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Chapter 81: Holy Empress

-Mariana, I have specially delayed this scene until the evening to look good on screen, so you have to finish the clothes quickly.

An order was heard that carried a condescending tone. Mariana remained cold as she said:

-I understand.

He picked up the clothes and a doubt crossed his mind.

Today Andrea had merely laughed at her with a few words, and then stopped making things difficult for her.

She shook her head. The corners of her mouth curved into a helpless smile.

"Is it bad enough that Andrea doesn't want to make things difficult for me?"

Before she could leave, footsteps sounded behind her and someone caught up with her immediately after:

-By the look on your face, is there something you're hiding without saying?

Playful words reached her ears. As soon as Mariana turned her head, she saw a pair of bright, enchanting eyes and was momentarily stunned.

-Xavier, what brings you here? Don't you have to keep filming?

Empress Santa was a drama that focused on the main characters, so the two main actors, Xavier and Andrea, naturally had many scenes, often shooting until midnight and working all day before calling it a day.

-Today's scene was supposed to be a show between the protagonists. Now Andrea's dress needs to be altered, of course I have nothing to do.

The sarcastic words were heard by Mariana, making her turn her head involuntarily and look at the man next to her. It was the first time she had heard a hint of discontent towards Andrea in his words.

In an instant, he already understood that Xavier, as a professional actor, naturally had his own quest for drama. Meanwhile, Andrea's lack of seriousness in her approach would therefore displease him.

- -So you mean I'm the one delaying your work? In that case, as a small designer, I'll have to get the clothes altered quickly so as not to delay your shoot.
- -I realized today that you are also a joker.

The coldness around her faded and gradually a gentler air emerged. Xavier looked away from the woman beside him, but his heart could not help but flutter.

Separated from him on the way, Mariana took the dress to the costume shop and finished its alteration when it was almost dark.

The orange sunlight coming through the window fell lightly on the clothes on the table, casting a warm yellow glow on them.

She folded the dress in her hands and sent it to the resting place for Andrea. When she opened the door, she saw Andrea sitting in front of the dressing mirror and stepped forward to show her the dress.

-Miss Solis, I've had the suit altered, would you like to try it on?

Andrea looked at the dress and said looking like she couldn't care less:

-Miss Ortiz's clothes are naturally good. Well, leave it there.

Frowning, Mariana said nothing more and put the clothes aside:

-Since there's nothing else, I'll go back first.

He didn't want to linger here a second longer.

Andrea, however, did not want her to get her way:

-You've been mending my clothes all afternoon, you should be tired too. I have here a bottle of wine that Mr. Soler gave me, just in time to give Miss Ortiz a taste. You're not going to deny me, are you?

Looking at Mariana, he continued:

-I'm afraid my outfit would not have been as impressive if Miss Ortiz hadn't been in charge of the wardrobe department this time, so don't hesitate any longer.

Mariana frowned, pursed her lips without saying anything. She didn't understand why Andrea was keeping her at this moment. It definitely wasn't to thank her.

"Could it be because of Leopoldo?"

-I didn't expect Miss Ortiz to call Leo last night. From what I heard, it sounded like you were so close that you were able to meet at night.

"That's right."

Mariana lowered her eyes and clasped her hands. Then she looked up and forced her voice as calm and indifferent as possible:

-I have no relationship with Señor Durán, except that I have recently received some favors from him and I have nothing to return, so I thought I would prepare a meal to thank him. Don't let Miss Solis misunderstand me.

His voice was husky with an imperceptible bitterness and sadness.

She gently lifted the bottle in front of her and, with a flick of her wrist, the burgundy liquid poured into a glass, which looked even more appetizing in the light of the incandescent lamps in the room. However, after the wine flooded half of the glass, Andrea did not stop and the liquid continued to flow downhill. In the blink of an eye, the glass was filled to the brim. It was a full glass.

A sneer appeared on his mouth as Andrea approached him with the cup in her hand and handed it to him:

-Miss Ortiz, if you can drink this glass whole, I will naturally accept your apology and there will be no misunderstanding. Even this inconvenience, which you want to thank Leo for, I can handle it for you, you don't need to thank him in person.

Arrogant mockery was revealed in his words, as well as contempt and disdain as if he were treating an ant.

Mariana was a little frightened contemplating the full glass of wine in front of her, and even her breath hitched a little.

