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Chapter 86: And only me

-You should know exactly what you have done. These things are not your usual amusements, but crimes!

The cold words let loose with a slight threat from her mouth. As soon as she heard them, Mariana couldn't help but clutch the phone in her hand tighter, as if it were her support.

-Leo, I explained to you what happened last night. I didn't organize it and I didn't know it, you can't replace my protagonist just because you suspect me. Besides, how could you treat me like that?

With a tinge of anger and sadness in her tone, Andrea looked at the icy man in front of her.

At this moment, a long figure was standing in front of the window. Leopoldo put his hands in his pockets and gazed at the large tree outside. He gave off a stern, icy aura and did not look at Andrea behind him.

Andrea felt very aggrieved and was about to cry.

-Leo, I'll explain it to you again. Last night I called Mariana to my room because I wanted to be her friend for your sake. But I didn't expect something like this to happen, and the others... I don't even know why they came...

Before she could finish, the man in front with his back to her had coldly interrupted her. His icy words made Andrea's heart flutter slightly:

-Just this once?

In an instant, he could not help but open his eyes wide and clenched his hands tightly together.

-The last time Mariana's father left the set, I had told my assistant to put a felony on him beforehand; he should have dutifully stayed in jail, but instead he returned to the set to cause trouble.

The deep voice turned cold, as if it came from hell and carried a monstrous rage.

-You released him on bail, didn't you?

Andrea couldn't help but take a few steps back as she unconsciously shook her head in impotent denial.

-And the last time Mariana got the job at the bar, you asked someone to leak it to her on purpose.

The man's words were as impassive and emotionless, as if the calm before the storm was approaching.

Andrea took a few deep breaths and tried her best to calm down. She hadn't imagined that Leopoldo already knew everything. He wouldn't believe her no matter how hard she tried to explain it.

She narrowed her eyes. A way out had already occurred to her. She looked very aggrieved and kept tears in her eyes, with a look that inspired a desire to protect her.

-So, because I've hurt her, you're going to take the paper away from me?

The voice was bitter and revealing of despair.

However, Leopoldo did not turn around.

For a moment, a smile appeared on Andrea's face. Her eyes filled with cruelty and swelled with hatred for Mariana inside her.

He had not thought that one day his career would be ruined in Mariana's hands!

"That woman?"

"That woman who must always be at my feet like an ant?"

This was unacceptable to her, a proud woman. How could she be willing?

-I will explain this matter to the director, you will leave the set today.

Andrea's fate was sealed with these insensitive words.

He didn't even want to wait a moment.

Something reluctant appeared in her eyes. Andrea stepped forward and said word for word:

-What you're doing won't disappoint... my cousin? She asked you to take care of me before she left, and this is how you take care of me? Hurt her sister for someone else's woman?

The figure that had been standing erect could not help but shudder at what the muer said and stiffened slightly. Leopold suddenly turned and turned directly to Andrea his somber gaze, which contained several emotions like churning currents.

A smile of satisfaction came over her face, but it was short-lived. By now, the anger and sadness in Andrea's heart had quietly disappeared. Her eyes were clear and filled with firm impetus.

But, even so, a gloomy feeling was brewing deep inside him. There had never been anyone but that woman in Leopold's heart.

Neither her nor Mariana!

-Leo, don't you want her back? You should know that she is always in contact with me.

With somber eyes, Leopold looked cruel to the core. After a long silence, he finally blurted out cold words from his mouth:

-What are you trying to say?

For the moment, Andrea had lost the panicked look she had just had. She slowly approached him, stood slightly on her tiptoes and looked up. The two of them were so close that even their breaths were intertwined.

Flirtatiously, she lifted her slender fingers and circled them gently over Leopoldo's chest, with a slight hint of temptation. Andrea raised her lips like a seductress:

-Do you think he'll still want to come back if he finds out everything you've been doing with Mariana? Tomorrow will be the day my cousin and I make our routine phone calls, if....

At this point, she deliberately prolonged her voice and did not speak for a long time.

Leopoldo stared at the woman in front of him. Her deep eyes looked like a huge container where a variety of emotions were hidden, either bright or dark, which finally returned to a darkness with a desolate silence.

-What do you want?

