, I'd be best off getting married to someone from another big family, bearing children, and then passing away." She let out a wry chuckle as she said this, her voice tinged with a hint of resignation.

Loraine's heart sank as she listened to her. She couldn't help but hate the Cruz family even more for treating Ariadna like this.

Did they only see the poor girl as a tool to extend their bloodline?

"But as my condition worsened over the years, that idea became less practical," Ariadna went on. "So, some family members came up with another plan. They began looking to the different branches of the family, searching for a child that would inherit the Cruz family name with the hope that they could finally be rid of me once and for all."

It was as if Ariadna was talking about something that wasn't related to her. She seemed quite indifferent as she spoke. "You think I'm eager to live, don't you?" she said to Loraine with a smile. "But the truth is that I'm alive not because anyone truly wishes for me to remain alive but simply because of the implications that my existence has on the Cruz family's wealth and legacy."

She smiled and lowered her gaze, but her eyelashes were trembling. "That's why sometimes I feel like it wouldn't matter if this illness never goes away," she murmured.

Loraine's throat tightened as she listened to this sad story. She felt the urge to unleash a torrent of curses on the members of

the Cruz family who had treated Ariadna like an object. That was how much it pained her. She reached out and held Ariadna's hand, and said to her with utmost sincerity, "Ariadna, you need to stay alive, for yourself and not for others!"

Ariadna remained silent and kept her gaze on the ground. But Loraine continued, "Do you remember all the things you planned to do after you recovered? Well, guess what? I've been on a little adventure lately and I've heard about a bunch of fun things. I'll tell you all about them."

Ariadna was clearly intrigued by this news and her eyes sparkled excitedly. Loraine cleared her throat and went on with enthusiasm, recounting stories of their trips to the street market for street foods and their recent escapades in the countryside.

These were tales Ariadna had never heard before, and as she envisioned those scenes in her mind, her spirits were lifted considerably.

When Loraine observed the change in her demeanor, she said to her encouragingly, "There are so many exciting things waiting for you out there. I'm saving them up for when you finally leave the hospital. So, your top priority right now should be to adjust your mindset and focus on your recovery."

By now, Loraine had realized that Ariadna wasn't anything like Tillie or the rest of the Cruz family. So, she was willing to go above and beyond to lend her a helping hand.

Meanwhile, Adriana, touched by Loraine's sincerity, half-jokingly remarked, "I wish I had a sister as wonderful as you."

Loraine laughed and reached out to pat her head affectionately, but before she could touch her, Ariadna slumped forward like a kite with its string cut!

## Chapter 700 Disagreement

In the instant Ariadna collapsed, Loraine's face was drained of color as her mind went blank. But she swiftly snapped back to reality and rushed to support Ariadna. However, others around them acted even faster, crowding around Ariadna.

Harlem stepped forward, lifting Ariadna's eyelids to examine her before giving urgent instructions, "Fetch the attending physician and prepare for emergency treatment!"

He shoed away nosy Cruz family attendants who were getting in the way.

Nurses quickly wheeled in an emergency cart and carried Ariadna onto it, then hurriedly wheeled her away.

The sudden turn of events left Loraine shaken, her face pale as she struggled to regain her composure.

The ongoing proceedings didn't require Harlem's personal involvement. Noticing Loraine's pallor, he spoke to console her, "This isn't the first time this has happened; it's not your fault."

Loraine pressed her lips together, her worry evident. "Does this condition occur frequently?"

Harlem paused for a moment before sighing. "If the surgery is further delayed, her condition will only deteriorate."

Loraine's mood grew heavy as she made her way back to Marco's hospital room.

Upon entering, she felt a strong gaze on her.



Marco looked at her, his expression akin to that of a forsaken puppy, as he lamented with a hint of grievance, "You were gone for far too long!"

He emphasized "too long."

Loraine offered an awkward smile as she approached, her eyes revealing guilt. "I bumped into someone I know at the entrance, and there was a small issue, which is why I'm running a bit late."

Marco's gaze sharpened as he spoke calmly, "Was it the Cruz family causing trouble again? I overheard something. If I didn't trust your ability to handle it, I might have stepped in to deal with that shrew myself."

Loraine responded swiftly, her tone protective. "You know you're not supposed to leave your bed until your leg heals. If you dare to move, I'll ensure you regret it."