He took the glass in Andrea's hand. Their movements caused some of the red wine to spill. But when she stopped shaking off the wine, a full glass was still visible.

With her head up, Mariana closed her eyes. Soon she forced herself to finish the glass of red wine in one gulp.

There was a little wine running down the corners of her mouth to her neck and making her already white skin even lighter.

Andrea's eyes flashed with a glint of cruelty. A fleeting thought made her smile.

-What a nice drink! Since this misunderstanding has been cleared up, we no longer have any hard feelings. Not long ago I got a dress with a nice design that I've been thinking of giving you, now I finally have the chance.

With that, she went to the side and pulled out a dress.

Feeling a little dizzy, Mariana couldn't help but grab the table next to her to support her body.

But to her surprise, her body was warming up next and seemed to need something cold to cool her down.

Handing her the dress in her hand, Andrea looked into her gradually blurring eyes and a flash of pleasure passed inside.

-Mariana, if you can accept this gift from me, I'm sure you would like to be my friend again. I have a fitting room right here, but it's a little dirty because the assistant hasn't been able to clean it yet.

After a pause, Andrea gave a strange smile:

-If you don't mind, I'll leave first and you can change here. Let me know when you're done.

With that, she tucked the dress into Mariana's arms as quickly as she could and turned to leave quietly.

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Chapter 82: A Poor Lie Revealed a Truth

When she turned to look at the woman shaking her head, Andrea's eyes filled with proud emotion, but it was immediately replaced by resentment.

All the words that had been buzzing, but which she could not quite make out, were already dissipated. Mariana couldn't help but shake her head harder, but she couldn't stop the dizziness. Her body had become even hotter as a result of what she had just done.

This dry heat made her panic and the urge to want a cool hand on her slender waist let her generate a little fear.

Suddenly, the living room door opened.

-I wonder what Miss Solis wanted to see me about? I still have to memorize some necessary lines, maybe I don't have much time to chat with you. Yes...

Before he finished the words, however, there was an abrupt pause as he saw who the person inside was.

Xavier stepped forward quickly and arrived in front of Mariana who was flushed, limp and had to lean on the table to stand up. He expressed a look of concern in his eyes and asked her:

-Mariana, what's wrong?

At the sound of his voice, Mariana raised her eyes, which were full of enchantment:

-Xavier, why are you here?

Her voice was husky and there was a hint of femininity that made someone look spellbound.

Reaching out to touch his forehead, Xavier's heart trembled slightly. The touch was very warm. He was about to withdraw his hand when Mariana grabbed it and pressed it firmly against his face.

In such a way, a moan escaped her lips and hit Xavier's eardrums. By now, Mariana was already unconscious without realizing what she was doing.

With confusion flashing through his eyes, Xavier looked around and already noticed that something was wrong. Mariana must have been drugged. This was Andrea's living room and the reason he came here was that she had called him. It was clear that they had both fallen into her trap.

As he pondered, he did not expect that the skin under his hands was getting softer and softer.

With a shudder in his heart, Xavier lowered his eyes and saw a large area of white skin.

The blushing woman could only be seen to have unbuttoned the collar of her shirt, exposing a wide expanse of smooth skin and even some of the pink lace of her bra, which enveloped her soft breasts.

This knowledge caused him to tense up a bit, not to mention that Mariana kept pulling his hand relentlessly against the skin of her breasts to mitigate their heat.

-Mariana, wake up, it's Xavier!

However, the woman did not answer him, continuing to unbutton.

His eyes fell on the slender hands and Xavier frowned as he watched their movements and the skin that kept showing.

Suddenly, noisy footsteps were heard outside. The next moment the door was opened from the outside.

The scene inside was presented in such a way to the crowd outside.

Andrea who was in front smiled wickedly, like a snake with its tongue out, and the look she gave the two people had a strange gleam in her eyes.

- -Ah! What's that about? Is that Xavier and Mariana?
- -I've always believed that the two of them had an unusual relationship, I was really right. I never thought they could do something like that on set.

-I didn't expect the sponsor behind Mariana to be Xavier. God, or did she hook up with several people at once?

The crowd was watching the spectacle before them and was amazed and commenting.

The woman's soft body resting on the man's broad chest, the shirt over her almost removed to reveal the light pink bra inside, in which her wrapped bosom fluttered; while the man's large slender palm was placed on the white skin of her breast.

