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Chapter 31: The boss seems to be smiling!

When Xavier stood up, all the crew members followed his example and stood up, toasting Mariana.

And when Andrea, who hadn't said a word from the beginning, saw that everyone was getting up, she gritted her teeth and reluctantly got up.

Looking at Mariana, who was not far from her, hatred rose in her eyes instantly.

"Why does she always have such good luck? Why can this woman always curry favor with so many people?"

"It's not fair!"

Obviously, she was the lead actress in the film, and should be the focus of attention. "Why do these people only pay attention to this slut Mariana, just because of those shabby clothes?"

Andrea's hand holding the wine glass was secretly clenched tightly, and her knuckles turned pale from the force. She looked at the smiling woman in front of her with deep hatred.

"Mariana, I won't leave you alone!"

Inside the office of Grupo Durán's president.

-Mr. Durán, the film Emperatriz Santa has already gained the recognition of the film and television industry, and the costumes designed by the lady have earned the praise of the entire industry.

The assistant reported exactly what he had just learned.

Leopoldo looked up and looked at the assistant, somewhat distantly.

-I know.

The assistant turned and left after receiving his response.

When he left, Leopoldo put down the documents in his hands, picked up the car keys on the table and his jacket and left the office.

When Leopoldo passed through the staff area, almost all the female employees looked at him sideways.

-Why is the boss leaving so early today?

-How strange! It's the first time I've seen the boss leave work so early.

-The boss is so handsome, even the way he walks is so attractive....

-Did you see him? The boss looks like he's smiling!

-Am I wrong or what? The boss is really smiling!

The female employees in the office whispered warmly. Their boss hardly smiled at all. If he wasn't so handsome, they would have thought he was facially paralyzed.

But today he had really smiled!

Besides, the boss, the workaholic, had left work early today!

Was there anything stranger than that?

After dinner, some recommended going to karaoke to entertain themselves a little more. The director was in a good mood and agreed.

Mariana had no choice but to follow the crowd to the next location.

In the karaoke room, Andrea was singing an extremely lyrical song, and her sweet voice was slightly muffled, it sounded to everyone's ears, which was quite pleasant.

The crowd on the couch was looking at her with a more or less envious gleam in their eyes, which made Andrea's look at Mariana even more reckless and even a bit provocative.

Raising the glass of wine in front of her, she took a sip, blocking Andrea's uncomfortable gaze, Mariana smiled bitterly, somewhat helplessly.

Next to her, Ana, naturally, was not used to seeing Andrea's provocative gaze, so she leaned close to her friend and lowered her voice to complain:

-Mari, did you see how Andrea is looking at you up there? Really, those who don't know would think she was a famous actress competing with her on the catwalk! How funny!

After saying that, Ana still felt very angry and pushed the fruit plate in front of her fiercely, as if this poor fruit plate was that annoying Andrea!

Hearing these words, Mariana shook her head and let out a soft sigh.

She really didn't want to be the imaginary enemy of this Andrea.

Thinking about this, she raised the cup in front of her again and took a sip.

The director felt that the many female companions had already drunk too much wine at dinner, so he ordered some fruity cocktails for them that were not too strong and relatively sweet.

When Mariana realized that she was a little dizzy, the cup in front of her was already empty.

He gently set the cup down and couldn't help but reach out to massage his temples a bit.

On stage, Andrea saw the woman who had her eyes slightly narrowed, her eyes revealing a glint of cruelty and malice that soon disappeared.

Andrea gave a sly smile, narrowed her eyes and tilted her head to finish her red wine in the glass in one gulp.

When she saw that Xavier was already seated next to Mariana, Andrea snorted a low laugh and nonchalantly handed the microphone in her hand to the man next to her who was looking at her excitedly. She then quietly stepped down from the stage, smiled shyly, picked up her bag and left the room.

At the sink, Andrea pulled out her cell phone and dialed a number, frowned gently and spoke somewhat delicately:

-Leo, are you still in the office?

-Our set is meeting now. I've had some wine, and my head is a little dizzy, can you come take me home?

