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Chapter 76: He treats me very well

The woman had already put down the tall glass in her hand and leaned over to the couch behind her.

-Come and sit down.

Mariana nodded, walked over and sat down on one side, her eyes looking straight ahead and not looking at Mrs. Perez.

A laugh rang in his ears, soft and affectionate:

-Relax, I'm not a tiger," he continued after a pause, "look at you, Leopoldo doesn't treat you well, does he?"

In an instant, she remembered what Leopoldo had done a moment ago, and Mariana spoke in a soft voice:

-It's not like that, he treats me very well.

-You don't have to explain it to me, I know exactly what he looks like.

Mariana kept silent and did not speak.

-I am relieved to see you today.

Mrs. Perez looked at Mariana, who was calm, and felt relieved. Since it all happened at the banquet that she celebrated, the lady knew exactly what had happened and she liked Mariana's reaction very much.

Mariana already knew what Mrs. Perez was talking about, but she didn't say anything, she didn't know anything about her nominal mother-in-law who was long gone, so she didn't know what to say. However, something occurred to her. The reason this lady wanted to see her was only to take care of her old friend's son, but Mariana was not really Leopoldo's wife, they were only married by agreement.

-Leopoldo's mother was a very kind person, so in the end.... Leopoldo, though he may seem cold and heartless, is naturally just like his mother, and will be someone to trust.

-I know, Mr. Durán has helped me a lot.

At these words, Mrs. Perez nodded in satisfaction.

The two chatted some more, Mariana suddenly remembered what Perla had ordered her to do, and said:

-Mrs. Perez, I am a designer, if you are willing, I can design a dress for you as a gift from me.

These words were spoken as if she were showing off her skills, not as the words of someone like Mariana. Mrs. Perez gently raised the tall glass on the table in front of her:

-This wasn't your idea, was it? If I'm not mistaken, it must have been Mrs. Durán's idea, right?

The word Mrs. Durán was emphasized with a strange emotion.

Mariana nodded her head slightly, her eyes sparkling with a hint of embarrassment,

-Indeed.

As Mrs. Perez was an old friend of Leopoldo's mother, she was naturally familiar with the Duran family affairs.

-You, girl, you are really innocent, do you really believe that Mrs. Durán is asking you to make clothes for me? How is it possible? It's just a matter of fundraising.

Mariana did not understand what Mrs. Perez had said.

-What does this mean?

-Since Juan retired, he made a charitable foundation, and now that charitable fund has fallen into Perla's hands, but with a fool like Perla, how can she manage it well? So now the foundation's funding chain is having some problems, she's probably hiding it from Juan and is secretly looking for someone to invest.

Mrs. Perez gently waved the cup in her hand like an elegant and wise queen in charge of everything.

At this point, Mariana couldn't help but be a little more curious about the person who might become an old friend of Mrs. Perez.

-Do you mean to say that Mrs. Durán deliberately asked me to make clothes for you, and she will be able to get more investment?

Mrs. Perez looked appreciatively at Mariana and laughed.

-But her wishes are going to come to nothing, no matter what, I'm not going to do business with someone like her.

Mrs. Perez's voice became more and more serious. Mariana understood that all those feelings that Mrs. Perez had for Perla probably had their origin in Leopoldo's mother.

-However, I still have to accept this dress that you design for me.

As she said this, Mrs. Perez stood up, stretched her arms slightly and looked at Mariana.

-Seeing me in these clothes, you should also have noticed that I like dresses.

After a slight start, Mariana stood up and began to measure Mrs. Perez's body.

Even so, Mrs. Perez still wanted to help Mariana increase her fame so she could enter the upper class social circle.

For a moment, Mariana felt moved.

When she left Mrs. Perez's room, Mariana did not want to stay any longer. Mariana stood at the hotel entrance waiting for Leopoldo's car, but she couldn't help but feel slightly lost. "If Leopoldo has gone to see Mrs. Perez and what have the two of them talked about?"

Mariana respected a woman like Mrs. Perez very much, she was like a bird that only soared in the sky, free and unrestricted, and there was nothing that could imprison her.

Mariana wanted to be her, but sighed slightly at the thought of her current situation. Mariana shook her head slightly. "But I can't, and I can't do it."