Hearing this, Andrea lowered her eyes and blinked, slyly hiding smugness under them.

-Nothing special, except that the protagonist of this Holy Empress has to be me, and only me!

The quiet words fell on the man's ears and, at the same time, bombarded Mariana's mind, making her heart pound.

-Okay.

-Thank you Leo. Tomorrow when my cousin asks me how you've been, I'll be sure to say you've been good and stayed by my side without other women by your side.

A sly laugh shone in her charming eyes. Andrea smiled indulgently, as bright and dazzling as the spring sun.

-Boom!

The door behind them was suddenly pushed open.

The two men standing together looked back and saw Mariana whose face was full of fury.

-Why are you here?

The high-pitched voice emitted from Andrea and reached Mariana's ear.

But she ignored her directly and instead looked at the cold man. Step by step, slowly but surely, she approached him. Mariana gazed at him with her head raised.

-What are you doing here?

The man blurted out the almost identical words, causing Mariana to snag a smirk.

-Why am I here? What am I doing here?

With a soft laugh, she continued:

-Am I not allowed to be here? Or are you talking about something that I can't be allowed to know? But everything I just heard is about me!

Words with a hint of desolation floated softly around the ears of the three.

-This is my classroom, please leave, Miss Ortiz.

Andrea took a step forward and stepped forcefully between Mariana and Leopoldo looking provocatively at the woman in front of her. A mischievous smile appeared on her mouth and her eyes abounded with sarcasm and contempt.

-Miss Solis' salon? Last night's salon is yours, isn't it?

This comment made Andrea turn around in fright. Her face, with her back to Leopoldo, was slightly twisted with anger and hatred that looked quite horrible.

She and Leopoldo had just argued endlessly about this very thing, and now Mariana had deliberately brought it up again.

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Chapter 87: Only that person exists

-Miss Ortiz, you are very eloquent! Leo and I need to talk, so please leave us alone.

The word "let us", which she deliberately said in a low voice while also accentuating, had a tinge of smugness and smugness.

However, Mariana ignored him and turned to the man:

-At the hospital, I told you it was Andrea who did this and I heard what you just talked about. Everything that happened to me is her doing! Why do you keep defending her?

The somewhat humble words came directly to Leopold's ears, causing his eyes to widen slightly.

Then Andrea's laughter was heard and her words were also extremely sarcastic.

-Who the hell are you to comment on Leo's decision?

As if he had not heard her, Mariana looked at Leopoldo waiting for his answer and his eyes were resolute.

He and she seemed to be the only ones in the room.

-It's none of your business. You are only the head of the wardrobe team on the set, it will never be up to you to decide whether Andrea is named as the protagonist of this drama.

The unceremonious arrival of the harsh words to Mariana's ears let her heart flutter wildly. Unable to contain herself, Mariana took a few steps back before she could stop her body from trembling.

-Why?

Bitter words sprang from already pale lips.

Leopold frowned as a hint of impatience crept across his face. Hands in his pockets, he simply ignored the woman and turned to leave.

For a moment, seeming as if her body had suddenly emptied of blood, Mariana became weak. She slowly bent down and clutched her knees helplessly. She was as vulnerable as if she were a newborn and abandoned in the blink of an eye.

-Why? You still don't get it?

The provocative comment burst into Mariana's ears word for word, leaving her unable to ignore it.

However deep the wounds in his heart, which were already bloody, he wanted to know exactly why.

"Why did you treat me like that?"

-Do you know a woman? A woman named Diana Solis.

The voice with a mixture of satisfaction and contempt sounded at his side, but in the end it was uncontrollably tinged with faint frustration.

Andrea looked down on Mariana with disdain in her eyes, as if she were looking at an ant that she could crush with her bare hands.

-Leo is not someone you can get, you must know who you are. How can you be worthy of someone as noble as him?

-Besides, the most important thing is that his heart already has an owner. No matter how hard you try, appearing in front of him all the time and bothering him, he still doesn't see you. There is only that person in his heart, he was, is and always will be!

The words began with a sarcastic tone, yet the closer they came to the end, the more despondent they became, wrapped in a faint sense of sadness and desolation; what sounded like a lost child, unable to find the way forward.

Andrea looked through the window at the bright sunlight, which was as if it wasn't reaching her, not even Mariana who was on the floor.