By this time, Leopoldo had arrived home, but the woman's upstairs bedroom was dark and silent.

The nanny spoke softly behind him:

-Sir, the lady is not back yet.

-I know.

Without an affirmative answer, Andrea, pursed her lips and joked with a seemingly carefree laugh:

-Leo, don't you know that this party is for Mariana, those costumes are really well designed, even I think they are very nice! Mariana is really great!

-She's the star of the party tonight, and a lot of people are toasting to her, I think she's had quite a lot to drink. I've only had a few drinks and I'm a bit tipsy already!

Her voice was sweet and inviting, with something sexy about it.

"Mariana, you are not qualified to compete with me! If Leo sees you being in the other man's embrace, let's see if he's still paying attention to you or not!"

The woman's eyes in front of the mirror became fierce and full of anger.

There was silence on the other end of the line for a few seconds before a deep voice said slowly:

-Send me the address.

Leopold turned to look at the nanny behind him, and his thin lips parted:

-Give me some medicine that can relieve the hangover.

-Yes, sir.

After saying this, the man picked up the keys and left with big steps.

At that moment, Mariana, in the private room, already realized that she had had too much to drink, and was hesitating whether to leave earlier, when a light masculine fragrance came from her side.

This aroma?

It was Xavier Bolaño.

Indeed, the next moment the male voice rang in his ears.

-Señorita Ortiz, you really are an interesting person. Andrea is singing up there, and the people on the set flatter her superficially, but Miss Ortiz sits off to the side and keeps her head down.

The unmistakable masculine scent enveloped Mariana's nose, making her body seem even hotter and more restless, with a thin sweat pouring down her forehead.

In fact, the air conditioning temperature in the private room was set very low, so you should not feel hot.

After not receiving an answer for a long time, Xavier looked at the top of the woman's head with a smile and shook his head gently.

"This woman is really reserved and discreet."

He was about to get up and leave when a gentle hand reached out and grabbed his sleeve, gripping it tightly with no intention of letting go.

The mysterious smile on Xavier's face slowly tightened and, after a pause, did not go away after all.

-Take me," the woman's voice came out a blur, and wasn't very noticeable under the loud music in the room, but Xavier still heard her clearly, which made him furrow both eyebrows.

Mariana's body was getting hotter and hotter, and she knew she must have eaten something by mistake. Or was it the fault of the cocktail she had just drunk...?

That feeling was kind of strange, but it made her panic even more.

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Chapter 32: Shameless woman!

Xavier at her side seemed to be her only help. Now his whole body was now so weak that he didn't even have the strength to get up, so she had no choice but to pull him up in panic.

-Miss Ortiz, you insist so much, how can I refuse? -Xavier said these words, waggling his eyebrows.

Mariana bit her lower lip hard, trying in vain to use the pain to keep herself awake. Although the man next to her had misunderstood something at the moment, she could no longer worry about so much at the moment.

Bending down slightly, Xavier wrapped his arms around Mariana's slender waist and the woman leaned against him. Thus the two bodies were tightly pressed together.

The woman in his arms was flushed. Her forehead was covered with beads of sweat, her eyes were slightly squinted, and her lower lip was already pale from the bite. But still she did not let go.

Such a pitiful look would let any man feel sorry for her.

But the two of them in that affectionate position caused those present to be surprised and even shocked.

Even Ana, who was already a little drunk, couldn't help but stand up and point her finger at the two of them, with a puzzled expression but with a touch of excitement, asking:

-You?

Mariana lowered her eyes and her delicate body could not help but tremble.

The environment was getting noisier and noisier.

-What's going on here! Has Xavier fallen in love with designer Ortiz?

-Last time I heard Ms. Solis say that Mariana has backing in the company, could it be that her backing is Mr. Bolaño!

-Mariana is really an expert in love. After only meeting Xavier a couple of times, she's hooked up with him! What a tactic!

-Or maybe Mr. Bolaño is not picky in his choice of women! Look at the scandals Mr. Bolaño has been involved in over the years. I don't think that's unusual.