Suddenly, a black Maybach pulled up in front of her, the rear window rolled down, revealing a face as cold as a Greek fresco in a church.

-Enter.

Mariana didn't say anything, she just got into the car.

Mrs. Perez had already given Mariana a skirt to take off her dirty and wet dress. This skirt was more sensual.

Leopoldo looked at her out of the corner of his eye and his face darkened slightly:

-If you wear this suit to the banquet, there will be more than one man who will approach you.

When Mariana heard the words with some mockery, Mariana's face paled for a moment, her lower lip bitten with a deep mark.

-That man, I don't really know her, and I don't...

Mariana tried to explain herself, but before she could finish, she was abruptly interrupted.

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Chapter 77: No need to explain it to me

-You don't need to explain it to me.

Mariana's body trembled slightly at the cold, harsh words. She bit her lower lip again and said nothing. Leopoldo's eyes, which had been looking straight ahead, shifted slightly and rested silently on the woman next to him who could not hide her low mood.

The words that Mrs. Perez had said suddenly flashed through Leopoldo's mind.

-I think Mariana is very good, dignified and decent, not arrogant. I like her very much. Although nowadays you and I are not very close, I also consider you as the one I have seen grow up. Me and your mother are in the same state of mind, I also hope you are well.

The voice became increasingly indistinct and unsupportive, with a faint hint of a sigh, and in the background a hint of exhortation.

-Appreciate it.

"Appreciate Mariana?"

Several thoughts occurred to Leopoldo, and finally he returned to calm.

-Don't interfere in Perla's business. Give the clothes to Mrs. Perez when you finish, she knows how to do it.

Leopoldo told Mariana with a dark note of caution.

Mariana nodded. They understood all these things, only she didn't see it for a moment and they almost took advantage of Perla.

-Good.

Nodding slightly, the coldness in Mariana's heart dispersed a little, her hands unconsciously rubbed a little.

-Since Mrs. Perez likes you, you can socialize more with her, it's good to meet celebrities," Leopoldo said with a sigh.

The sigh made Mariana's heart flutter fiercely, remembering Leopoldo's mother. She looked at the man in the darkness beside her, and a trace of imperceptible anguish passed through Mariana's eyes. She couldn't help but reach out and place her hand on the back of the man's broad hand, and the coldness that immediately entered her skin made her heart shudder more.

Leopoldo looked at Mariana, who had pursed her lips, but did not let go of Mariana's hand.

Clearly, Leopoldo felt warmth coming in, warming his heart a little through the touching skin, warming everything. It turns out that the palm of a person's hand can be so warm.

The two looked at each other like that, hands clasped, neither of them speaking, a slightly sweet ambiguity flowing in the air.

Lionel looked at those two in the rearview mirror, and smiled secretly.

“Now, I won’t have to put up with the boss’s anger anymore, it was just awful!”

During this period of time when she was taking care of Zoraida, Mariana had finished the dress for Mrs. Perez.

It was also a dark purple dress, but it was no longer short, with an overflowing floral pattern hidden in the hem, and when the hem was slightly fluttered, it revealed a changing pattern, very bright and lovely.

The dress was packed and Mariana was going to send it there in a few days.

Zoraida was much better. Her face was rosy, which made her feel even more benevolent when I looked at her.

That day, Mariana said goodbye to her neighbors, and began to gather her things.

Looking at the busy Mariana, Zoraida’s eyes could not help but moisten with an indescribable astringency that made people feel sad and relieved at the same time.

-Mari, thank you for this period of time. You leave your job to take care of me, it is really hard for you.

With a soft sigh, Zoraida approached Mariana’s side, her wrinkled old palms unconsciously rubbing the crutches she held, her voice also slightly trembling with emotion.

-Mari, the only thing that worries me now is you. I think Leopoldo is a good man, he treats you well and respects you.

Mariana stepped forward to take Zoraida’s hands and spoke with a soft smile on her face gently:

-I know.

“Both Mrs. Perez and Grandma Zoraida have told me to take the happiness in front of her, but is Leopoldo really my happiness?”

As Mariana pushed her suitcase outside, she saw Lionel standing by the car waiting for her, and Leopoldo sitting in the back row.

Lionel took the suitcase from Mariana's hand and put it behind her.

