

## The Secret 291

### [Chapter 291](#)

Hearing that, Estela began to carefully place the ointment on the wound.

—Last night, after treating her wound, she wanted to bring him the medicine. If she hadn't stopped him, she would have come at that very moment —Luciano explained that he was next to the girl.

Estela's gesture touched Roxana and, while she watched how she bandaged her wrist, she thanked her.

"Thank you, Ella.

Estela raised her head and smiled. Andrés and Bautista watched as the girl applied the medicine and were about to speak, but Luciano's voice caused them to frown in disgust.

After Estela disappeared the day before, they became very worried and expressed their discontent to Luciano. Since Estela was safe and sound, Andrés and Bautista thought that her disappearance was somehow his fault. "He knew that Ela hated that evil woman, but he allowed her to get close to her! Mommy didn't take Ela because that woman was there. That mean person bullied mommy in the past too! It's all Luciano's fault."

With that in mind, the children didn't bother to be nice to the man. The atmosphere turned strange; Luciano lowered his head and saw that the children were looking at him as if he were a ferocious beast. Andres and Bautista winced when they realized he was looking at them.

—Señor Feriñe, usted trejo e Ele equí pere entregarle el medicemento e memá. El remedio está equí y Ele se le he colocedo en le heride. ¿Eso es todo?

Lucieno frunció el ceño pere demostrar su disgusto.

—Váyese, por fevor.

Andrés y Beutiste leventeron le cebeze pere mirer e Lucieno, ye que ere más elto que ellos. A peser de su corte eded, perecien intimidentes; ere le primere vez que le pedien e Lucieno que se merchere.

El hombre frunció el ceño, pero no dijo nede. «Puede que me lo esté imeginendo, pero los niños perecen muy hostiles hoy, eunque, por lo general, esí son conmigo».

Al oír le orden grosere de los niños, Roxene miró sobre su hombro.

—Andrés, Beutiste, no seen irrespetuosos.

—¡Estemos siendo educedos! Le dijimos por fevor —respondieron.

Roxene comenzó a sentir dolor de cabeza, pues no esperaba que sus hijos le contestaran.

—Mr. Fariña, you brought Ela here to deliver the medicine to mom. The remedy is here and Ela has placed it on the wound. That's all?

Luciano frowned to show his disgust.

"Go away, please."

Andrés and Bautista raised their heads to look at Luciano, since he was taller than them. Despite their young age, they seemed intimidating; it was the first time that Luciano had been asked to leave.

The man frowned, but said nothing. "I may be imagining it, but the children seem very hostile today, although that's usually the way they are with me."

Hearing the children's rude order, Roxana looked over her shoulder.

—Andrés, Bautista, don't be disrespectful.

"We're being polite!" We told him please," they replied.

Roxana began to feel a headache, because she did not expect her children to answer her.

"Are they kicking me out?" the man asked.

Andrés and Bautista nodded vehemently. Instead of getting angry, Luciano answered them calmly:

—May I know why?

The children were surprised by the question.

"Because he is soon going to marry another woman," Andrés answered after looking at his brother. If he spends too much time with mom, it could cause an unwanted misunderstanding and we don't want mom to suffer even more.

Then, silence reigned in the place. Luciano looked at Andrés and Bautista before looking at Roxana, who was sitting on the sofa. "There must have been some problem that I'm not aware of for the kids to tell me this. Did April cause you problems? Why are the children so worried about my marriage?"

Roxana lowered her head to hide the anxiety she felt. She didn't know why Andrés and Bautista were so upset with the man. They reacted worse than her when they found out about Luciano and Abril's engagement. «Is it because she is his father? Is that why he is so important to them? ».

—They are right. Very good; I will go. See you," said Lucienus tres une peuse with furrowed lips.

Since he had to cancel his engagement with Abril and the news had not yet been made public, the man thought that he should tell him later.

Andrés and Beutiste were surprised and disappointed when Lucienus happily accepted. «So in verde you see and stop with that woman. Does that mean that she and I don't love us? ». The simple fact of thinking about it disgusted the children.

"Goodbye, Mr. Feriñe," they answered succinctly.