Because they were the same type.

I had been doing the same thing for a long time before Mariana came along, but the result was nothing more than that, was it? In any case, it could not compare with the name Diana.

Without paying any more attention to Mariana, Andrea closed her eyes, hiding the different emotions in them and turned around to leave.

With her head erect, Andrea looked like a haughty princess whose face had a smug look on it; the corners of her lips were curved happily as if she didn't know what it was like to be sad.

As the temperature in the room was dropping and the sun was fading into darkness, Mariana crouched on the floor in a daze sobbing for a long time. Her eyes were so uncomfortable that they could not shed any more tears.

He struggled to get to his feet, but his legs were numb from the long crouch and he almost fell to the ground.

It took her a long time to regain consciousness. Raising her eyes, Mariana cast a glance at the night sky outside. That blackness looked like Leopoldo's eyes, as if trying to invade her heart to swallow the last light.

By the time she returned to the dressing room team, the others had finished their work, leaving behind only Ana who was anxious and pacing constantly.

Seeing her enter, he pounced on Mariana and pulled her by the hand. He looked her up and down before speaking with concern:

-Mari, where the hell have you been? I've been calling you, but you didn't answer the phone and I thought something had happened to you.

Mariana looked down and opened the phone she had been unconsciously clutching in her hand, which showed dozens of missed calls, some from Ana and some from Xavier.

Mariana froze and only then remembered that she had left earlier to call Xavier.

He couldn't help but smirk bitterly and shook his head.

Ana had never seen Mariana like this; the calm, peaceful and cool woman she used to be was so unlike this somewhat disheveled and depressed person in front of her.

Ana felt anguished and hugged her, asking in a cracked, hoarse voice:

-Mari, something happened to you, didn't it? Did someone bully you? Is it Andrea?

His words showed thick concern.

Mariana's originally cold body gradually warmed up, as if there was a warm current flowing slowly to her heart. She could not help but reach out and embrace the source of the warmth.

At this moment, the door behind them opened loudly and slammed against the wall with a bang.

The two embraced, astonished, turned to look to find Xavier standing in the doorway.

For now, on his face hung a few sweats. He seemed very anxious as if he was looking for something. The next moment, his gaze fell on Mariana and only then Xavier calmed down a little.

Mariana approached him and asked with some concern:

-Xavier, what's wrong?

As soon as she finished the sentence, she was forcibly pulled into a broad chest. Panting sounded around her ears, blowing the hair around her ears and generating a slight tingle, which made her shiver slightly.

She was held rigidly in the man's arms, wide-eyed and with no idea how to react.

Behind her, Ana raised her hand in surprise and covered her mouth to prevent the exclamation from sounding to avoid disturbing the two who seemed affectionate.

But surprise had taken up all his heart.

"So Mari and Xavier are really in love!"

It was a long time before Mariana gently pushed Xavier away. She looked up at him and asked in a low voice:

-Xavier, seriously, what's wrong with you?

Xavier blinked and, looking at Ana standing behind them, paused in what he was about to say.

After a long while, he spoke with a smile:

-Mariana, can you go for a walk with me?

At this moment, Anne, standing on her back, hurriedly waved her hand and urged:

-Go ahead, go ahead, don't worry about me.

Only then did Mariana nod her head in acceptance.

But after leaving the set, Xavier told Mariana to get in the car and the two drove to a small, dilapidated building on the outskirts.

Just as they were about to go upstairs, a greeting sounded behind them.

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Chapter 88: Secret Base

-Xavier. What brings you here today? I didn't have time to clean the room today, why don't you...

With a slight gentle smile on his face, Xavier looked at the older woman in front of him with a kindly attitude.

-Vera, it's okay. It was me who came in today without telling you. Go about your business, I'll just take my friend upstairs for a chat.

At that, Vera Echave glanced at Mariana standing behind him, only to see that this woman's eyes were slightly red and puffy, but remained unable to hide her fair skin and delicate, very impressive looking features.

Vera winked meaningfully. She looked at Xavier and spoke in a whisper:

-Xavier, is she your girlfriend? How pretty!

And he froze and, for some reason, did not refute her in the first place. After a brief pause, he smiled without saying anything, as if he had tacitly agreed.