And Leopoldo also got out of the car and waved softly:

-Madam.

-Well, Leo, Mari is like my own granddaughter. Don't bully her!

Mariana's heart was filled with emotion. The old woman's serious threat with a joke was not offensive at all, and yet it was the sweetest thing Zoraida wanted to do for Mariana.

-I won't," Leopoldo still nodded his head.

-Good, very good.

The large trees beside the road sped past, leaving only a green shadow behind them.

Mariana, sitting in the car, remembering Zoraida's expression as she was leaving. The old woman did her best to keep smiling, Mariana's heart filled with a sad feeling.

-Take me to the theater set," Mariana spoke softly.

-Listen to my wife.

Leopoldo said indifferently, but the words caused a layer of indescribable affection to rise in Mariana's heart. The word Esposa was like a surprise, but it still made her notice a slight tinge of tenderness, which seemed somewhat affectionate.

"Why do I feel so happy to hear it?"

Suddenly, Mariana turned her gaze back to the window, but this time, the scenery outside did not enter her eyes. Mariana raised her hand and placed it gently on her left breast, where she was trembling violently and tirelessly.

"The word can be so pleasing to the ear. "

Soon it was time to get to the set.

Lionel put the suitcase on the floor and stood waiting, a few steps away, Mariana and Leopoldo stood facing each other.

-I'm going to leave.

However, despite saying this, Mariana's feet did not move in the slightest, remaining in place and looking at Leopoldo.

-I have already spoken to the director, no one will make things difficult for you.

Mariana's eyes were fixed on Leopoldo, with tender feelings hidden deep in her eyes.

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Chapter 78: Are you trying to protect her?

Only this tenderness was not even perceived by herself.

-I always bother you. So, I'm leaving.

This time, however, Mariana did not thank Leopoldo.

-Good.

Turning around, Mariana was about to leave, but she didn't know what she was stepping on, suddenly slipping, her body fell backwards uncontrollably, Mariana was shocked for a moment and couldn't help but scream.

In the next instant, Mariana fell into Leopoldo's wide embrace. And the smell of tobacco made Mariana feel a little shy.

The slender, soft body snuggled tightly into the man's embrace. The dazed, wide open eyes and red lips were a beautiful sight in Leopold's eyes. He was fascinated by this woman and hugged her tighter.

Mariana's face got redder as she noticed the man's movement.

After two seconds of silence, an angry voice suddenly sounded not far away.

-What are you doing!

Mariana suddenly reacted and hurriedly got up from the embrace, tidying the hair around her ears to cover her increasingly flushed cheeks.

Leopoldo looked at the angry woman in front of him, his eyebrows slightly furrowed, but said nothing.

Seeing the blush on Mariana's cheeks, Andrea couldn't help but reach out and raise her palm up to slap her, but this didn't happen as she expected and she saw her wrist being grabbed by a strong hand.

Chest heaving with anger, Andrea looked at the person next to her:

-Leo, what are you doing? Are you trying to protect her?

These words were really uncalled for. "Protect me? Have I made some kind of mistake? It doesn't seem so."

Mariana laughed, but in Andrea's eyes, she was teasing.

-What are you laughing at?

Andrea stepped forward and stood in front of Mariana, speaking angrily.

-What are you doing? This is none of your business.

The cold, hard words came out of Leopoldo and landed in Andrea's ears, as if it were a bolt from the blue, making her body tremble fiercely.

-Is it none of my business? Have you forgotten? Or have you already fallen in love with this woman?

Andrea spoke without scruple, stepping forward and blocking Mariana in front of her.

At this moment, Andrea had no trace of her previous charming and adorable intentions in front of Leopoldo, her face was full of anger although she had done her best to hide it.

However, Leopoldo did not give her another chance to speak. He turned around and looked at Mariana:

-Since you have arrived, you may enter first.

Mariana knew that Leopoldo's act was to let her leave in a hurry. After looking at the furious Andrea, Mariana nodded slightly and left with her suitcase without asking too many questions.

When she returned to the set, Mariana heard a lot of comments from people and, naturally, there was a lot of talk about her.

-Look! This kind of person left the set without saying anything and didn't even tell the director, so he just took sick leave to take care of his grandmother?