The woman had a flushed face and slightly narrowed eyes, but you could still see her eyes full of desire, a clear sign that she was in pleasure with a man. And the man holding her had dark eyes and hands placed firmly on her slender waist. The whole room was immersed in an ambiguous atmosphere.

Anyone watching that scene would come to the misunderstanding.

-Xavier, what are you doing? Is it Mariana? You two...

He stopped abruptly at this point and an expression of total surprise appeared on his face. Andrea reached out to cover her lips, wide-eyed at the sight of the two embracing.

However, it was clear that a poor lie revealed a truth.

At this moment, the director stepped forward and glanced with a frown at Xavier and Mariana. As if thinking of something, he quickly turned around to turn his back to the two but face the crowd and said:

-Come on, get out there, something has happened here. Everybody go away.

He then looked at the attendants on either side of him, who nodded and urged the crowd outward.

Xavier was a nationally acclaimed actor with tens of millions of fans; if that news got out, let alone the backlash to himself, it would be a huge blow to the crew. They had already suffered through the last leaked dress crisis and couldn't afford another scandal like this.

And because Xavier had many female fans who treated him as a boyfriend, if they knew that he and Mariana were having an affair, his fans would investigate all information about her and even abuse her.

In an instant, everyone in the room left, leaving only the director, Andrea, Xavier and Mariana.

At this point, Mariana, her face red and her eyes unfocused, still didn't understand what was happening and just squirmed uncomfortably in Xavier's arms.

-What the hell is going on here?

With a glance at Mariana who seemed not to have heard him, the director sensed a huge anger in his heart and his eyebrows furrowed with a very unfriendly expression.

-Director, are you still not aware? It's obvious that Xavier and Mariana fall in love. They are already doing something like that, they are in their love bubble for sure.

With dark eyes and a sullen face, the director remained fixed on Mariana.

His gaze shifted to Andrea who was standing off to the side. Xavier frowned:

-What? Don't you know why this situation has arisen, Miss Solis?

Without giving her a chance to reply, Xavier quickly continued:

-This is your living room, why am I here and why is Mariana here too? You really don't know?

The aggressive words with a slight condemnation left his lips, landing coldly in Andrea's ears.

She hitched a sarcastic smile. She lazily crossed her arms and a mixture of contempt and disdain appeared in her eyes:

- -Yes, this is my living room, but what if you had deliberately come to my living room to do such a thing if you wanted to divert attention or frame me?
- -Besides, there hasn't been anyone in this room before, is it possible they were trying to find an empty space to do such brazen things?

After a pause, Andrea looked at the director looking as if she had suffered injustice:

-Director, after all, I am also the lead actress in this drama, naturally the salon is not available to just anyone, right?

The director narrowed his eyes and pursed his lips tightly. His face darkened and he had some recognition of Andrea's words.

The woman in his arms continued to writhe as her soft body constantly tempted the man.

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Chapter 83: Being Mutual

It was not a good time to argue with them, since, clearly, Mariana could not take it anymore.

Holding the woman tightly in his arms, Xavier finally cast a cold glance at Andrea before apologizing frankly to the director:

-Director, Mariana is not feeling well, I will take her to the room first and explain it to her later.

Then, without waiting for the director to say anything else, he walked away hugging her.

With her gaze riveted on the backs of the two men, Andrea's eyes sparkled with smug mischief and the corners of her red mouth turned up in a smile.

Xavier looked down at the girl in his arms and had no choice but to carry her into his living room and lay her gently on the bed.

Watching the woman, her face flushed, squirming on the bed, Xavier stood to the side, frowning with indecision.

The desire I had just felt had faded under the embarrassment of being seen by so many people, but unexpectedly, it came back when I saw Mariana in that state. Hands clenched uncertainly, Xavier reached to the side and poured a glass of water, gently lifting the woman from the bed and bringing it to her lips, coaxing her to drink it in an attempt to relieve her heat.

The glass was quickly emptied and, just as he was about to leave her back to bed, the next thing out of his imagination was that she hugged him.

The soft, warm, delicate body writhing over his back and the subtle moan that escaped his lips caused Xavier's Adam's apple to twitch uncontrollably and his eyes to darken.

He turned quickly and his hands held the woman's shoulders tightly.

For the moment, her eyes were tinged with a growing desire and became redder and redder. Finally, he spoke through gritted teeth, unable to resist any longer:

-Mariana!