-Come on – Xavier lowered his eyes and looked at the woman in his arms, who had closed her eyes as if she had fallen asleep, but the slightly trembling eyelids had already revealed the deepest emotions inside her.

The cool evening breeze blew against her flushed cheeks, and the coolness made Mariana's consciousness a little clearer.

-What are you doing? -Mariana shuddered and raised her head to see a cold and somber man in front of her.

It was Leopoldo.

The man wore gray casual clothes, which hid his cold and oppressive aura, but the look was even more indifferent than usual, making it icy to the touch.

He walked with large steps, Leopold slightly lowered his eyes, looking at the blushing woman. Her eyes first filled with anger, then turned cold.

Mariana was a little hesitant as she moved gently in Xavier's arms, trying to get out of his embrace.

That look from Leopoldo made her uneasy, even panicked.

In the eyes of the outside world, they were not "husband and wife," and even had no relationship.

Xavier, who was holding Mariana in his embrace, noticed the woman's struggling, and narrowed his eyes slightly, looking at the man in front of him playfully.

-Mr. Durán, what a coincidence to find you here.

The flirtatious tone made Leopold's eyebrows furrow even more.

The next second, Leopoldo spoke slowly, but the words that came out were very harsh.

-I didn't expect Miss Ortiz to be such a person," the man paused, revealing a smirk, and continued, "So embarrassed?"

Mariana's cheeks, which were flushed, became very pale.

Mariana closed her eyes helplessly, but her mind was filled with memories of that day at the hotel entrance, when Andrea, in the car, gently kissed Leopoldo's face.

Seemingly unable to take any more, Mariana's slender body swayed.

-The truth is not like what you saw.

His words seemed unconvincing to Leopoldo.

-Leo, are you here already? -A sweet and delicate voice came from behind her, and only then Mariana understood that he had come to pick up Andrea.

He wanted to laugh coldly, but felt an unexpected pain in his lips, and it turned out that his lower lip had been injured by her bite.

"It seems that when you have bad luck, everything goes wrong for you."

Andrea approached Leopoldo and, naturally, took him by the arm. And she pretended to finish seeing Mariana and Xavier, and asked in surprise:

-You?

Then she took half a step forward and looked at Mariana with concern, pretending to ask:

-Mariana, what's up? Are you going to the hotel now?

After saying that, he even blinked mischievously at Mariana.

-Leo, it turns out that Mariana and Xavier have such a relationship, I didn't even know it before," said Andrea with an innocent look, pretending to be nice in front of everyone.

Hearing this, Leopoldo fixed Mariana with an even more indifferent look of slight displeasure, which made Mariana's already pale face even more frustrated.

Mariana lowered her eyes slightly, wanting to explain something, but she felt that her throat was blocked by a lump and she could not utter a word.

-Miss Solis, if you don't know the situation well, please don't talk nonsense. Playing tricks is not a good quality, huh?

Xavier didn't care about the gossip, but looking at the woman who looked even weaker in his arms, he decided to refute.

-What are you talking about!

-That's enough," Andrea quieted down at the sound of Leopoldo's voice.

Averting his gaze, Leopoldo took one last look at the woman in front of him.

-Let's go," Leopoldo said, but the words he spoke were extremely harsh.

Andrea took Leopoldo's arm and walked away with him, lifting the corners of her lips and glancing at the blushing woman with disdain.

Mariana raised her head uncomprehendingly and looked at the man who had turned away, but felt a burst of pain strike her heart.

"Yet he still wasn't willing to take me home – was it because he was afraid Andrea would misunderstand something?"

"Forget it, we're not a real couple anyway."

The pain made Mariana narrow her eyes slightly, and she drew a bitter smile with a touch of sarcasm.

-Don't look, they're gone," Xavier's voice reached her ears, a little against the grain.

Leopold's icy pressure on her suddenly disappeared and a wave of heat swept over her, without the cool night breeze being able to relieve her one bit.

-I want to go home," the voice had a lovely flavor, and the words she spoke seemed to be wrapped in a smoldering warmth.

-Then you have to tell me where your house is,” said Xavier with some helplessness.

