

The Secret 351

[Chapter 351 Very Sadly](#)

Jacobo did not stay in the residence for long after confirming that Estela was okay and leaving before dinner. Luciano stayed in his study for a while, then took out his cell phone to call Pilar. He had taken Estela to kindergarten in person that morning and even if she had left on her own, he knew that she must have left school and Pilar must know what happened. On the other hand, Pilar was nervous about having received a call from Luciano and she told him everything without omitting a detail.

—I left once I left Estela there. Miss Jerez told me that she would take her back, didn't she? —Said the teacher fearing the consequences and she was regretting at that moment for having left Estela with Roxana because, after all, she did not seek Luciano's permission and took her to Andrés and Bautista's home anyway; if that had been little, she also left the little girl in that place. There was no other way in which she could explain herself, she had been irresponsible and Luciano was not happy with Pilar's dangerous actions, especially since Estela had returned home on her behalf... —Yes, she came

. Luciano's gaze turned cloudy. How is Baptist?

Despite what happened, Luciano preferred to tell Pilar that Roxana had sent Estela home, which allowed the teacher to breathe easier and she responded immediately:

"He's fine right now and should be back at school in two days."

-I see. I appreciate it," Luciano answered curtly. Pilar sincerely apologized before finally ending the phone call, although Luciano remained very thoughtful after listening to her. He hadn't seen Roxana on any occasion since that time he bumped into her in the cafe and he didn't know what her mother had said to her that same day; however, he could sense that she did not wish to see him for a while after that. Thus, all he knew about Bautista was that he was not feeling well, but he had no knowledge about his recovery and everything else; he knew that Roxana wouldn't tell him anything, even if he were to talk to her to ask.

Luciano pursed his lips until they formed a thin, narrow line at a thought; if it was based on what Pilar said, Roxana must have been the one who sent Estela home and she wasn't going to leave her halfway to walk the rest on her own, she must have left her at the entrance of the mansion and without having entered. That is why Catalina did not know that it was she who took her home; In other words, Roxana kept avoiding him. Luciano felt exasperated when he thought about that and pinched his eyebrows, but it was at that very moment that someone knocked on the door of his study room. It was Catherine.

—Mr. Fariña, it's time for dinner. —Luciano got out of his train of thought and murmured an answer to then leave the room and go for Estela, who didn't stay in her room and came out of it just after her father called her; she looked normal, even though she wasn't in such a good mood. Luciano slowed down his pace and followed the little girl from behind her seriously, because Estela was supposed to be happy for having gone to Roxana's home; however, she didn't look happy in the least and he wondered what Roxana had told him.

Hadn't I promised that our little disputes wouldn't affect the children? Once they went downstairs, Luciano sat next to her daughter and asked her calmly:

"Where did you go today?" —Estela she was perplexed for a few moments, but then she shook her head between her silence and making it clear that she did not want to talk about it. Luciano frowned and now he was even more sure that Roxana must have told him something and he was lost in her thoughts trying to figure out what she could have said when Estela pulled at his shirt, then he lowered his head to see what was happening.

- I want vegetables. —The little girl looked at her father with puppy eyes and pointed to the vegetables that were on the other side of the dining room; Luciano was taken by surprise because this had been the first time that Estela had spoken to him since the kidnapping incident and Roxana had nothing to do with it.

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Since Estela didn't get a response from her father, she moved her plate forward and insisted until Luciano finally snapped out of his stupefied state and served his daughter a few vegetables on her plate. She lowered her head and began to eat right after, making it clear that her appetite had improved considerably from how she had been before. Estela finished dinner and wiped her mouth before going back upstairs, but Luciano called her name and the little girl stopped on her way.

-The A. —She stopped walking and turned around to look at Luciano in a confused way; When they collided with each other's glances, he couldn't contain himself any longer and had to ask her: "Did you go with Miss Jerez today?" The little girl pressed her lips into a very tight line as she listened to her father, but then she lowered her head and refused to reveal anything to him; At that, he got up from her seat and approached Estela's side to carry her to her sofa to tell her: I called Miss Garcia, she already told me.