With that, he suddenly lowered his head. But finally the kiss only landed softly on Mariana's forehead, pausing for a good while before slowly drifting away.

His gaze deepened. Xavier contemplated the lips that remained just inches away, so delicate, like a summer flower in bloom that was waiting to be picked by him.

As if compelled, he unconsciously lowered his head and slowly approached the temptation.

He almost managed to kiss her when a loud bang sounded in his ears.

In an instant, loud, anxious footsteps came from far away. When Xavier looked up, the arrival was already in front of him.

It was Leopoldo.

The man's face was cold and his eyes were filled with raging emotions, like a burning anger or an icy abyss, an actual mixture of fire and water that made him even more terrifying.

Leopoldo stepped forward and grabbed him, then punched him hard in the face, which broke the otherwise lovely face and made the corners of his lips stain with blood.

Reluctant to give her so much as a glance, Leopoldo went straight to Mariana and took her in his arms. The anger in his eyes intensified as he looked at her bare white skin.

Removing his suit jacket, he wrapped it tightly around the woman in his arms and lifted her up, then his cold gaze fell on Xavier who was standing propping up the table.

It was as if he was looking at a dying man.

Laughing to himself, Xavier looked lovingly at Mariana who lay unconscious in the other man's arms:

-I didn't expect Mr. Durán to arrive suddenly. I wonder what his relationship with Mariana is? And why did he hit me? After all... you have to be mutual to do such a thing, don't you?

Instantly, in Leopold's eyes burst a great anger rolling in a furious and agitated manner; at the same time, it was as if the boundless grass was burning with a blazing fire and the heat wave was still hitting Xavier.

Four eyes met. Their gazes intertwined, collided and brushed against each other in the air, even bursting into sparks that fell to their surroundings. But neither of them noticed that and kept grappling with each other.

The icy words spoken by Leopoldo were shrouded in a thickly dominant aura.

-Get away from her.

Each letter was as strong as lightning.

With these words, Leopoldo did not look at him again and left with giant strides.

Looking at his back, Xavier slowly stood up and reached out to wipe the blood at the corner of his mouth. The red blood on his fingertips looked a little gruesome, but in his eyes there was some doubt.

"What is Mariana's relationship with Leopoldo?"

After he threw the woman in his arms into the back seat, the anger in Leopold's eyes remained. In a deep voice, he indicated to the assistant in front of him:

-Drive.

The attendant cautiously glanced in the rearview mirror at those two people sitting in the back.

The woman had been roughly pulled into the car by the man and was leaning uncomfortably against the door; the man had an icy stare and hands in his lap, but did nothing about the woman who was still writhing.

The assistant sighed softly in his heart. "The boss is so unromantic."

As the car sped down the road, Leopoldo's eyes were still darkly fixed on the woman wrapped in a wide black suit and still squirming.

The jacket over her to cover herself had come off, exposing a wide patch of white skin at the neckline, causing Leopold's eyes to darken and his anger to flare up again.

The color of his eyes became darker and darker, like a black curtain, so hermetic and not letting in any light.

But the next moment, the man reached out and wrapped his hands around the woman to pull her into his arms. The ample black suit still rested on her body, wrapped tightly around her without revealing anything.

He secretly glanced back again, the assistant finally relieved.

You could see that the hair of the woman whose face was well red was tousled to hide half of her face, but that made the other half even whiter and more attractive.

At this point, she was writhing constantly in his arms, but was held by the man through her clothes and secured with a strong position. Although he looked extremely cold, the movements of his hands were gentle.

Soon they arrived home. Without saying a word, Leopoldo went upstairs hugging Mariana silently. He went straight to the bathroom and threw her forcefully into the bathtub.

The next moment, he grabbed the shower, turned on the faucet and held it against his head.

Leopoldo looked at the woman in the tub who was slowly starting to wake up due to the cold water, struggling and writhing violently at this point.

The emotions that lurked in his eyes rolled like waves, wrapped in fierce anger. Since she had been so disobedient and had repeatedly defied her boundaries and put herself in danger, it was time to teach her something.

After a while, the woman in front of her finally regained some consciousness. She raised her head in a daze and saw the man standing to the side.

With a grim face, like a demon from hell, he stood looking down on her from above. The coldness emanating from him made her shiver slightly.

It was then that Leopoldo turned off the tap:

-Are you awake yet?

A sneer appeared at the corners of his mouth and his eyes were full of irony.

-I... What happened to me?