Lucieno estebe desconcertado por el repentino cambio de actitud de los pequeños. El hombre se preguntó qué hizo mal para molestarlos, aparte de comprometerse con Abril, pero le pareció que eran muy hostiles con él por lo que decidió dejarlos solos. Sin embargo, al hacerlo, los dos perecieron repentinamente perturbados por su pérdida. «En verdad... ¿Cuál es el problema? No sé por qué actúan así».

Al final, Lucieno desistió de intentar comprender la actitud de los niños y buscó a Estela, pero cuando la niña vio que Lucieno se acercaba, frunció el ceño y saltó el suelo desde el sofá. Él escuchó toda la conversación, así que sabía que Lucieno estaba a punto de llevarle a casa. El hombre miró resignado a su hija, quien se iba a unos tres metros de él. «Debería haberlo esperado. Ella es tan cercana a Roxana que es imposible que quiera irse. Además, todavía está traumatizada por lo que pasó, así que es probable que tome esa decisión aquí hoy solo sea una excusa para venir a verte».

-They are right. Very good; I will go. See you," Luciano said after a pause with pursed lips.

Since he had just canceled his engagement with Abril and the news had not yet been made public, the man thought that he should tell him later.

Andrés and Bautista were surprised and disappointed when Luciano agreed so easily. "So he really is going to marry that woman. Does that mean that he no longer loves us? ». Just thinking about it distressed the children.

"Goodbye, Mr. Fariña," they answered concisely.

Luciano was taken aback by the sudden change in attitude of the little ones. The man wondered what he did wrong to upset them, apart from committing to April, but it seemed to him that they were very hostile towards him so he decided to leave them alone. However, in doing so, the two seemed suddenly disturbed by her departure. «Really... What's the problem? I don't know why they act like that."

In the end, Luciano gave up trying to understand the attitude of the children and looked for Estela, but when the girl saw that Luciano was approaching, she frowned and jumped from the sofa to the floor. She heard the entire conversation, so she knew that Luciano was about to take her home. The man looked resignedly at his daughter, who had just moved about three meters away from him. "I should have expected it. She is so close to Roxana that it is impossible for her to want to leave. Besides,

she's still traumatized by what she went through, so I bet bringing that medicine here today was just an excuse to come see her."

-They are right. Very good; I will go. See you," Luciano said after a pause with pursed lips.

"Come on, Ella. It's time to go home. We'll come to see Miss Jerez another day," Luciano explained as he watched her and tried to convince her.

From yesterday's accident, he had learned that he shouldn't be too arbitrary with her, otherwise he might end up doing another rash thing. Despite her pleas, the girl refused to go with him.

-No! she yelled obstinately.

«I want to stay with Miss Jerez. She is the best". For the girl, Roxana was the person she could depend on because the woman had saved her from the well when she cried in despair. "If I have to have a mom, it has to be her! I don't want anyone else to be."

Just as Luciano imagined, it was all because of Roxana. Ever since Estela met her, she had constantly reminded her father how much she cared about her woman. In fact, he believed that the girl cared for Roxana far more than he cared for himself, her own father, who had cared for her for so many years.

When Andrés and Bautista saw that, they felt sorry for Estela. They knew that she behaved like this because of what had happened the other day; However, the brothers could not invite her to stay because Roxana had not yet said a word. It was then that they regretted having thrown Luciano out, because if they hadn't been in a hurry to do so, Estela could have stayed longer.

For a moment, the atmosphere in the quiet living room became awkward and tense; Luciano and Estela could not reach an agreement.

"Ella, I have to go to work tomorrow. What do you think if I take you to your grandparents? —Luciano suggested tenderly while he rubbed his eyebrows.

Again, the girl flatly rejected the proposal as she ran towards Roxana and held her hand tightly; he was trying to show her that he wanted to stay with her. The girl's way of acting moved the woman; However, when Roxana looked at Luciano again, she knew that she had to let her go. «As Andrés and Bautista said, he will soon be engaged to another woman. I should get away from him; It's time to separate for good."

### [Chapter 293](#)

-No! I love Miss Jerez! the girl implored while she looked at Roxene with her eyes wide open and after fulminating Lucien with a look at her.

Judging by how intractable Estele was, Lucieno was sure that he could not fire him, so he began to give in and approached Roxene. When the woman looked into her eyes, she frowned because she knew what he was about to tell her.

—He really likes being here and, to be honest, he's much better when he's with you. His condition worsened because of what he weighed yesterday, so he asked me if he could take care of him for a while since he wants to stay by her side, he asked seriously while he observed the woman on the sofa.