That caused Estela to frown and say, "

I don't like Miss Garcia." —Well, she had promised Estela that she would not tell Luciano about what happened, although he did nothing more than soften her small furrowed forehead and corrected her:

"Miss Garcia was right. You are my daughter and I have the right to know where you are going after school, apart from the fact that Catalina told me that you had returned on your own and that left me worried, I had no choice but to ask her what happened. Believe it or not, she was also shocked when she found out. —Estela showed guilt and she pronounced in a low voice:

—I was not alone. —Although Luciano was already expecting that answer, he patted him on the head and said:

—I know, I imagine that Miss Jerez was the one who brought you home. I also explained it to Miss

Garcia. Estela's face relaxed a little. Why can't you tell me that you went to Miss Jerez's house? she asked gently, though he already had an answer, but he refused to admit it to himself. Estela did nothing more than shake her head in silence, which made Luciano frown a little and he persisted—: Did she tell you to do this?

Estela shook her head instantly and took that opportunity to explain:

—Ella wanted to do it!

-Because? Do you think that would have prevented you from going to see her? Luciano asked. Estela rarely used to talk to him, but she didn't hesitate to defend Roxana on that occasion and he felt overthrown because of that. Estela lowered her head and remained silent, allowing silence to fill the space between her father and her daughter for some time. Luciano could feel that something did not add up in all that; From the time he met Andrés and Bautista, he could perceive that the two of them kept away from him. But not only that, but he also felt that this distance towards him had reached its peak in recent times, although he could live with it, but he could not ignore the fact that Estela was trying to hide something from him; she still had no knowledge about her true identity and she was already defending and going to Roxana's side.

The atmosphere remained silent for a while longer and Luciano was about to give up, to stop asking Estela questions until she suddenly told him innocently: —Señorita Jerez doesn't like you

. -Luciano's forehead wrinkled and the little girl raised her head to look at her father with a longing look. Miss Jerez will kick you out.

Estela stopped talking just at that moment, but Luciano knew that the little girl still had more to say. He recognized that he would have accompanied his daughter if he had known that she was going to Roxana's house, but she had been keeping her distance from him and would have thrown him out of her home if she had seen him too, so Estela would not have been welcome either.

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Estela stared at Luciano after she finished speaking. She could perceive how Roxana, Andrés and Bautista kept their distance from Luciano and ended up appropriating the same effect towards him, so she was honest with her father hoping that he would reflect on himself and treat the three of them better; that way, they would open up to Luciano and maybe that would convince Roxana to stay. Little Ella became anxious when she thought about Roxana moving to another country, while Luciano didn't know how to feel to be precise about her daughter's comments. Roxana had told him the same thing on one occasion.

"Did he say that to Ella too? Is that why she came back in such a bad mood? She wondered and wanted her questions answered, so she asked:

"Did señorita Jerez tell you in the afternoon that she doesn't like me?" Estela shook her head, although Luciano breathed a sigh of relief for some reason when he saw her do it. He knew that Estela had only

created her own conclusion after having observed how Roxana treated him, but if Roxana hadn't said such a thing to the little girl, then why did she come back so down? Besides, she also behaved in an unusual way during dinner and the more Luciano looked at him, the more confused he became. So why did you come back so grumpy? Did Miss Jerez say something to you?

That question hit him right on target. Estela hadn't stopped thinking about what Roxana had said to her throughout the afternoon and she lowered her head sadly, but, in the end, she murmured:

—Miss Jerez won't play with me anymore. That puzzled Luciano.

-Because?

"Roxana had promised that whatever was going to happen between us was not going to affect the children, why did she have to tell Estela that?" Once again, Estela shook her head, but Luciano did not give up:

—Miss Jerez told you that you couldn't tell me? Little Ella shook her head. Then you can tell me and maybe she can help you convince her —she told her and Estela knew that this was highly unlikely, but anyway she felt a small ray of hope for that and she said with a muffled voice:

—Senorita Jerez is moving abroad with Andrés and Bautista. —She lost her temper right after saying that and Luciano felt as if her heart was being crushed, while her face turned pale and it was as if time had stopped.

"Will Roxana go abroad with the boys?" She thought she, because it was something that he had never heard until that moment. Is she doing this because of me? Or is she just getting rid of Estela? ». If that was true and if he judged himself for the way she had been avoiding him lately, Luciano could admit that he hadn't found out about it until after Roxana had left. He had been trying to locate that woman for six long years and he had finally succeeded after trying to exhaustion, so the fact that Roxana planned to leave without saying goodbye made him enraged and the more he wandered at it, the angrier he was. it turned.

Estela's eyes filled with tears when she didn't get an answer from her father.