Mariana looked down at the wrinkled and messy clothes on her body and frowned, not understanding what exactly had happened.

She tried to recall, but all she could remember was that Andrea had given her a dress and asked her to wear it, but she had no idea what happened next.

-What happened to you? It's probably that... you tried to betray me and I caught you red-handed.

Her eyes suddenly widened as her pupils contracted. Mariana looked at the man in disbelief.

"How could I do something like that?"

Suddenly, in his mind passed some debris of images.

It appeared that Xavier had arrived after she got drunk and was unable to stand.

What about him?

Without looking at Mariana's stunned face, Leopoldo turned abruptly and left the place.

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Chapter 84: Coma

Mariana stood shivering in the cold water of the bathtub, still confused by what was happening.

She had just changed and was lying in bed when her cell phone rang, disturbing the tranquility.

With some helplessness, Mariana answered him and spoke in a low voice:

-Hello...

But before she could finish her sentence, she was rudely interrupted:

-Mari, Mari, it's me! Do you know what happened to you today on the set? Not long after I left, I didn't expect such a thing to happen to you. You can't have sex on set even though you like Xavier so much, right? And you were in Andrea's living room. I don't believe it though, what the hell were you thinking?

An immense doubt instantly invaded her eyes. Mariana unconsciously clutched the phone in her hand with her fingertips slightly pale from the force, and a violent shiver ran through her heart.

-Anita, tell me, what really happened?

Out of nowhere, his voice trembled again as he remembered the words Leopoldo had spoken.

-Hey? -Don't you remember? Even though the director said the news couldn't get out, now it's everywhere. Everyone on the set says it was you who was romancing Xavier and then having sex in Andrea's living room....

The voice became lower and lower and finally became as faint as a fly, but Mariana could still pick it up precisely.

-Also, I don't know what happened with everyone, but at that time they went to Andrea's living room. Supposedly she invited them to do something, then she found you and Xavier there.

In the end, Ana's tone also became a little strange.

-It was also said that Xavier took you to his break room afterwards.

Her eyes darken and snippets of memory suddenly intrude into her mind. Mariana already understood exactly what had happened.

-Hey? Mari, what's wrong? What the hell is wrong with you? Say something...

On the other end of the line, Ana was still asking questions, but she could no longer hear what she was saying.

Mariana's eyes fixed on the ceiling above her and her heart swelled with anger. Her hands subconsciously clenched into fists. The sharp nails dug into the soft palm of her hand, causing a slight pain to shoot through her body, but she was unaware of it.

It was Andrea!

Andrea had forced her to stay in her living room to drink that full glass of wine. Now that she thought about it, some vile drug must have been contained in this one as well.

And Xavier was also called by her. Even the director and set staff had been brought in by her.

Mariana laughed. Her eyes grew colder and her lips paled from the ice water she had just used, giving her an even more impassive look.

It was Andrea!

-How are things going?

With the phone in his hand, while Leopoldo looked at the assistant, his eyes were cold.

-Sir, this matter should be the work of... -Miss Solis. Miss Solis.

After a pause, the assistant did not speak again. However, because he received no response, he reluctantly had to continue:

-She drugged the glass of wine that the lady drank. We have taken it for analysis and found the ingredients. And Xavier was also invited by her to her salon.

A deep voice came from the other end of the call and Leopoldo's eyes grew more frigid. After a long pause, he said:

-I understand.

The next day, Leopold came downstairs only to see the nanny going back and forth by the dining room table in a state of confusion, with a slight look of panic and deep concern on her face.

A hint of confusion crossed his eyes and he took steps to approach, sitting down in his seat before asking disinterestedly:

-What's wrong?

-Sir, I just went to the lady for breakfast. I have been knocking on the door, but no one answered, so I went in to see and found that she had a high fever and is still unconscious now.

Leopoldo was surprised and felt an inevitable tremor in his heart. He lowered his eyes and hid the emotion in them.

-I have given him medicine, but he is not getting better at all. But... but today I have a family matter and I have already asked the lady for permission in advance. What am I going to do now?

As he said this, his tone became a bit panicked and shaky.

The hand he was cutting the ham stopped and returned to normal in an instant. He said calmly:

-I'll take her to the hospital later.

At these words, the nanny was overjoyed and a little relieved,

-Well, sir, thank you for your understanding.

Attentive to things at home, the nanny hurriedly untied her apron around her waist and left after grabbing her bag.