-If you also have a big boss as a sponsor, you can also leave and completely ignore the agreement signed by the crew, and you won't have to pay compensation.

-Those who are beautiful and have a good figure can easily climb into the bed of the rich and have more treatment and opportunities!

Mariana's slender fingers holding the luggage could not help but clench tightly, her fingertips were slightly white from the force, and the veins on her back could not help but show. However, Mariana's face remained calm, seemingly unconcerned by the comments.

When Mariana entered the office, someone gave her a tight hug. The familiar smell made Mariana give her a smile.

-Mari, you're back at last, if you don't come back, I'll have to come and get you.

Mariana heard Ana's complaint, but only felt very affectionate at that moment.

-Well, I'm back, aren't I? It's been a difficult time for you. I always encounter difficulties and I always ask you to help me....

Before Mariana could finish, Ana let go and spoke:

-Mari, don't say that, since we are good friends, of course we should help each other! Besides, if you don't come back, this costume group won't know any leader named Mariana, it will be me, Ana Lopez, who will be the team leader! You will be the one who loses out.

At these words, Mariana's smile was even brighter, and she reached out to gently pinch the tip of Ana's nose.

-Then, when the time comes, I will give you this position, and I will be a little employee for you.

Hearing these words, Ana waved her hand repeatedly with a regretful expression:

-It is not possible, no.

The daily work was so complicated and trivial for Ana. If it went on like this, she felt her hair would fall out.

At these words, the two could not help but look at each other and laugh.

-You're back, have you gone to greet the director and the producer?

Gently shaking his head, Mariana's eyes glinted with a hint of concern, looking a little uneasy. Although Leopoldo said he had already said so with the director, the truth was that she had violated the treaty by leaving the set without saying anything.

-I'll leave my things here and go look for the director.

-I'll keep it for you, you go and come back quickly.

Ana took the suitcase from Mariana's hand, she knew that this was an important matter and she could not delay.

Standing in front of the director's room, Mariana hesitated for a long time, still not entering.

Several times he reached out his hand to knock on the door, but did not do so.

Suddenly, a familiar dark male voice sounded behind her.

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Chapter 79: News about that woman

-Mariana? Are you here to see me? Have you finished with your business?

When Mariana turned around, she looked at the director who was standing behind her looking at her with surprise.

-Why do you want to see me?

There was no trace of anger, not even a hint of displeasure, which made Mariana think of that man.

Mariana sat down in front of the director, holding with both hands the coffee he was handing her, and after a pause, she said:

-Director, sorry, because of my grandmother's illness, I left the set, it's my fault for causing trouble to the director.

The director waved his hand nonchalantly, smiled and looked at Mariana:

-Mr. Durán has already told me about this, your grandmother is very ill and there is no one to take care of her, am I not clear about the importance of the matter?

Mariana shook her head in fright and blushed:

-Of course not.

-In this case, you can go back now, probably because grandma's condition has also stabilized. You still have to pay more attention to the theater costume set, work hard, okay?

-Yes.

Mariana nodded seriously.

After leaving the director's room, Mariana felt relieved and her pace on the road was much lighter. The person she should thank most was Leopoldo, he had helped her a lot, whether it was for her, for the set or for Zoraida.

After work, Mariana went to the supermarket and bought a lot of meat and vegetables. She wanted to prepare a big meal to thank Leopoldo. She had always received help from him during this period of time, so Mariana had to thank him.

When she returned home, Mariana looked at the nanny next to her and smiled:

-I'll cook tonight. If you have nothing to do, go home early.

At these words, the nanny was stunned for a moment, but then a satisfied smile appeared on her face and she hastened to nod her head:

-Well, it's weird that madam wants to cook for sir yourself, so I'm not going to disturb your world, so I'll go home.

The words "the world of you" flashed through Mariana's mind, causing her cheeks to flush slightly.

After more than an hour of preparation, Mariana took off her apron and looked with satisfaction at the six dishes on the table.

Mariana didn't know what Leopoldo liked to eat, so she prepared a few dishes that she was better at, so that if Leopoldo liked them, she could make them for him next time.

Mariana sat at the table and looked at the clock hanging on the wall, it was already after nine o'clock.

"Leopoldo should be back soon. "

From time to time, Mariana glanced at the wall clock, but the light in Mariana's eyes was fading.