"Daddy, I don't want Miss Jerez to leave..." Then he gently tugged at Luciano's shirt, which made him wake up from his thoughts and he finally turned to his daughter, even though it seemed like he couldn't utter a word to her. could reassure It was clear that he now wanted Roxana to avoid him once more, but, considering the bad state of their relationship back then, he knew that he had no reason to interfere in their affairs. Roxana.

[Chapter 354 Kicking Her Out Of Homeros](#)

Estela noticed that her father remained silent and little by little she lowered her gaze and then remained equally speechless for a while before raising her head to see Luciano with puppy dog eyes.

"So, can I play with Miss Jerez when she grows up, daddy?" —Luciano was stunned once more when he heard his daughter.

«Estela is still so young, but she is already thinking about her future. If Roxana promised her that, it means that she really plans to go abroad and she will even stop contacting Estela after she leaves ». An instant of irony came to Luciano when he thought about that and wondered how Roxana would react when he found out that she was about to abandon Estela for the second time after having done it when the girl was still a baby. Despite everything that had happened, Estela was already determined.

"Miss Jerez told me that I could play with her when she was older, so I'll grow up as soon as possible," the little girl declared with total seriousness while she looked at Luciano.

«I don't doubt that Roxana has taught him to say that». Luciano didn't quite know how to feel when he remembered how strange Estela had behaved during dinner. "She ate more than usual and even started a conversation with me. Maybe she hopes to recover soon because of what she had told Roxana. Doesn't she have any idea of the great influence she is for Estela? ».

The little girl muttered quietly for a moment before looking down once more utterly helpless.

"I'd like Miss Jerez to stay..."

"Miss Jerez may have promised me that I could play with her abroad once she's grown up, but it's going to take a long time for that to happen and I want to see her every day. days". Luciano's face tightened when he saw how sad Estela was.

"Daddy will find a way," Luciano promised him in a gravelly voice.

«I don't care that my relationship with Roxana is not on good terms right now, I'm not going to let her slip away so easily now that I know she plans to run away; This is not just because I spent six years looking for her, but because she is also Estela's biological mother!"

Estela regained her hopes after listening to her father and nodded confidently.

Meanwhile, Abril waited at the hospital until it was time for Luciano to get off work, but time went by and she still didn't see that man; instead, she received a call from her subordinate.

—Miss Pedrosa, Miss Estela went to look for Roxana with her teacher and stayed at her house until four in the afternoon. After that hour, the woman took her home. —The look on April's face became chilling the moment she heard that.

"What about Luciano?" You saw it? —She had to go through all that suffering just to prevent Luciano and Roxana from having time to be together; On top of that, she had also intentionally shown Roxana how important Luciano was to her when he went to visit her at the hospital last time.

"All my suffering will have been in vain if Luciano went to see that bitch again today!"

—Señor Fariña never appeared, but he returned home with a man shortly after Miss Estela did; It seemed that she was in trouble from the way that Mr. Fariña looked puzzled —the subordinate quickly reported and Abril secretly sighed with relief before ordering:

—Okay, keep watching Roxana. The woman ended the call after that. Abril guessed after listening to her subordinate that Luciano had stayed at home to keep Estela company. The woman then lay on her hospital bed and began to plot against Roxana.

«My plan may have destroyed any chance of Luciano seeing that bitch, but that doesn't affect the little brat and it may only be a matter of time before Luciano and Roxana see each other again if I don't do anything about it. that little girl My only option now is to kick that Horneros bitch out.»

[Chapter 355 It Is Not Good For Your Mental Health](#)

After a moment of consideration, Abril took out her cell phone and called Sonia, who didn't take long to answer.

"Is something wrong, April?"

"Could you please come, Mrs. Fariña?" My arm hurts a lot and I'm scared..." April sounded very uneasy.

"Just give me a few minutes, I'll go there right now," Sonia promised instantly, and it was so that the woman hurried to change her outfit before heading out the door, but it wasn't until she was inside the car that she began to wonder. why Abril had called her if Luciano was with the young woman. What about Luciano? Is he not there with you? Sonia asked out of mere curiosity.

"I don't know where he could be either. Maybe he's working overtime, but I didn't want to call him for fear that it would distract him. My parents were not answering my calls, so I had no choice but to ask for their help. —April sounded slightly sad, so Sonia did not hesitate twice to reassure the young woman.