Only when he heard the door close behind him did Leopoldo leave the silverware, get up and go upstairs. As soon as he opened the door, he saw Mariana in bed in a coma.

Her face was still flushed, her eyes were closed and her lips, slightly wrinkled from lack of water, were slightly open and moaning.

After remaining a few moments in silence by the bed, Leopoldo took his hand out of his pocket to lift the blankets over Mariana and lifted her up.

The body in his arms was trembling slightly and curled up, looking small and lovely. To his surprise, it was as light as a feather that he couldn't feel a single weight. Leopold blinked involuntarily and his heart fluttered as if something had struck him.

Sitting on the edge of the bed, he looked at Mariana who was still sleeping. By now she had been given the injection and her fever was gradually dropping.

-Mr. Durán, here are all the company's papers for today.

The assistant came by car to this private hospital and first looked at Mariana lying on the hospital bed before placing the stack of papers in her hand on the table next to her.

He had not expected his boss to be willing to stay here with the sick woman. He was a man who had always taken his jobs very seriously, even asking him to send the papers to the hospital. This was not Mr. Durán's usual style.

With a slight nod, Leopoldo looked at the unconscious Mariana, walked over to the sofa and sat down to start going through the papers.

The assistant then quietly withdrew.

When she opened her eyes, what she received first was a white ceiling. Mariana, confused, couldn't help but frown after looking around where it was still the color white.

But the next second, her gaze fell on the man with his head down, working on his papers.

It was almost dusk. The last rays of the sun were shining through the window, falling unceremoniously on the man, covering him with a warm yellow glow to dispel much of his usual aura of coldness.

He held a black pen and face with slender fingers as he scribbled rapidly on a white sheet of paper.

Such a Leopoldo in a working state was like nothing Mariana had ever seen before. She stood stunned looking at him in a trance.

And the man, who had been working with his head down, suddenly noticed a burning gaze upon him and raised his eyes instinctively.

Their eyes met, but for a moment neither spoke.

One was sitting and the other lying down, so they looked at each other in silence.

The orange sun wandered over the two of them, creating a somewhat warm atmosphere.

He stood up and walked with his slender legs towards Mariana on the bed.

-How do you feel?

The woman opened her mouth, but no words came out. Her throat felt dry and sore.

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Chapter 85: Being discharged

Leopoldo, standing beside her, poured her a glass of water and gently lifted her up.

After finishing everything, Mariana finally recovered. She opened her mouth softly, but her voice was still hoarse:

-Better. Thank you for bringing me to the hospital.

After thinking about it, she added:

-And for staying here to take care of me.

With a quick glance at the various papers on the table, Mariana understood.

Leopoldo turned and, with his icy and stern gaze reaching the other place, he frowned without saying anything else. It was his mistake to put Mariana whose body was burning hot in ice water, which had given her a high fever during the night.

-It was Andrea who did it last night.

In the midst of the quiet and peaceful atmosphere, a hoarse voice rang out abruptly and diffused to both their ears.

Mariana's heart fluttered slightly. Nor did she expect him to suddenly... pour out his complaints to her.

She smiled bitterly and a thousand despairs rose in her eyes. She had not thought that one day she would tell Leopoldo about Andrea's harassment of her.

Such a realization caused an inexplicable emotion to well up in his heart, like a warm and a cold current, which intertwined and poured into his atrium, finally converging into an indescribable feeling.

Hearing what he said, the man raised his eyes, which were so dark that it was difficult to distinguish the hidden emotions.

However, she was reluctant to take back what she had just said.

As if she could not bear the depth of his gaze, Mariana, stunned, lowered her eyes. The tears that had just come almost from the bottom of her eyes disappeared in an instant and calmed down.

-I knew that.

At these words, Mariana abruptly raised her head to look at him in a dazed, slightly incredulous bewilderment.

-Did you already know? Then...

But as we talked about it, she paused. I wanted to ask her what she was going to do.

But it was impossible for him to say it.

The two remained silent for some time, and finally it was Mariana who took the floor with difficulty:

-I feel much better. I still have a lot to do on the set, I... better be discharged.

With that, he tried to get off the bed.

The man standing next to her had his deep eyes fixed on the woman. His face looked a little somber.

-What are you doing?

The fall of the cold words in her ears made Mariana's movements involuntarily stop, but then she returned to normal.