The burning body of the woman next to him was close to his, and her body heat transferred to his body along the tight clothing, making him a little uncomfortable and annoyed.

At that moment, a man dressed in a formal suit walked quickly past him, and glanced at Xavier before turning his gaze to Mariana.

-Mr. Bolaño, my master asked me to come and take his drunken wife home.

-Please, leave the later. I will bring her safely to her husband’s side.

Xavier cast a playful glance at the woman moving in his arms.

“Your husband?”

At that moment, Mariana raised her head slightly, looked at the man in front of her and nodded:

-Please.

After handing the woman in his embrace to the man who had just arrived, Xavier curved the corners of his mouth in a mysterious smile.

“Things seem to be getting interesting.”

Leopoldo looked at the woman on the bed, with a few buttons of her shirt already undone, exposing the light pink underwear she wore inside. The woman’s body writhed haphazardly on the bed, and the sheets were ruffled by the woman’s movements.

“Was she like this in the man’s arms?”

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Chapter 33: What will you think of me?

Instantly, the man’s gaze became serious, and was suffused with unfathomable anger.

“Did he cheat on me?”

Mariana felt very hot, as if she were in the extreme summer, but the next moment she seemed to be in the coldest winter, vacillating between two seasons.

Maybe she noticed the man’s indifferent gaze. Mariana searched for coolness and pressed her whole body against Leopoldo’s. A sensation of coolness invaded her and let her avoid a pleasant moan.

Leopoldo raised his eyebrows, not knowing if someone had given her the drug or if she had taken it on her own.

The woman’s soft, smooth hands kept sliding up and down his body, warm and urgent.

Finally, aroused by the woman’s lust, Leopoldo roughly pushed Mariana onto the bed and pressed himself against her.

Whoever did such a thing, she would still have nothing.

The moon was quietly hiding behind the clouds, as if it was so shy that it could not observe the excited passion in bed, and so the night sky became darker.

The next day, streaks of sunlight secretly streamed in from the window and spread throughout the room, creating a warm and peaceful atmosphere.

On the bed lay Mariana, with the thin comforter loosely covering her body, revealing her slender arms covered with red kiss marks, and her straight hair was spread across the clean white pillow.

After a good while, the woman groaned and woke up quietly, looking up at the ceiling in confusion, with a slightly dazed expression.

The bent legs stretched unconsciously, and in an instant, a pain hit him, causing Mariana to frown fiercely.

Such a familiar feeling...

She remembered again the day when Leopoldo was drunk and she woke up in her bed feeling the same way.

“Last night...”

Mariana ignored the pain and sat up immediately, examining the purple spots that crisscrossed almost her entire body. She was very clear about what this represented.

He looked down, and smiled a bitter, somewhat helpless smile.

Now that she thought about it, she supposed there must be something wrong with the cocktails at the karaoke bar.

“But who did such a thing to me?” Of all those present, only Andrea held a grudge.

“Did you deliberately dredge me so that Leopoldo would see me making out with another man?”

Mariana lifted the corners of her mouth in a mocking smile, fearing that this result would disappoint her.

Although her consciousness was blurry at the end, Mariana knew exactly who the man she was with last night was.

It was Leopoldo.

“But like this, what will you think of me?”

Mariana smiled bitterly and bowed her head, while burying her cheeks in her hands. She did not want to face reality.

In the office of the president of Grupo Durán.

The assistant was diligently reporting on the boss’s schedule for the day, but when he looked up, he discovered that the boss was unconsciously fiddling with the delicate pen in his hand, and was looking lazily toward the corner of the office, as if he hadn’t heard what he had just said.

He hesitated a bit, not knowing whether to stop and remind the boss or keep reading.

“Since when did this workaholic like Mr. Durán have such an expression, not caring about his job?”

Such a discovery made the assistant a little surprised.

-Why don't you keep reading?

Leopoldo looked at the assistant with raised eyebrows, a bit impatient.

-I'm sorry," the assistant ducked his head respectfully and tried to soften his voice as he continued to report on his work schedule.