-Everything's fine. After all, your injury is due to me, so the least I can do for you is take care of you. Wait for me at the hospital, I'll be there any second. —Sonia hung up the call after Abril agreed with her request and dialed Luciano's cell phone seriously, since it seemed unlikely that her son was still working so late. Luciano snuggled Estela into her bed after chatting with her, but he received a call from Sonia as soon as he left her daughter's room. Where are you? Haven't you left work yet? —Sonia asked suspiciously, although Luciano was able to deduce almost instantly the exact reason why her mother called him and rubbed her temples.

—I already left, but Ela didn't feel well today and I came home earlier to take care of her. —Sonia's tone of voice calmed when she found out that Estela was not well.

"How is she right now?"

"She's better than she was in the afternoon, I just tucked her into her bed," Luciano replied.

"She looked fine the last time I saw her, what happened to her today?" —Sonia continued asking, but Luciano remained silent for a while when he remembered the reason why Estela was sad, so in the end he preferred to evade the question.

—Most likely, he had a relapse and nothing more. —After that, he thought of something and added: —Doctor Lara said that Ela needs me right now, so I don't think I can go to the hospital right now. If necessary, you could hire a quality sitter for April.

Sonia did not agree with that and frowned in response.

—In that case, you should take Ela to the hospital so she can live with Abril, I'm sure she's much better at taking care of the girl; after all, women tend to be more considerate and attentive.

"I don't see the need for Ela to live with Abril, besides that the hospital environment won't be good for her mental health," Luciano replied in a somewhat icy way because he was sure that he was quite direct in the cafe when he said that he wasn't going to marry April and he didn't expect his mother to be so stubborn even after he made it clear. Luciano felt irritated and rubbed his eyebrows and then added, before Sonia could answer, "April has almost fully recovered." Tomorrow I will send her caretaker to the hospital and feel free to visit her whenever you want if you are so worried about her, I won't stop you. —Luciano's tone of voice left Sonia upset, who squeezed her forehead and was about to scold her son, but he heard the man's voice again before he could utter a word: "Ela's already awake, I'll go see how he is." If you don't have anything else to tell me, I'm going to hang up.

[Chapter 356 Nothing Is More Important](#)

Sonia's veins became visible with rage as soon as the call ended and she remained enraged to the core even after she arrived at the hospital.

«So many years I've been waiting to see Luciano marry Abril, but now he tells me that he plans to break up with her? I'm not going to accept that!" Sonia finally reached the door of April's room and it wasn't until that point that she changed her anger to concern. April was lying curled up in her bed and it seemed that she had fallen asleep, which led Sonia to enter on her tiptoes to see how the young woman was doing; It was there that she realized how much weight Abril had lost and was convinced that the poor thing had suffered from her injury. Even while she was sleeping, she was clenching her eyebrows tightly, which made her discomfort clear and that only made Sonia feel even more guilty.

"I'm here, April," Sonia informed her in a low voice, and April's brows frowned much harder when she heard Sonia, but she didn't come to her senses until after looking at the older woman for a few moments.

"I didn't expect you to arrive so soon, Mrs. Fariña." —Sonia stopped her when she saw the young woman try to sit up straight.

"Don't bother, you don't need to get up. —Sonia took a look at Abril's injured arm and then asked her, given her concern, —: How is your arm doing? If you like, I can ask someone to review it for you.

In response, April pretended to feel her arm while smiling in such a way that it seemed like she was apologizing to Sonia.

—It doesn't hurt anymore, I think I threw a tantrum for nothing. Sorry for bothering you so late, Mrs. Fariña. Sonia sighed with relief.

-I'm glad to know you are fine. It was then that April looked behind Sonia with anticipation, as if she was expecting someone else to follow the older woman behind her back, but she looked down in disappointment when she saw no one else.

"Where is Luciano, Mrs. Fariña?" Continue working? April asked as she pretended not to have been affected by the man's lack of presence. Sonia was enraged once more when she mentioned Luciano, but she controlled her emotions for April's sake.

"He already went home. Ela wasn't feeling well, I'm afraid he won't be...

—The best thing is for him to stay home with Ela —said Abril with a nice smile. My arm is fine now and Ela is more important, after all.

Abril's considerate behavior made Sonia feel even more guilty for her son's actions, so she promised her:

—You are the best daughter-in-law anyone could ask for in life. I'll see that Luciano marries you as soon as you recover! —Abril responded to that with an affirmative movement of the head, but, far from Sonia's perception, Abril had already drawn a disturbing smile full of malice.