The food on the table was already cold, and the hand of the clock was already pointing up, it was already midnight.

Leopoldo had not yet returned.

A slight worry ran through her heart, Mariana picked up her cell phone, hesitated for a moment and dialed.

Soon, the phone was picked up and Mariana said cheerfully at once:

-Why aren't you back so late yet?

However, in the next moment, Mariana's smile came to an abrupt end. The light in Mariana's eyes also went out completely, like the food in front of her, cold and untouched.

-Who is it?

Mariana bit her lower lip hard and did not respond.

It was Andrea who answered her.

There was a moment of silence there too, and then the voice came out:

-Mariana? How did you get Leo's cell phone number? Calling at such a late hour is really shameless.

Then Andrea laughed at Mariana:

-Leo is not here right now, he has gone to take a shower and won't be out for a while, Miss Ortiz, do you want to keep waiting? Or if there is something important to say, I can pass it on for you.

The words were full of provocation, with a deep sense of sarcasm, but containing a slight trace of anger.

"Right now, he and Andrea are together." This knowledge made Mariana's heart strings snap all at once, those first tender feelings of maintenance disappeared in an instant, as if they had never existed.

-I'm sorry, I have the wrong number.

Mariana hung up the phone.

Staring at the cold food in front of her, Mariana picked up a fork and stuck it in her mouth, chewing it carefully before swallowing with difficulty.

"Yes, Andrea was the one who has been following him around and making scandals with him."

"Even when he went to Mrs. Perez's house, Leopoldo took her with him. Andrea is the one he approved of in his heart. I, on the other hand, am just a woman with whom he has an agreed marriage contract, and from the beginning it's... for money."

Mariana could not tolerate the empty room and went upstairs. Her back was helpless, like a worn and damaged rag doll that had been unceremoniously abandoned in a corner.

And at that moment, Leopoldo was indeed at Andrea's house.

Leopoldo picked up the cell phone on the table and glanced at the time on it before a hint of impatience crossed his eyes.

-Tell me.

Hearing this, Andrea handed one of the two tall glasses she was holding to Leopoldo, she said in a flirtatious and innocent voice:

-Leo, since you're here, why do you have to leave so early? Have another glass of wine.

Andrea's body leaned forward, from the wide open collar you could clearly see her beautiful body, Andrea was wrapped in a white robe, without any extra decoration, wet hair hanging over her shoulders, full of seductive intent.

Coldly averting his gaze, Leopold's face remained as normal, unmoved by the beauty.

-News about that woman.

The cold, hard words fell on Andrea's ears, not wanting to say another word.

With a quick flash of impatience in her eyes, and with a cold brutality hidden inside, Andrea sat upright and leaned back slightly, sinking into the plush couch.

-Leo, that woman has been gone for a long time, and you're still....

There was a pause, feeling some difficulty in her throat, and Andrea couldn't help taking a sip of wine:

-He's living the good life abroad. Leo, and he doesn't need you.

It was a cruel and cold sentence.

Leopold shivered imperceptibly, his eyes a dark stream before returning to calm:

-Is that all you have to tell me today?

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Chapter 80 : Acknowledgment

People always had a shameful conflict, not allowing themselves to be more humble and at the same time uncontrollably wishing to know about that person.

With a tremor in her heart, Andrea knew that Leopoldo was angry.

Andrea flashed a bright smile as she walked gracefully and slowly to Leopoldo's side and sat down next to him.

-Leo, I'm here.

She said, wanting to reach out and touch the man's large palm on her knee, the next instant, the handsome body beside her abruptly pulled away and stood a short distance away, his eyes slightly narrowed as he looked down at her from above.

-You'd better not play any tricks on me," the man bowed slightly and his gaze was cold and stern, "you should know that I'm not a patient person.

His words fell with a thousand-pound weight, and they seemed to carry a chilling coldness that made Andrea shudder uncontrollably:

-Leo...

However, Leopoldo had already left, and his figure disappeared in an instant.

Andrea's hand holding the glass of red wine tensed, and veins peeked out from the back of her white hand.

"It's all Mariana's fault! If not for this bitch, how could Leopoldo treat me badly!"

"Mariana Ortiz!"