Observing her reaction, Marco decided to play along, feigning innocence as he glanced upward. "But I didn't venture out of bed just now, did I?"

Loraine sighed, a hint of exasperation in her voice, and shook her head. She moved the table closer, setting out their food, and remarked as she did, "The Cruz family can be quite overbearing, but Ariadna is different."

Marco remained noncommittal. While he held no fondness for the Cruz family, Loraine's defense of Ariadna triggered an unfounded jealousy, reminding him inexplicably of Grady. "Is that so? Is Ariadna getting close to you just to leverage your connections and borrow the ninth-generation robot?"

Loraine blinked momentarily, surprised by Marco's insight. Had the soundproofing in the hospital room suddenly failed, or was Tillie being too loud, allowing Marco to overhear their

conversation?

However, Loraine swiftly remembered that Sullivan and Marco shared a close friendship. Since she had just been in contact with Sullivan, there was a chance he might have informed Marco about the situation.

Without overanalyzing, she patiently clarified, "Ariadna isn't that type of person."

After a brief pause, she settled down at the edge of the bed and looked up at Marco. "I've already talked to Sullivan, and he seems unwilling to consider lending the surgical robot. Marco, do you have any sway with him to change his mind?"

Marco's expression remained stoic. "You're already concerned about Ariadna after only meeting her a few times? Be cautious about being taken advantage of. Doing favors can sometimes lead to exploitation."

Loraine's tone grew earnest. "Do you have a misconception about Ariadna? We shouldn't judge people based on a few individuals. She stands apart from the rest of the Cruz family; she's a good little girl."

Marco's indifference persisted. He cared little for someone named Ariadna, and the Cruz family held no credibility in his eyes.

Seeing Marco's skepticism, Loraine felt somewhat helpless. But with her growing familiarity in handling him, she smoothed her hair and tried to convince him in a way he would like. "And have you forgotten? We had our cold war, but it was Ariadna who convinced me to forgive you. She praised you highly, saying we were a perfect match. Yet, you treat her like this."

Marco's response to her words confirmed her strategy. He pulled Loraine into a warm embrace, moving in for a kiss, and



said proudly, "Well, she has excellent taste. She's absolutely right! After all, we genuinely are a match made in heaven."

Loraine couldn't help but chuckle as she playfully pushed him away. "You shameless man! It's one thing for others to say it, but declaring it yourself? Aren't you the least bit embarrassed?"

With mock innocence, Marco raised an eyebrow. "I'm just stating the facts. What's shameless about that?"

With a mischievous grin, he took Loraine's hand and placed it gently against his face. "Look, my face is right here. Nothing to be ashamed of, right? Go ahead, touch and confirm for yourself."





## Chapter 701 Mr. Bryant

Loraine was utterly taken aback by the man's shamelessness, so she pinched his face and noticed how firm and taut his skin felt.

In response, Marco playfully rubbed his cheek against her palm.

The stubble on his chin grazed her hand, inducing ticklish and tingling sensations all over her arm.

Loraine quickly pulled her hand away, but not before Marco swiftly planted a kiss on her palm. "I'm hungry. Aren't you going to feed me?" he said with a grin.

Aware of her own guilt for avoiding his question earlier, Loraine obediently picked up the food and began to feed him.

But it soon became clear that his hunger wasn't genuine. He was just seeking for whimsical excuses to engage her and get her to be close to him. By the time he had finished about half of the food, Loraine was left breathless from his kisses and was already exhausted.

Marco toyed with her silky hair, his fingers tracing patterns along her scalp. Leaning in close to her ear, he murmured, "Loraine, if you want me to do you this favor, I will."

The prospect of getting assistance for Ariadna's situation renewed Loraine's hope. She took a deep breath and said to Marco, "Not that I'm intentionally trying to make things difficult for you. It's just that Ariadna's condition is quite severe, and I can't bear the thought of..."

She trailed off as she recalled the hopeful expression she had seen on Ariadna's face earlier. When she resumed speaking, her voice had softened considerably. "You know I don't have any siblings. Ariadna is like a little sister to me. So, if there's anything I can do to help her, I'd do it."

Marco nodded in understanding and leaned down to give her a tender kiss on her forehead. "Don't worry. I'll find a solution," he assured her.