Vera's eyes couldn't stop moving between the two of them as she nodded in satisfaction before leaving.

Mariana, who was behind them, naturally, had not heard Vera's question.

The two opened the door and entered the room.

But what was before her made her pause a little.

The room was furnished in a somewhat old-fashioned but clean manner. An old, obsolete television was set up on the table and in front of it were Dalbergia armchairs, with smooth but somewhat faded arms.

When he looked up, he noticed some candlesticks on the table, of an antique style that looked like objects of yesteryear.

Even the color scheme of the room design was vintage, where antique touches expanded.

Mariana suddenly realized that it was probably a place where the elderly lived.

He turned his head to look at Xavier whose appearance was somewhat melancholy and guessed approximately who had lived here.

Xavier turned around and slowly walked over to one of Dalbergia's armchairs and sat down, telling her to sit next to him as well.

-You have to wonder whose residence a place like this really is.

Nodding softly, Mariana continued to look at the various antique ornaments in the room.

At this moment, however, a flat voice rang in his ears:

-Early in the morning, my parents were busy with work and didn't trust the nanny to take good care of me, so they sent me to my grandparents and asked them to take care of me.

Mariana's heart tightened as she looked at the man whose eyes were in front of her. Such Xavier was a look she had not seen before.

-For a long time, my childhood was spent here. I had a very happy and carefree life.

His voice fell on Mariana's ears, interspersed with a bit of warm laughter.

Unconsciously, she tilted her head and her eyes followed Xavier's to the small television set in front of her, still carefully covered with a red and white patterned cover, just enough to show the seriousness the elders had put into her life.

She had not expected Xavier to have such a memory.

That man of many young girls' dreams, the one who always wore a bohemian expression and played all kinds of other people's lives on the screen, turned out to have a dim light in his own life.

The story in his ears continued:

-Then the disease took my grandparents. Years later, I bought the place and redecorated it, restoring it as it was.

At this point, Xavier stopped narrating and turned his eyes to look at her.

-Nobody knows that this is my secret base. I always come here when I feel bad, so I feel that someone is waiting for me, someone to stay with me to spend the not-so-good times together.

The light in the eyes of the man in front of her seemed to spread over her, as fiery as if it would burn her.

-Xavier... -Mariana spoke hesitantly.

But he interrupted her.

-Mariana, you can take here as your secret base too. If there is something you are not happy about, I am here and you can talk to me.

Xavier looked at her with a very serious face, leaving aside his usual mischievousness.

In the time he had been away from Mariana, he had perceived, one after another, many malicious words in the words of those around him: jealousy, or disgust, or mockery.... Such things abounded everywhere.

Blinking hard, she struggled to hide the tears in her eyes. Mariana watched the small television with some bewilderment.

-How do you think people's choices really are? If not being elected means being left behind, right?

The words drifted softly into Xavier's ears, a little hoarse like shards of broken glass that had fallen to the floor.

-Xavier, you know what? Once again, I was not chosen.

Speaking, Mariana turned her head to stare at him with a trembling gaze brimming with tears, as fragile as if she would break on contact.

-Mariana, some things are not your fault and not being elected is not your cause, don't think like that.

A small, bitter smile expressed itself on her face as Mariana looked at the man, with a faint broken light in her eyes.

-It's not my fault?

Like a child who had done something wrong and was desperate for an affirmative response. It wasn't about someone telling her she was doing the right thing, but hoping someone could comfort her.

There was a moment of silence before Xavier quietly took the floor:

-As long as one lives in this world, one has to make choices. He will choose what he considers important, and he will inevitably renounce what he does not consider important.

At these words, Mariana hugged her knees tightly. She encompassed in a glance the vulnerability all over her body and her slender shoulders trembled in a heartbreaking way.

-There is no necessary correlation between choosing and being chosen, abandoning and being abandoned. Because the choice is made by others, but the abandonment is what one thinks one can only call abandonment.

His gaze went through the window and landed on the loose, worn swing in the yard.

-You probably don't know that I had those same thoughts when my parents sent me to my grandparents. I felt abandoned, that they had chosen their careers and abandoned me.

-But then, it was my grandparents who cured me, and they were also the ones who told me that truth.