The twist-action pen slipped from his slender fingers and fell to the desk. Leopoldo looked at his own hand, as if he could still feel the soft touch of the woman from the night before. And he sharply remembered the delicate appearance of Mariana lying on the soft white sheet, very different from the innocent and quiet one she used to be.

Leopoldo reached up and rubbed his temples. His eyes became a little more serious.

"Why do I remember these things?"

-At three o'clock in the afternoon, the heads of all departments are called together for a meeting....

The assistant was still reporting on Leopoldo's tedious work, but was interrupted by his cold voice.

-Go and investigate if anything unusual, such as drugging, occurred at the dinner organized by the Holy Empress set.

Hearing those words, the assistant's expression became serious and he hurried to respond:

-Yes, I understand.

The assistant then stepped forward, placed the folder in his hand on the table and turned around to go do what his boss had assigned him to do.

Leopold's gaze rested on the expensive pen and the corners of his lips curved into a mysterious, sly smile.

Some things he had to investigate deeply.

When Mariana arrived on set, other colleagues were already in place. Seeing her arrival, they all stood still for a moment before continuing with their task.

The strange looks from the crowd made Mariana, who had never been overly flamboyant, a little uncomfortable.

-He's so late today! This is not like your usual punctuality.

-Hey, you don't know this, do you? Yesterday, she went to the hotel with Xavier, that best movie actor! She's dating Xavier, so of course she doesn't care about our humble crew.

-Yes, you're right! Well, with her relationship with Mr. Bolaño, she may even find someone else to help her draw her own costume design!

-Hey, do you think she drew that draft herself or not?

-Who knows!

The chattering of others reached Mariana's ears unhindered, but apparently they didn't care if she heard them.

At this point, she just felt a little funny.

"When you have a new identity, it's as if all the efforts you've made before are for nothing."

How ridiculous!

Mariana had a calm look on her face and did not pretend to pay attention to these discussions. As she was about to turn around to look for Ana, someone called out to her the next second.

-Mariana!

The sweet voice had a slight charm and affection.

It was Andrea who called her.

-Miss Solis, hello," a slight and elegant smile appeared on Mariana's face as she looked at those people who approached her. She smiled nodding her head, very demure and elegant, as if the protagonist those people were talking about was not her.

However, hands that were invisible to onlookers were already tightly clasped by her.

-I don't know how I can help, Miss Solis? -Mariana asked kindly.

Andrea casually arranged her hair around her ears. Today she wore a wig, and her makeup was very exquisite, like that of a fairy out of children's fairy tales.

-They say you left with Xavier last night, Mariana. Is this true? -Andrea asked with bad intentions.

The originally noisy environment suddenly quieted down, the crowd seemingly carrying on with what they were doing, but in reality everyone was listening intently and secretly to what was going on.

Gossip always gets people excited.

-Yesterday I was drunk, and Mr. Bolaño only helped me out to get some fresh air and nothing else," Mariana pursed her lips slightly and explained in a soft voice.

-Is that so?

Showing a vicious smile, Andrea stared at Mariana and asked her, not intending to easily leave this good occasion to humiliate her.

Suddenly, his gaze fell on Mariana's neck.

It was cooler today, but not cool enough to wear a dress with a high collar, so Andrea guessed that Mariana seemed to be covering up something with this outfit.

After a moment of secret close observation, Andrea found red marks the size of fingernails on Mariana's neck around her ears.

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Chapter 34: Their Marriage Uncovered

Andrea's eyes were full of contempt and mockery, and even her expression became involuntarily vicious.

"This bitch is really shameless – she's only met Xavier a couple of times and she's already slept with him!"

-It's not too cold today, why are you still wearing a turtleneck sweater? -
Andrea asked on purpose.

Right after launching this question, she actually heard people around her start to gossip, and all kinds of evil looks fell on Mariana instantly, making her feel slightly oppressed.

-Look, Mariana, what is this on your neck?

Mariana was startled, but in an instant she felt a slight coolness: Andrea had already lowered her high collar.