He'd always known that his girl had a kind heart and was always willing to help others. The problem though was that he didn't like the Cruz family very much.

But if helping Ariadna would make Loraine happy, he was more than willing to do it.

The two of them lay in each other's arms for a while, lost in the warmth they shared. Unbeknownst to them, it was already time for the next round of dressings. Before long, the nurse came in to attend to Marco's wounds, and that was when Loraine realized that Marco was still wearing the same clothes that he wore the previous night.

She herself even planned to stay overnight in the hospital, so it was clear that something had to be done about clothing and other necessities.

Since it wasn't yet dark outside and the hospital wasn't far from home, Loraine decided to go back home to bring some personal belongings to the hospital.

While at the house, after taking what she wanted, she was beginning to tidy things up when Sullivan suddenly called her phone again.

The previous call had been rushed and chaotic which led to her

hanging up in a hurry. Now that she was calmer, she suddenly realized that she had not thanked him for the assistance he rendered. So, she answered the call immediately.

Sullivan's hearty laughter greeted her ears almost instantly. "Loraine, how did things go with the previous issue? Did that Cruz family member bother you again?" he asked in concern.

It was clear that he genuinely cared about her.

Loraine felt warm in her heart by his words and she spoke to him sincerely. "It's all resolved now, Dr. Palmer. Thank you so much for standing up for me today. I'm very grateful."

"What did I do?" he chuckled dismissively. "I only spoke the truth. Besides, we're friends. What are friends for? If you need help with anything, I'm always here."

When he said this, a thought suddenly entered Loraine's mind, and she quickly translated it to words, "Since you said that, I think I do have a favor to ask of you."

"Really? What is it?" Sullivan asked, sounding surprised.

"It's about that... that girl from the Cruz family who's sick. She's a really good and obedient girl. I was wondering, is it possible to lend the surgical robot to assist her?"

Sullivan was taken aback by her request. "Wow. After how they treated you today, you're still willing to help one of them?" he asked in disbelief.

"No, she is a very different person. Ariadna is not arrogant like those members of her family," Loraine stated firmly.

Sullivan smiled and said with a sigh, "Loraine, you truly are a kind-hearted angel. But I don't have the authority to make that decision. I have to ask Mr. Bryant."

Lorraine was puzzled to hear this. "Why would you need to ask Marco about the Solar Company's matters?" she asked in surprise. "Besides, he is no longer the CEO of the Bryant Group."

And by the way, were they not friends? Shouldn't friends address each other more casually?

Sullivan froze for a moment when he realized that he had all but revealed that Marco was the CEO of the Solar Company. But he quickly recovered himself and let out a nervous chuckle before swiftly coming up with an excuse, "Oh, it's just that the last time we talked, he was still the CEO of the Bryant Group, and he had a partnership with my company. You know, I've been solely focused on my research and I don't keep up with current events. So, I didn't know he had resigned. Ha-ha."

Even though his explanation made sense, Lorraine couldn't help but interpret his words differently.

It almost sounded like he was saying that since Marco was no longer the CEO of the Bryant Group and no longer had any partnership with the Solar Company, it meant that Marco no longer had any influence.

If even Marco of all people couldn't help, then who could she expect help from?

A sinking feeling began to settle in Lorraine's heart as she realized how hopeless the situation was.



## Chapter 702 Renewed Hope

Though he was curious, Sullivan had no idea what Loraine was thinking. Trying hard to sound concerned, he asked her, "By the way, how has Marco been doing after he left Bryant Group? I haven't been in touch with him for a long time."

Unbeknownst to him, Marco had leaked all the information about his recent contact with Sullivan.

But Loraine was too preoccupied and distracted with Ariadna's issue to think about the loopholes in Sullivan's statements. So, she just smiled and said, "He's doing well. With his talent, he'll be back on top in no time. I'm sure he will excel without the Bryant Group. You don't need to worry."

As for the scandals involving Marco and the Bryant family, Loraine decided not to talk about them.

After all, those were Marco's personal matters. Only Marco himself had the right to talk about them.

"You're absolutely correct!" Sullivan said emphatically in response to Loraine's statement about Marco. "Loraine, I trust you and I know your judgment is never wrong. I believe Marco is an outstanding man and a good person, and I'm sure he'll rise again."