A husky voice with a hint of suppressed emotion came out of his mouth in a whisper:

-I want to go back to the set.

For a moment, a quietness reigned in the room again.

After a moment, the indifferent gaze turned away from the woman before he said coolly:

-I'll take you back.

And so the conversation broke off on bad terms.

Mariana's eyes narrowed slightly as she watched the fading scenery outside. Her lips were slightly dry and wrinkled from the fever, less delicate than usual.

The breeze outside the car window gently brushed the strands of hair on her cheeks, causing a stinging sensation, something that even went to her heart and caused a slightly peculiar fluttering in her mind.

The silence in the room seemed to last until the car. The man had thin lips pursed and eyes fixed straight ahead, apparently unwilling to give any glance at the woman beside him.

Soon they arrived at the set. Mariana got out of the car and spoke in a daze after a hesitation:

-Thank you... for bringing me here.

So saying, she quickly walked away without waiting for Leopoldo to answer her.

Just as she opened the door, she saw Ana and, naturally, she saw her too.

-Mari, I heard that you have been sick, why didn't you stay longer in the hospital and come back so soon? Your health is the essence of the battle! Without good health, how can you fight those people?

The words had taken on a slight tone of resentment at their end. Clearly, this incident had made Ana even more furious with Andrea.

With a look of helplessness at the anger on Anita's face, Mariana couldn't help but shake her head and gently reassured her:

- -Enough is enough.
- -How can it be enough? You don't know how treacherous last night was. I was so scared when I heard our group say it.

Some doubt passed through her eyes as she leaned closer to Mariana and lowered her voice to a whispered question:

-By the way! Mari, I haven't asked you yet, how did you leave the set yesterday? Why was Xavier still here at the end and you disappeared?

Speaking of which, Anne glanced intently at the crew personnel around her going back and forth and spoke mysteriously:

-Mari, when he came out of his living room last night, he hurt his face! The corners of his mouth were injured, it looks like someone hit him in the face. Do you remember what happened last night?

He opened his eyes wide and Mariana's heart skipped a beat.

Had Leopoldo beaten Xavier?

There was the slightest hint of confusion shining in her eyes. She couldn't help but bite her lower lip and was silent for a moment.

After a few moments, he suddenly stood up, he hastened to say before leaving:

-I have to go out for a while.

Mariana left Ana sitting in the same place with her eyes wide open in confusion.

She walked fast. As she passed by the crew, different gazes turned to her, causing her breath to almost freeze, but her face to become even calmer.

- -Is he really still here? After what happened yesterday, the director won't let us talk about it, he's suffocating me!
- -Yes, I really don't know why Mr. Bolaño is interested in her. It's horrible that someone like him would be wasted on a woman like her.
- -And don't you think it's also a disservice to his fans? How unexpected. Despite the scandals about him everywhere, he's messing with the staff in private. It's true that people in the entertainment industry have more ways to have fun.

The incessant noise of chatter filled Mariana's surroundings, which left her involuntarily quickening her steps.

He gripped the phone tightly in his hand. His fingertips were slightly white from the effort and the veins on the back of his hand showed on his pale skin, looking slightly fierce.

Passing around a corner, Mariana crossed a hallway at a brisk pace. When she stopped again, there were not many people around.

On the door of the room to her left in front of her it said Rehearsal Room and only then did Mariana realize it.

It turned out that, unbeknownst to him, he had arrived in Andrea's "living room". He couldn't help but express a satirical smile.

This was the room that Andrea usually took over. Although it was a rehearsal room, inside almost all of her things were placed and it had obviously become her other break room.

With a flash of cold rancor in her eyes, Mariana went to the side.

Standing in front of the window, he looked at the illuminated screen of his cell phone in his hand and his slender fingers moved over it, finally stopping on the name "Xavier."

She knew Xavier had protected her in yesterday's incident.

And last night's discussion between him and Leopoldo left her unable to avoid feeling a little worried.

As she hesitated, sudden noises were heard in the rehearsal room behind her. Mariana stiffened in her seat, holding her breath, not daring to move.

Then, a loud bang fell on his ears.

-Leo, what do you mean by that? Are you going to do this to me for that woman?

This high-pitched voice and the word "Leo" made her shudder.

A moment later, his feet seemed to be out of his control and moving toward the door of the rehearsal room.

There was probably such a rush that the door was not properly closed, leaving a gap so that discussions inside could be clearly heard.