She heard scandalous voices all around her, and Mariana instantly felt very humiliated.

Last night, Leopoldo had acted too roughly and left hickeys on many parts of her body, so she had thought about wearing her collar high to cover the red marks in the morning, but she didn't expect to be exposed in front of everyone now.

The gazes of the crowd fell on his neck, covered with hickeys.

The red hickeys on the originally fair skin also showed how violent the passion movement in bed the night before was.

Several men in the crew could not help but whistle at the sight of such a scene, which was somewhat humiliating for Mariana.

-What are you doing? -a delicate voice suddenly sounded. Hearing the voice, the agitated Mariana calmed down a little and felt a bit of excitement at the same time.

It was the voice of Ana, her best friend in the company.

Ana fiercely pushed Andrea's hand, stepped forward and stood in front of Mariana to protect her.

Ana crossed her arms, looked fiercely at Andrea and ironized with coldness and sarcasm: -What kind of education have you received, Miss Solís? Why do you treat Mari so rudely? They say that Miss Solís comes from a rich and noble family, but I don't see a trace of nobility!

Ana's words were sarcastic. Mariana lowered her head slightly and smiled, very excited about her friend's help.

To have someone stand in front of her, speak up for her and defend her, she was very moved.

Hearing these words, Andrea's originally smug face froze slightly, and her eyes widened as if she was about to lose control at any moment.

But in the next second, he revealed a false smile and said:

-You're the one being irrational, aren't you? I was talking to Mariana and you're the one interrupting me and scolding me recklessly. I think you're the one who's being rude!

After a pause, Andrea nonchalantly pushed Ana, who was in front of Mariana, aside and looked angrily at Mariana, speaking with disdain:

-Speaking of education, does this woman who seduces others have nobility? Look at those hickeys on her neck, that's the best proof of her shameless seduction!

Andrea's harsh words were full of mockery and contempt, which made Mariana speechless, not knowing how to reply for a moment.

-It has nothing to do with you! Mari is still single, of course she can do whatever she wants! Or do you mean...?

Before Ana could finish her words, she felt her sleeve being gently tugged, she turned around. Seeing Mariana's pitiful appearance, her anger subsided slightly.

After Ana calmed down completely and saw Andrea's smug look, she suddenly understood that those words she had just said were like indirectly confirming those scandalous rumors between Mariana and Xavier!

At the thought of this, Ana could not help biting her lower lip and turned to look at Mariana with some trepidation, her eyes full of apologies.

Seeing his pitiful appearance, Mariana patted his hand, telling him not to blame himself.

She turned around and the sweetness in her eyes disappeared, giving off a cold aura that made people shiver.

Seeing her like this, Andrea couldn't help but recoil a little.

At that instant, the Mariana in front of him seemed to have become that cold and severe man, because that cold seriousness seemed somewhat familiar.

Thinking about this, Andrea became even angrier, staring fiercely at Mariana. Anger made her raise her hand high with the intention of slapping the cheek of the woman in front of her!

The audience could not help but hold their breath at the sight of this farce.

Andrea's temperament was well known to everyone on the set: she was reckless and easily angered, but she was not that kind of violent person anyway.

The director was still inside, giving directions to the crew and preparing scenes for today's shoot, and was unaware of what was going on outside.

For a moment, viewers could not help but feel sorry for Mariana, thinking that she would have to suffer this slap today.

But in the next second the situation changed abruptly!

Andrea's wrist was held tightly and she could not move.

When Mariana looked up, she saw Xavier.

-This is not the place where you can indulge as you please!

Xavier's eyes were full of coldness, making even his handsome features become a little stiffer.

He pulled Andrea's hand mercilessly, looked around and said with a smile:

-Last night, I was just helping Miss Ortiz to get some air, and then Miss Ortiz was also picked up by the person sent by her husband. I really don't know how this caused such a misunderstanding....

Xavier's low voice reached everyone's ears, and caused a bigger uproar in the crowd.

-Is Mariana already married?

-Don't tell me! So young he's married? Then those hickeys on his neck...?