Loraine smiled and thought happily to herself that Marco's friends were great people who genuinely cared about him.

Nevertheless, Sullivan continued to talk, "There were so many people trying hard to see Marco back then. So many that if they lined up, the line would stretch from Vagow all the way down



here. But after he stepped down as CEO of Bryant Group, they all disappeared. You're the only one who has stuck with him."

Sullivan continued excitedly, "Loraine, you're the only one who has stayed by his side through thick and thin! You have no idea how lucky Marco is to have met you!"

Loraine knew Marco would agree with him if he could hear him.

She couldn't help but smile to herself as she quietly listened to Sullivan's words.

After expressing his opinion about Marco, Sullivan suddenly remembered that Marco hadn't won Loraine over the last time he saw him. He realized just how somewhat offensive some of his words might sound, so he sighed regretfully and added, "It's just that his approach to pursuing girls has never been very good. Loraine, please be patient and lenient with him. I can tell that you both have strong feelings for each other and you're meant to be together."

At this point, Loraine had begun to blush.

Not only was she and Marco already together, they'd even gone much further. They'd had intimate contact, and at this stage, kissing was already becoming frequent for them.

But of course she wouldn't tell Sullivan about all these. Since he was still talking and he showed no signs of slowing down, Loraine quickly interjected, "Dr. Palmer, aren't you skipping work at the moment?"

Sullivan paused for a moment before responding, "It's okay. I'm just wrapping up a project. It's not very urgent."

But Loraine suggested tactfully, "I'm sure your project is important. I think you should finish it first. Besides, I have something to attend to as well. Let's talk next time."

Sullivan didn't catch on to Loraine's polite dismissal, so he said cheerfully, "Sure thing. We'll talk later then. Bye."

After hanging up, Loraine breathed a deep sigh of relief.

The next day, weighed down by guilt for not being able to help Ariadna get the surgical robot, Loraine went to Ariadna's hospital room to see her.

The moment she entered the girl's hospital room, she saw that Tillie was there too, talking nonstop to Ariadna who looked troubled and eager to be rid of her.

The moment Ariadna saw Loraine, her eyes lit up instantly and she exclaimed, "Loraine!"

Loraine walked up to her bed with a wide smile.

Tillie stopped talking and looked at Loraine with an unpleasant expression on her face. "Miss Torres," she said in a cold tone, "as you can see, Miss Ariadna is not in a good condition and cannot tolerate emotional outbursts. It'll be better if you don't talk too much to her."

From the tone of her voice, it was obvious that Tillie was blaming Loraine for the fact that Ariadna had fainted the previous day.

But Loraine found her statement surprising. Normally, Tillie would have shouted at her and tried to drive her away. But today, she was surprisingly polite.

At this point, Ariadna looked at Tillie and said, "Tillie, I want to talk to Loraine alone. Can you please excuse us?"

Tillie kept quiet. Loraine expected her to say something, but she didn't. Instead, she just stepped aside and let Loraine come

closer to talk to Ariadna.

Loraine was still surprised by the total and sudden change in Tillie's attitude. It was as if the sun had risen in the west for the first time!

Nevertheless, she sat down beside Ariadna and was about to ask her how she was feeling. But when she saw her pale face, her heart sank. She quickly asked in concern, "Are you okay? How are you feeling today?"

Ariadna smiled and shrugged, "I'm feeling much better. But don't worry about me. My illness has always been like this. Yesterday's fainting wasn't your fault at all."

However, Loraine felt angry with herself. She just didn't know how to tell Ariadna the news that she couldn't borrow the robot. But Ariadna happily grabbed her hand and said, "Loraine, thank you so much. You've really saved my life! The Solar Company contacted our family yesterday and said they could lend me the robot to perform the surgery!"

The little girl, filled with hope at finding a chance of a cure, beamed with pure joy and exclaimed ecstatically, "My illness can now be cured! All thanks to Loraine for helping me contact Dr. Palmer!"

Just then, Tillie nodded at Loraine. Though she looked a bit uncomfortable, she was still clearly grateful.

Loraine was shocked to hear what Ariadna had just said. She had thought there was no hope left! But somehow, they were able to borrow the robot.

The question that nagged her mind now was what changed over the night. What exactly happened behind the scenes?