"It can't be a mere coincidence that that brat felt bad as soon as she left Roxana's house!" Abril couldn't believe that her plan to keep Luciano by her side had been spoiled by a little girl, so she swore that she was going to get rid of Roxana and Estela equally. She looked up from her after a moment to look into Sonia's eyes.

—Listen, Mrs. Fariña. I remember that Ela likes Miss Jerez very much, isn't she? Don't you think that her condition would improve if he spent more time with her? —Sonia raised an eyebrow out of curiosity when she heard that.

"I thought you didn't like Roxana."

—I was afraid that she was going to steal Luciano from me, but now I realize that she was wrong to think in such a way. Actually, I can't do anything if she's the one who won Luciano's heart, but there's nothing more important than Estela's well-being," Abril replied with a bitter smile.

[Chapter 357 More Fuel On The Fire](#)

Sonia's gaze showed a slight discontent when she saw how attentive Abril was with Estela and how Luciano rejected her suggestion. If only her son had listened to her words over the years and made Estela spend more time living with Abril, surely the little girl would not feel so attached to Roxana, especially when considering all the affection that Abril felt for her. she; equally, Estela would not need Roxana either.

April showed a resentful smile.

—To be honest, I still feel a bit envious of Miss Jerez and how quickly she won Ela's affection. It would be lovely if she loved me just as much. —Abril cautiously looked at Sonia, who frowned at those words.

"But how absurd! She snapped. You will become Ela's mother, so it is only a matter of time before she loves you. Anyway, who does that woman think she is? I had already told her that she would make life impossible for him in Homeros if she got in touch with Luciano and Estela again.

Sonia's words seemed perfect to Abril and she left her delighted.

"All the pieces are falling into place! She was just trying to find out how she was going to convince Sonia to throw Roxana out of Homeros, but she herself suggested it to me. In that case, it seems to me that it would be enough for her to add fuel to the fire ». That thought filled April with motivation, who made a worried face.

"Will that day come to pass, Mrs. Fariña?" Ela loves Miss Jerez very much and even if Luciano is not ready to marry her, for him her highest priority will be Ela's feelings, in the same way that he has been rejecting me. I have a feeling he's going to accept Miss Jerez just for Ela's sake. —Sonia's appearance turned cold as a rock.

—I already told him to stay away from Roxana.

"Ela's still a girl," April argued. She wouldn't understand and would cry to see Miss Jerez, no matter what we adults tell her. I think it would be best if we waited before doing anything, I couldn't bear to see her sad. I will be happy for Ela if Luciano falls in love with Miss Jerez and decides to marry her for Ela's sake.

"Never that," Sonia declared silently, but Abril looked confused for an instant, because it seemed that she didn't understand the other woman. Sonia expressed annoyance —: If we can't stop Ela from seeing her, then we'll have to make her disappear from Homeros and Ela will forget about her entire existence as the years go by.

This was a plan that she had formulated from the beginning and she knew that this was an inevitable event.

"It would only take a few phone calls to oust Roxana from Horneros considering her current financial and social position." April sneered in silence, at the same time she acted panicked.

"Don't be hasty, Mrs. Fariña! Miss Jerez did nothing wrong; Furthermore, her sudden disappearance could negatively affect Ela's condition. —Sonia looked concerned at Abril's injured arm and with a frown.

"Your arm wouldn't have hurt a second time if it hadn't been for her." Regarding Ela's condition, I was thinking of having you spend more time with her so that they can develop a good relationship. You will have to make him love you little by little. —Abril was already overwhelmed by all the joy, but she still felt the need to act in a dissuasive way towards the older woman and although each of her comments sounded like they were trying to stop Sonia, the reality was that April was only throwing more fuel to the fire. Sonia despised Roxana more and more the more April spoke, until she finally patted the young woman's hand. You shouldn't be concentrating on these issues, just focus on recovering during your time in the hospital.

April pretended to have remained silent at her discontent and very carefully drew a disagreeing face as she did so. Sonia stopped trying to persuade her; instead, she urged him to sleep while she kept him company.

[Chapter 358 As You Say](#)

April closed her eyes and pretended to fall asleep; After a while, she could hear Sonia's quiet voice, who was having a conversation on the phone outside the room.