The next day, Mariana woke up with a slight headache, she stretched and rubbed her temples, her mind was in a state of anguish.

Last night, Mariana had tossed and turned in bed and had not slept well all night, her mind kept flickering with various fragmented images that kept disturbing her, making her tired but unable to sleep.

With difficulty getting up, Mariana left the room, washed up and sat down at the dining room table for breakfast.

Suddenly, she heard the sound of soft footsteps, apparently aware of something, Mariana raised her eyes, but the next moment she couldn't help but be stunned.

He saw Leopold in a smart black suit coming down the stairs, his face as cold as ever, with a sense of depth and inscrutability that made people cool to the touch.

"Why are you here at this time?"

An enormous suspicion seized Mariana's heart, provoking the slightest surprise.

Leopoldo took big steps to sit down in front of Mariana, and the nanny served him breakfast. However, the nanny did not turn around and go downstairs, but remained standing next to him and spoke in a low voice.

-Madam, you cooked a nice table last night. I was thinking you two wouldn't be up early this morning, so I just made something simple to eat. Ma'am, sir, please enjoy.

The words revealed a hint of embarrassment.

Mariana looked down in a daze, staring at the breakfast in front of her, unconsciously picking at it with her knife and fork.

Leopoldo's strong gaze from across the table startled Mariana, causing her hand to prod the ham in front of her to stop, her heart trembling.

Noticing the strange atmosphere between the two, the nanny frowned and finally withdrew quietly.

-Did you cook yesterday?

Leopoldo's question landed in Mariana's ears, who felt her head, which still ached slightly, hurt even more.

After a long silence, Mariana in a low voice with a slightly dejected sense:

-Yes, but I didn't expect you to have a date last night, the dinner would have been to thank you for the help you have given me during this time.

-Last night...

Leopoldo wanted to explain, but Mariana interrupted him:

-Since things have already happened, then stop talking about it, thank you?

After a pause, he continued again:

-If you need my help for anything in the future, just say the word, I'm sure I'll help you.

There was a moment of silence when Mariana finished speaking.

"What does Leopoldo need my help for?" Mariana's temples throbbed and the pain seemed to have intensified.

Right now I didn't even want to hear Leopoldo's own words that he was indeed with Andrea the night before.

After quickly finishing the breakfast in front of her, Mariana went out.

Looking at the empty seats in front of Leopoldo, he felt a little nervous, but soon became calm again.

When she arrived on the set, Mariana only felt an intense headache, as if there were worms wriggling in her mind, which irritated her, but she could do nothing about it.

-Mari, if you're not feeling well, why don't you say goodbye and come back sooner? I'm here, it's okay.

Ana looked at Mariana with some concern. Mariana's face was pale and her eyebrows were furrowed, it was obvious that she had not slept well the night before.

Rubbing her temples, Mariana spoke:

-I'm fine.

-Then pay attention to rest today, if you really can't stand it, you have to tell me. I'm not too busy today, I can also do a good job alone, it's better to come back, otherwise....

Ana's worried voice rang in her ears, Mariana raised her eyes and said helplessly:

-Well, Anita, let me be calm, I know.

Ana said no more.

She had just silenced Ana, Mariana wanted to rest, but she didn't expect someone to come in from outside:

-Mariana, Miss Solis said she has lost weight recently, her outfit doesn't look good on her, and it doesn't look good on camera either, so she asked you to change her outfit.

-Now?

-Yes, that is what Miss Solis said.

Mariana looked at Ana, who was standing next to her with a worried face, reached over and pinched the tip of her nose:

-It's okay, don't be so sad. It's just to change his suit, it's no big deal.

After saying this, Mariana headed to the shooting location.

He saw only Andrea lying comfortably in a chair with her eyes closed, and the assistant next to her carrying a plate of fruit in one hand and holding the script in the other.

-Miss Solis, I hear your suit doesn't fit, let me take a look.

At that moment, Andrea opened her eyes:

-Yes, I don't know what's wrong. Is it because I've worked too hard this time? Leo even said yesterday that I've lost weight all over my body.

There was an obvious smugness in her words, Andrea looked at Mariana provocatively.

-Then Miss Solis, take off your suit, I will take it to you and change it, it will be ready soon.

Lowering her gaze slightly, Mariana spoke calmly.