-Her husband must have left them! Mariana is so pretty and has such a good figure, her husband must love her very much!

Mariana naturally heard these comments from her colleagues, lowered her head slightly embarrassed, and unconsciously fingered the delicate ring on her ring finger, with a slightly dazed expression.

"Is my relationship with him finally revealed?"

Hearing this, Ana, who had been looking admiringly at Xavier to the side, turned her head in disbelief to look at her best friend, but not hearing her rebuttal, and then looking at the movements of her fingers, Ana already believed Xavier's words.

-Mari, you're already married! Why didn't you ever tell me?

-You've been wearing this ring, and I thought you just really liked it, but I didn't expect it to be your wedding ring! Mari, you should have told me! -Anna grumbled as she pretended to be angry.

-Anita, I'm so sorry. I really didn't mean to hide it from you – after saying that, Mariana lowered her head again, with a slightly bitter look on her face.

Seeing her like this, Ana also fell silent without complaining any more.

"Does she feel unhappy in the marriage?"

Outside the office of Grupo Durán's president.

The assistant hung up the phone and looked at the closed door, hesitating whether or not to enter.

Finally, he pushed open the door and entered.

-Mr. Durá, the lady has been misunderstood and that Xavier Bolaño.... -There was a pause before the assistant continued- -The fact that the lady is married has been exposed.

After saying this, the assistant raised his head and looked carefully at the boss behind his desk.

This morning the assistant was investigating the drug issue as instructed by his boss, but he had never expected to come across something so scandalous on the set and now he had to report this to his serious and indifferent boss. What bad luck he had today!

-What happened?

Hearing this, the assistant hurried to recap everything that had happened at the scene for Leopold.

After these words were spoken, the office fell into a long silence.

The man sitting behind the desk put the pen down in his hand and leaned back slightly, tapping his knuckles rhythmically against the wooden desk. The sound of his knuckles rapping on the desk adding a touch of tension to the already slightly dull atmosphere.

A hint of dissimulation crossed the man's dark eyes, and Leopold coolly ordered:

-There is no need to investigate further about drugging at the meeting.

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Chapter 35: Out of your control

-Mr. Durán, if there is nothing else, I will leave first," the assistant looked carefully at the boss's expression and said respectfully.

-Good.

Hearing this, the assistant turned and left the office.

The man rose from his office chair and walked to the brightly lit windows, with the endless flow of traffic beneath the building.

Leopoldo looked at the crowded traffic below for a while, and calmed down a bit.

However, at this moment, it was as if something had spread from his heart and out of his control.

On set.

Ana held Mariana's hands with tearful eyes, which were full of compassion and sorrow. She bit her lower lip slightly, and wanted to say something to comfort her best friend, but in the end she could not utter a single word.

-Don't worry. That slap didn't hit me, and I'm just fine.

Mariana paused and said with some helplessness:

-But I am very sorry for having caused Mr. Bolaño any inconvenience.

He turned his head to look at Xavier, who was rehearsing a scene with Andrea, with gratitude and some concern on his face.

Because of him, maybe Andrea would get along badly with Xavier. Maybe on the surface she wouldn't dare to do anything to him, but according to her spoiled character, she surely wouldn't easily pass up any opportunity that could ridicule Xavier.

-Mari, don't worry. Xavier Bolaño is at least the best actor on this set, that Andrea wouldn't dare do anything to him! You'd better worry about yourself first, now you've had a fight with her, and she's the lead actress in this movie! Ouch!

At the mention of this, Ana furrowed her eyebrows a little, and sighed heavily, as if she had come across a big puzzle.

-Well, don't think about it so much, there will always be a solution," Mariana leaned forward and gently brushed the tip of Ana's nose, showing a slight smile.

Suddenly, there was a piercing sound of the fabric tearing, followed by an anxious scream:

-Mariana! Come here right now.

Raising her head, Mariana looked in the direction of the voice, but was met with a smug look.

At that moment, Andrea was looking at her with her arms closed over her chest, her eyes full of contempt and mockery.

Sighing quietly, Mariana stood up, patted Ana's shoulder, who was pulling her quietly, smiled and walked slowly towards Andrea.