"Find out what Roxana has been up to since she returned to the country." The other person on the other end of the call must have found something with her investigation and was reporting it to Sonia. I see - Sonia answered-. If so, she notifies all the distributors of medicinal herbs in Homeros that it now becomes an act of rebellion against the Fariña Group for Roxana to be provided with such resources. The person on the other end recognized the order instantly.

April heard Sonia's footsteps approaching quickly, so she quickly adjusted her posture to appear to be sound asleep. Sonia stood on one side of the bed and looked at how tired Abril looked, which made her look fill with affection and guilt.

Roxana shouldn't have come back after running away six years ago! But this time I'll make sure she disappears from our lives for good, I don't care what it costs me to do it anymore. My son should not disappoint a girl as pretty as April.

Under Sonia's constant watchful eye, Abril began to feel uneasy and then pretended to have been woken up by a fright and then feigned surprise at the presence of the older woman standing next to her bed.

"What time is it, Mrs. Fariña?" Why are you still here? It was a perfect performance and even her raspy voice when she woke up sounded impeccable. Sonia smiled as if nothing had happened.

"Don't worry about it, I'm staying here to keep you company." April frowned.

—She should go home now, it doesn't seem ideal for me to spend the night here and I'll feel guilty if she wakes up sick tomorrow. —It wasn't until that moment that Sonia reluctantly accepted. I'll walk her out of it. April prepared to sit up, but Sonia stopped her instantly by pushing her shoulders firmly against the bed.

—You must rest, I can go out on my own. Besides, the driver is already waiting for me downstairs. — Abril didn't force her to do anything and simply nodded in a docile way.

"Have a safe journey home." —Sonia assured him that it would be so and then added:

—The caretaker that Luciano prepared for you will arrive tomorrow, but you can call me for anything. — She only felt comfortable leaving the room after getting April's promise and she turned off the lights in the room as she was leaving. As soon as the sound of the door closing was heard, April snorted disdainfully into the pitch blackness.

What do I care if Luciano's little bitch doesn't like me? And what if he prefers Roxana? All of them will have to choose me if Sonia's plan works! In Roxana's case, that bitch had stolen Luciano from me once six years ago, but I'm not going to let the same thing happen this time! That bitch had better go back where she came from! I am the only one who has permission to have Luciano by her side! ».

Meanwhile, Roxana was completely unaware of the conspiracy that those two women had hatched. Her story to Estela about establishing her home abroad was nothing more than a last-minute fabrication to reassure the girl; However, after thinking better of it, it didn't seem to him that going abroad was necessarily a terrible idea if he wanted to get rid of the Fariñas and Abril once and for all or could at least continue a stable life now. the same way he had done before. However, that decision was made too quickly when she still had to make a lot of preparations, adding that she also had to have a very serious talk with her teacher.

Roxana stayed up all night to send Javier a message expressing her ideas and Javier responded shortly because it was already daylight from where he was.

-As you say; However, if you want to return, you will first have to resolve the outstanding issues of the research institute. —Roxana smiled with relief and promised. It was already dawn by the time she finished her discussion with Javier, so she made a simple list of chores for herself, arranged her things and fell asleep.

[Chapter 359 Let It Stay Between Us](#)

As she went to bed very late last night, Roxana fell into a deep sleep until, the next morning, she was woken up by the ringing phone. With no chance to collect her thoughts from waking up from her, she groped blindly at her pillow for a while until she found the source of the sound. After taking the phone from her and narrowing her eyes at the screen, she answered it in a daze.

"There's a problem, Dr. Jerez," Conrado said anxiously on the other end of the line.

-What's happening? he asked hoarsely, sitting up suddenly, fully awake.

"A delivery of medicinal plant supplies that we were expecting to receive this morning has not arrived. Conrad sounded serious.

The supplier of medicinal plants that the research institute partnered with used to be very punctual with their deliveries. If they were promised a delivery in the morning, the research institute would have received it at the start of business hours. This delivery had been long overdue that day.

If supplies of medicinal plants did not arrive on time, many projects would be shelved in less than two days. As a result, their progress would be interrupted, causing the research institute considerable loss.

"Have you called our partners yet?" Roxana was paralyzed. While she was speaking, she activated the speaker mode and, in a hurry, she cleaned herself up while she listened to Conrad's report.