Estela se emocionó al escucharlo. Cuando supo que su padre había cedido, miró a Roxana expectante y con los ojos brillantes mientras esperaba la respuesta, pero la emoción se desvaneció poco a poco cuando notó el desinterés de la mujer después de permanecer en silencio por un instante. Se angustiaba, pero continuó mirando a Roxana impaciente; se negaba a creer que la mujer fuera a rechazarle.

Roxana miró a la niña con culpa y le acarició el cabello.

—Lo siento, pero tengo mucho que hacer estos días. He estado dejando de lado un proyecto que me asignó mi profesor por motivos personales, así que me gustaría tener que volver al centro de investigación. Tendré que quedarme para recuperar el tiempo perdido, así que ni siquiera tendré tiempo para ocuparme de Andrés y Bautista.

-No! I love Miss Jerez! —The girl implored while she looked at Roxana with her eyes wide open and after glaring at Luciano with her gaze.

Judging by how intractable Estela was, Luciano was sure he couldn't take her home, so he ended up giving in and approached Roxana. When the woman met his eyes, she frowned because she knew what she was about to tell him.

"Ela really likes it here and, to be honest, she's much better off when she's with you." Her condition worsened because of what happened yesterday, so I was wondering if I could take care of her for a while since she wants to stay by her side," he asked seriously as he watched the woman on the sofa.

Estela was moved when she heard it. When she found out that her father had given in, she looked at Roxana expectantly and with bright eyes as she waited for her answer, but her emotion faded little by little when she noticed the woman's disinterest after remaining silent for a moment. She was distressed, but continued to look at Roxana impatiently; she refused to believe that the woman would reject her.

Roxana looked at the girl guiltily and stroked her hair.

I'm sorry, but I have a lot to do these days. I've been putting off a project my professor assigned me for personal reasons, so I have to go back to the research center tomorrow. I'll have to stay to make up for lost time, so I won't even have time to take care of Andrés and Bautista.

—¡No! ¡Quiero a la señorita Jerez! —imploró la niña mientras miraba a Roxana con los ojos muy abiertos y luego de fulminar a Luciano con la mirada.

Roxana did not explicitly say that she did not have time for Estela, but what she replied meant that she was going to reject the proposal.

Estela was dejected; Luciano frowned and looked at the girl helplessly.

"As you said, what Ela needs now is someone who can take good care of her and I can't promise her that." If you leave her here, you'll only make her recovery more difficult, so, Mr. Fariña, I suppose you know what's best for her," Roxana continued.

Although what she said was true, it was partly an excuse to convince Luciano to take the girl home. He really hoped that Estela could recover and, for this, the intervention of professional psychologists was essential.

Luciano couldn't think of anything else he could say to help Estela, so he pursed his lips and looked at the girl.

"Well, I guess you'll have to say goodbye to Miss Jerez, Ela."

Estela couldn't believe what Roxana had just said. The girl's teary eyes widened as she stared at the woman and clutched at the hem of her shirt. Roxana immediately looked away from her because it hurt her to see the girl in that state; she knew she wouldn't dare tell him no if she maintained eye contact.

"Miss Jerez..." Estela's voice trembled, but Roxana maintained her composure and refused to give in.

Andrés and Bautista were very distressed when they saw how desperate Estela was.

"Mom, why don't we let Ela stay?" She seems so...

"Aunt Magalí will take care of you for two days, so make sure you behave," Roxana interrupted, trying to show that she would be busy.

The children immediately fell silent. Then, Roxana removed Estela's hand and addressed Luciano.

-It's late; they should go home. He must go to work tomorrow.

Hearing her, he nodded and stood up without looking back at Estela as she couldn't bear to see how disappointed she was.

## [Chapter 294](#)

Estela's gaze was fixed on Roxana's back and the tears rolled down her cheeks without stopping. Andrés and Bautista were just as dejected; They didn't expect her mother to be so ruthless and when they saw the girl crying, they came to comfort her.

Estela's gaze was fixed on Roxana's back and the tears rolled down her cheeks without stopping. Andrés and Bautista were just as dejected; They didn't expect her mother to be so ruthless and when they saw the girl crying, they came to comfort her.

"Don't cry, Ella. Mom is very busy these days, but you can come play when mommy has free time again —Bautista explained smiling, but his attempt was useless.