Xavier stood up and walked to Mariana's side. After a hesitation, he placed his palm on her soft hair and stroked it tenderly, with a touch of affection.

-If a person is resentful because they were not elected, then there are too many unforgivable things in this world, aren't there?

After a long while, he spoke in a soft voice:

-Just follow your heart.

He had been cured here once, and now in the same place he was trying to warm up the woman in front of him.

The man's hoarse voice rang in Mariana's ears, rushing into her cochlea and causing a booming impact.

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Chapter 89: Getting rid of me

Looking at the affection in Xavier's eyes, Mariana burst into tears in an instant.

Tears welled up in his eyes with overwhelming determination, as if to wash away all the injustices he had suffered.

Xavier froze. The look in this Mariana's eyes caused a sharp tremor to his heart and then a slight pain spread through his body. He leaned forward and gently embraced the woman, an embrace that was no longer of the teasing and flirtatious nature of the past, but a more real and incredibly tender warmth.

It took Mariana a long time to regain her composure. She raised her eyes with a slight sob and looked at Xavier. Her face turned red and she whispered in a hoarse voice:

-Thank you.

"Thank you for making me feel like I'm not an outcast."

Finding herself again, Mariana returned the determination in her eyes. No matter what the future held for her, she would have to be strong to cope. Only she hadn't been chosen yet, not that she ever would be!

The hope that arose in his eyes in an instant burned violently, like the grass that, after a bitter winter wind, sprouted tenaciously from the snow and one day would grow and spread throughout the land.

The two returned to the set.

-Are you all right?

Not far from the set, Xavier stood looking at the staff walking back and forth. His tone was a bit mocking and the corners of his mouth turned up playfully.

A calm answer from Mariana rang in his ears:

-Yes.

The next moment, however, she turned to look at him.

-I'd better go first, right? And you come back later. After all, you know I have a bad reputation on the set, if you stay with me, I'm afraid....

He could not help but lower his gaze and did not speak again.

With a smile, Xavier reached out with a hand around his shoulders and approached him with a sneer:

-What, are you trying to get rid of me? I didn't know Miss Ortiz was like that.

His words revealed a strong joke.

With that, he advanced with his arm around her, as if unaware of the stir his actions would actually cause.

Mariana's breath caught and she turned her head to look at him stunned with wide eyes, so wide that he seemed the only one in the world.

It turned out that it was only she who had been shy and weak, who had always paid attention to how others saw her.

Finally, she finished sorting out her emotions and once again sketched a slight smile. All she felt was a warmth all over her body. Reaching out, she pulled Xavier's hand away from her shoulders and said:

-Even so, you can't take advantage of me either.

After some mutual banter, Mariana flashed a bright smile and took the lead to walk to the set.

Xavier was stunned and then a chuckle escaped him. He shook his head a little helplessly before following her.

The two just walked side by side through the crowd and thus led to a great sensation.

-Mariana is too shameless. After what she's been through, she still dares to stay with Mr. Bolaño so openly. Does she want to get him in trouble too?

-Yes, do you think he is trying to discredit Mr. Bolaño's reputation? If this matter is known by his tens of millions of fans? Oh my God! I don't even want to think about it!

-But don't you think that the kind and affectionate look with which Mr. Bolaño smiles at Mariana is very beautiful? It's like a romance novel between a famous actor and an unknown designer!

All kinds of chatter filled her ears, but Mariana ignored it. She walked slowly through the crowd toward the dressing room to say goodbye to Xavier.

-Thank you anyway.

The sincere voice in his ears let Xavier's eyes instantly turn bright. He leaned toward Mariana and spoke with a smile:

-There's no need to thank me again. If you really want to, buy me dinner sometime.

Mariana smiled and nodded,

-So, let Mr. Bolaño give me this pleasure later.

-I wouldn't dare turn you down.

The two joked for a few more moments before Mariana returned to the locker room. As soon as she entered, she looked at Ana sitting in a chair deep in thought, her expression one of stupefaction.

-What is it, Anita?

At the sound of his voice, Ana, who had been in a trance, stood up abruptly and looked at her with the desire to cry. In the blink of an eye, tears came to her eyes.

-Mari, what should I do? Andrea's assistant just brought in her dress saying it's scuffed in one place.