"I did, but some of them didn't answer," she told him desperately. Those that did, on the other hand, were ambiguous and did not give us a firm answer. "He'd rather they just tell him they don't want to be partners anymore." Since she was so discouraged by their beating around the bush, she did not dare to look for other suppliers of medicinal plants.

"Understood," Roxana replied, her heart sinking as she dressed. I will go there right now. Without saying another word, she hung up.

The children were already sitting in the dining room when she came downstairs. Bautista had recovered enough to return to preschool that day; Besides, both he and Andres couldn't wait to see Estela at school. Since they wanted Roxana to take them to school, they both looked at each other expectantly while she went downstairs, which she noticed.

"Something happened at the research institute," he apologized. I have to go as soon as possible, so Miss Landa will take you.

Although this discouraged them, the boys understood their mother's hectic schedule.

"Drive carefully, Mommy," they said in unison, nodding in understanding.

She hurriedly calmed them down and headed out the door without waiting for an answer. The night before she had planned to deliver her work to Conrad before taking the children abroad.

His work at the research institute made Javier proud, as he solved many problems upon his return and taught the researchers various modern techniques. He didn't expect such an incident to change his plans.

Roxana hurried all the way. Once she arrived at the research institute, Conrado was waiting for her at her entrance.

"Have the investigators heard yet?" Her," she asked immediately.

"I haven't told them anything," Conrad said, shaking his head. I don't want you to panic.

She sighed, relieved.

"For now, it's best that it stays between us." We have to make an effort to come up with something. Explain the problem to me.

Conrado agreed and, while they talked, they both went to Roxana's office.

[Chapter 360 Why Wait Until Now](#)

When they were alone in the office, all their concern was reflected in their faces.

"I wonder if you remember what the Pedrosa Group did when they messed with us last time," Conrado said, his eyebrow quivering with concern.

After her words, Roxana wrinkled her forehead, also remembering the experience of the sabotage in April after returning to the country. Without any reason and under the order of the Pedrosa Group at that time, its suppliers of medicinal plants in Horneros rejected the offers of collaboration offered by the research institute.

"Someone must have ordered the medicinal plant suppliers to stop supplying us with supplies. But who will be behind this? »She thought, her eyes shadowed. Her mind was a mess.

Since they had already solved the problems that April caused them, Roxana was sure that they would not fall for the same tactics. Although Conrado didn't say it out loud, he knew that Roxana was the intended victim; he patted her shoulder, trying to comfort her when he saw her worry.

"Don't think about it so much. Since you are already here, you should be the one to call our partners and find out their intentions. It is very important that we look for other suppliers soon if they do not want to collaborate with us. We must ensure that our projects are completed on time.

So, Roxana reacted and agreed. Then, Conrado gave her the contact numbers of all the partners in the research institute so that Roxana could call one by one.

"I'm sorry, Dr. Jerez. Although we've had a nice collaboration with the research institute, we can't meet her order for the specific ingredients she needs on such short notice, so... "Is

that you, Dr. Jerez?" Excuse me for not letting you know sooner as it happened out of the blue. Our factory is rushing a large order from a hospital, so it is very likely that we will not be able to deliver your order.

Roxana called several companies without stopping. The people in charge had every kind of reason to reject her; the meaning behind her words could not be more explicit: they did not wish to continue with her collaboration. She clenched her fists and, undaunted, dialed another number. Committing to how distraught she looked about her, Conrad patted her hand tenderly.

"Don't bother," said Conrad. Roxana, confused, looked at him. It's obvious they have something against the research institute. Furthermore, they appear to be on an equal footing with the Pedrosa family and perhaps even more influential.

Although she refused to admit it, she knew she was right. After a moment of silence, Roxana lowered the phone.

"If she'll allow me to ask you, have you offended anyone recently?" she asked, concerned.

Imperceptibly, Roxana stiffened at her words.

"I don't mean that as if I blame you," she explained hastily, "but that it was you who solved this very problem we faced earlier. I want to remind you that because they are capable of going to such lengths, it might be easy for them to do something to you or your children. Must be carefull. Don't worry about the research institute; I can persist for a while. He smiled at her reassuringly.

"Thank you," Roxana answered, her eyes shining with her gratitude.

Still, she couldn't think of who might be taking these steps with her: The only possibility is that Sonia is behind this. However, Roxana made things clear to Sonia the last time they saw each other and she had not communicated with Luciano during this time. If Sonia was the one who did it, she could have done it on the day of her break up instead of waiting until now.