-What's wrong?

But Andrea only gave a derisive snort, and with her slender hand Andrea pinched a corner of the hem of her own dress. Her movement was full of contempt.

-The dress looks good, but the quality is so bad! How come the dress split when I just took a big step?

Mariana frowned slightly and ignored Mariana's provocation, lifted a corner of the dress and checked it briefly before saying:

-Miss Solis, I don't think this fabric can be torn so easily, can it?

For the first time, Mariana's gaze towards Andrea carried some uncontrollable distaste, and Mariana stared directly at her without any intention of dodging.

Predictably, that look pierced Andrea's lofty self-esteem, and she narrowed her eyes slightly and clenched her hands to resist the fury.

-You mean I slandered you?! -Andrea asked angrily.

Hearing this, Mariana smiled slightly and did not argue with her, bending down slightly to pick up the piece of cloth that had been torn on the floor.

Mariana's calm posture made Andrea seem even more irrational and uneducated.

Xavier, who had said nothing, watched the discussion between the two women with interest, but his glance at Andrea contained some mockery.

-The cracks in this fabric are neat, not that it has cracked due to quality problems. It is more likely to have been cut with a knife.

This statement came as a great surprise to the crowd.

The people of the being could not help but stare at the shredded fabric in amazement, and the scene was silent for a moment.

The director's gaze wandered back and forth between Mariana and Andrea, finally he sighed softly, reached over to take the tattered cloth from Mariana's hand and said aloud:

-If everyone doesn't stop arguing about it, we won't be able to continue filming!

The director's voice was loud and clear, and everyone present heard it.

Andrea's face, which had been somewhat rigid, quickly returned to normal, and she shot a fierce look at Mariana, letting out a cold laugh as she turned and walked away disdainfully.

"And what if the others guess that I'm the one doing the dirty ploy? I'm the lead actress! Would the director offend me for a petty costume designer?"

"How ridiculous!"

Looking at Andrea's haughty back, the director sighed secretly and looked at Mariana with some apology in his eyes, but finally ordered in a deep voice:

-This matter is over, I'll have someone send you the clothes later, and you take care of the repair.

Mariana nodded her head.

-Mari, it's clearly that Andrea....

Mariana interrupted her before she could finish her sentence.

-Well, that's enough.

Even if she knew the truth, what could she do?

Mariana returned to the dressing room with heavy steps and began to think about how to modify the dress that had been vandalized.

However, the matter did not end so easily.

Since then, Andrea would pick on her, intentionally or not, whether it was because her dress was torn, her hair was covering her eyes or she had lost the hairpin that matched her dress.

Every day, Mariana walked the set, working tirelessly to satisfy Andrea's inordinate requests, as if she didn't feel the fatigue.

Finally, one day, the hard work brought her down.

-Mari, that Andrea is really hateful, he really thinks of all kinds of ways to create different difficulties for you every day. I really don't know... -Ana complained to the side.

Before she could finish her sentence, Mariana, who was still cutting the clothes, suddenly fell towards her.

The terrified Ana rushed to hold Mariana, who was already leaning on her, and asked terrified:

-Mari, are you all right?

The woman lying in his arms was pale and breathing heavily, looking very uncomfortable.

Ana reached out to touch his forehead and discovered that his forehead was very warm.

-Mari, you have a fever! I'm taking you to the hospital right away.

Ana was about to move when she was gently pulled. The very nervous Ana stopped suddenly, not daring to move.

-These days the progress of the team was already delayed because of the suit problem, what will happen to the next job if I go to the hospital at this time?

Mariana exhaled with a hot breath as she spoke, but with a firm attitude, and her body was even more like a burning, smoking furnace from the fever.

-What nonsense are you talking? Now you have a high fever.

-I can take some pills to reduce the fever and I'll lie down for a while. I'm fine," Mariana paused, licked her slightly dry lips and directed the words weakly. Help me get some rest on the side.

Ana could do nothing and had to hold her to the side to rest.

She was well aware of this woman's stubbornness.