-I thought it was unnecessary to bother you, I... repaired it. But I didn't expect it, soon after I sent it to her, that assistant said that it could no longer be used, that it is badly repaired, Andrea broke it in a fit of pique!

Saying Ana, aggrieved and angry at the same time, took the clothes on the table and handed them to Mariana with an anxious expression.

-Look at him, Mari!

Frowning, Mariana unfolded the clothes in her hands to see before sighing involuntarily.

Her hem in front of her was originally embroidered with an intricate floral design, which was now torn and scattered.

What was worse, there were several large holes around it, one of which had been carefully patched, but that was still difficult to hide the poor condition.

As a designer, she naturally had a deep knowledge of sewing and line direction.

She could see at a glance that the suit had been damaged with malicious intent.

The tedious lines of the pattern had been forcibly trimmed to make it look so mangled and unrecognizable.

-Mari, what should we do now? Andrea said she had a scene early in the morning. It's already in the afternoon, it's impossible to repeat a dress as demanding as this one.

After a pause, Ana continued:

-And he said... he said that, if I couldn't do it, he was going to fire me.

Tears filled her eyes and Ana, anxious and nervous, could not help but sob.

Looking at her with some sorrow, Mariana stepped forward and hugged her gently, reassuring her in a tender voice:

-It's all right, Anita, I'm here, I'll help you.

She knew that Andrea had done this to Ana because of her.

Suddenly Leopoldo's cold face burst back into her mind. It was certain that the reason why Andrea treated her and those around her more harshly was nothing more than that she had the support of that man and so could act without any scruples.

For a moment, he was more curious about this Diana that Andrea had mentioned.

-Mari, what do you think we do? This suit is already so seriously damaged, how can we remedy it?

At that, Mariana wanted to laugh and she really did.

Intimately, he pinched her red, swollen nose from crying and sighed.

-Look at you, you're crying so much that your makeup has run.

Then the consolation continued:

-I designed this dress, can't I modify it even if it breaks like this? Don't worry, tomorrow morning I will deliver a perfect and qualified dress for you to take to Andrea.

-Really, Mari?

Ana was surprised. Her face was still a bit skeptical, tears still hung from her long eyelashes, but the corners of her lips were already rising uncontrollably.

She stepped forward and hugged Mariana, wrapping her arms around her neck tightly and bouncing up and down.

-Mari, thank you! You are the best.

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Chapter 90: A cold face but a warm heart.

That total confidence seemed to confirm the two words "to be chosen". Mariana's heart warmed as she stepped forward and wrapped her arms around Ana.

She would be elected again.

After reassuring her, Mariana began to tackle the torn dress.

The only way was to cover the holes since they were already impossible to fix perfectly. Andrea had been used in this dress for filming for a long time and the director would never agree to any obvious alterations.

Ana, who had not left, stood next to Mariana with coffee, accompanying her silently and trying to help her.

Suddenly, an idea came to her mind and Mariana remembered the two outfits she had designed that had been photographed and posted on Facebook.

In fact, the dress designed this time was not the same as those of the previous one at first glance, but its details were somewhat similar.

Regarding the hemlines of both, she opted for elaborate floral designs as a way of highlighting the heroine's noble elegance from the inside out.

Her mind made up, Mariana went to the corner, lifted the black cloth on top and carefully pulled out the two forgotten outfits underneath.

Lowering his eyes, he couldn't help but sigh softly. If they could be used in such a way, it wouldn't be a waste for them, better than having them in a corner without attracting any attention after all.

-Mari, what are you doing?

Ana, seeing the series of his movements, was startled and could not help but ask.

-They are earlier dresses, although the pattern is not exactly the same as this one, but if you don't look closely, you won't be able to tell. In that case, I'll swap the two skirts and sew them together, won't it be done?

With that, he took the scissors and began to cut mercilessly.

-But Mari, it's your work..... -whispered Ana, looking with suspension at Mariana's clean movements.

In fact, he knew that the two designs, which had been despised by the entire crew, were the ones Mariana loved the most. So, even though they brought back bad memories, she had put them in a corner with a cloth on top.

-Okay, I'm afraid they won't be able to realize their value unless they are used in this way. Then I will sew the seams together in the shape of petals so that no one will notice.

Without even raising her head, Mariana said as if she didn't care at all.

For a moment, Ana's eyes filled with tears. She couldn't help but clench the cup in her hand and was deeply moved inside.

People always said that Mariana was an arrogant and even a little indifferent person, that such a person had no heart, much less gave anything.

But Ana didn't buy it and, rather, he liked her very much. He took it upon himself to approach her and befriend her.

In fact, it was Mariana who had been taking care of her for the most part.

Only his face was cold but his heart was warm.

She blinked hard to wipe away the tears in her eyes. He put down the glass and approached Mariana, speaking softly:

-Mari, I'll help you cut the hem of this dress, okay?

-Of course.

Mariana straightened her back with difficulty and stretched her sore arms, blinked and looked outside the window.

The faintly white light that was let in through the window illuminated everything in the room with a cool chill that inevitably lifted the mood.

Mariana turned her stiff neck and, looking at Ana who was already asleep on the table, a serene smile appeared on her face.

At this moment, it was as if all his fatigue had suddenly been swept away, replaced by an indescribable sense of relief.

He stepped forward and gave her a gentle push:

-Anita, wake up, it's dawn.

The sleeping Anne struggled to raise her head and opened her eyes sleepily, looking at her with a puzzled expression.

-Anita, I've had the dress altered. Get it to Andrea quickly or she'll make things difficult for you again if her morning scene is delayed.

Hearing those words, Ana's drowsiness dissipated instantly. She stood up abruptly and looked at the clothes Mariana was holding in her hands.

He unfolded it and took a look at it. It was so perfect that it didn't look like an articulated costume, but rather as if it had always been that way.

Admiration instantly filled her eyes. Ana went forward and embraced her, saying gratefully:

-Mari, thank you!

And with that, she carefully carried the suit and ran out to Andrea's living room.

With her eyes fixed on that cheerful figure, Mariana felt tired only then. She shook her head smiling, then moved to the armchair and closed her eyes.

The prolonged mood swings and heavy workload had left her physically and mentally exhausted.

A few moments after that, his steady breathing began to echo through the silent locker room.

Little did anyone know that Mariana, who was asleep for now, had snuck into the Patio Feliz of her childhood. In front of the door of her grandmother's house, laughter flooded in and she ended up laughing with them.

Mariana was awakened by an anxious sound of urging:

-Miss Ortiz, Miss Ortiz! Wake up! Miss Solis said she wanted to ask you about the dress and asked you to come quickly. The whole team is waiting for you.

He reached out and rubbed his forehead wearily, feeling his temples bursting.

Mariana stood up and spoke in a hoarse voice to the staff who had come to call her:

-Let's go.

When he arrived on the scene, the director, Xavier and everyone from the team were present and the director looked somewhat angry.

Mariana froze with a slight uneasiness going through her mind, but without pausing, she arrived in front of Andrea in no time.

At this moment, the latter was standing with a cushion under her feet, looking slightly sad with teary eyes, as if she was angry and aggrieved.

-Miss Solis, what is it?

At that, a huge rancor shone in his eyes, then he looked at Mariana in an extremely arrogant and irritated way.

-Don't you know what happened? -Didn't you design this dress? You should have altered it last night too, shouldn't you?

A little confused, she looked at the untouched dress Andrea was wearing and asked:

-Is there something wrong with this dress?

His voice was kept as calm as possible.

-Something wrong? You have the nerve to ask me what's wrong with it? This dress is obviously much longer than the last one. I've got an action scene today, but I can't even stretch! What do you think?

Then, as he turned to look at the various members of the team with ears wide open for gossip and the impatient director not far away, under his eyes a smile of amusement quickly jumped out, which was short-lived.

-Miss Ortiz, now that you've altered the dress like this, how do you expect me to keep filming?

With a sigh, Mariana glanced at the clothes Andrea was wearing. Yesterday she had measured it meticulously and it was not very different from the original.

Only the hem would be slightly larger, but which would not affect the cinematography action. I didn't expect Andrea to have picked up on this slight distinction and take advantage of it to make things difficult for her.

-Today's scene is very important, and the crew has rented this space for a long time, so there is no time to waste. But now I can't even move, how will I continue filming?

His voice was indulgent and commanding and came through loud and clear to everyone's ears.