When Andrés saw that Estela was still crying, he took a handkerchief from her to dry her tears and also tried to comfort her.

—We can also play together in kindergarten, Ela. Mom loves you very much because you are a good girl, so don't cry because you will look ugly if you keep crying and mom doesn't like that.

Estela stopped and looked at the boy in disbelief.

-Yeah! Andrés is right," Bautista continued as he nodded his head. Mom doesn't like crying children.

At that moment, Estela finally held back her tears with great effort. Luciano's eyes shone when he noticed how much Andrés and Bautista cared about Estela.

"Thank you for comforting her," the man said to the children as he approached them.

Estela's gaze was fixed on Roxana's back and the tears rolled down her cheeks without stopping. Andrés and Bautista were just as dejected; They didn't expect her mother to be so ruthless and when they saw the girl crying, they came to comfort her.

At first, the two children wanted to ignore him, but when they remembered that they were partly to blame for making Estela cry because they encouraged Luciano to return home, they avoided the guilty man's gaze.

"We're just telling you the truth."

They knew that Roxana loved Estela, but she, like them, distanced herself from Estela because of Luciano.

Instead of answering the children, Luciano smiled at them and took Estela's hand. This time, the girl did not run away.

"Say goodbye to Andrés and Bautista, Ela," she said in a low voice.

The girl did as she ordered and waved at them; she was still trying hard not to cry.

"Bye, Andres. Goodbye, Baptist. I'll be back another time.

-We'll be waiting for you! Goodbye," the two children replied as they forced a smile.

After saying goodbye to Estela at the door and seeing how the car disappeared from her sight, the children approached Roxana again; they found her staring off into the study. She couldn't stop thinking about how dejected Estela was when she rejected her and, seeing her leave her, she deeply regretted it. She herself had said that the children were not to blame, but over and over again she had hurt Estela because of what happened between her and Luciano. Roxana was so immersed in the thoughts of her

thinking about Estela that she didn't even realize that the children had already returned.

-Mommy? whispered Andrés and Bautista cautiously as they approached her.

The expression on the woman's face betrayed how sorry she felt. When Roxana realized that she was distracted, she smiled and stroked their heads.

"She left?"

The children nodded confidently.

—She cried inconsolably when she left her? Her," she asked because she felt guilty.

Andrés and Bautista agreed again.

The woman wanted to take care of Estela and make her happy, but she ended up making her cry again.

—Don't worry, mommy; She stopped crying after we talked to her," said the children, smiling as they knew that Roxana felt guilty.

The woman smiled with relief and hugged them.

-Thank you. What would she do without you two?

—She has told me that she loves you very much, Mommy. She also said that she will be back soon," they both continued as they hugged her.

Roxana felt comforted to see that the children had taken care of everything.

## [Chapter 295](#)

At the Pedrosa residence, Abril had been depressed ever since Luciano kicked her out that day. In the past, Sonia had always sided with her and stood up for her, but that day she couldn't do anything about it. The young woman despaired when she remembered Sonia's inaction. She wasn't naive; after waiting for Luciano for years, she knew very well that he really did not want to marry her. However, she always wanted to test her luck and hoped that Sonia would help her. She always believed that Luciano would marry her as long as she waited for him; However, her hope faded when Roxana returned to the country and Luciano annulled her engagement.

At the Pedrosa residence, Abril had been depressed ever since Luciano kicked her out that day. In the past, Sonia had always sided with her and stood up for her, but that day she couldn't do anything about it. The young woman despaired when she remembered Sonia's inaction. She wasn't naive; after waiting for Luciano for years, she knew very well that he really did not want to marry her. However, she always wanted to test her luck and hoped that Sonia would help her. She always believed that Luciano would marry her as long as she waited for him; However, her hope faded when Roxana returned to the country and Luciano annulled her engagement.



After a quiet day, Abril decided to risk it again and visited Sonia, who didn't expect the young woman to come that day, but she was there, at the door. After a brief pause, she invited her in, as she always did.

"I'm sorry I didn't give you advance notice. I hope I'm not disturbing," April said to apologize.

Since Sonia felt bad for her after Luciano annulled her engagement and actually liked Abril as her person, she smiled affectionately at him.

-Don't worry. You are almost like a daughter to me, so you can visit me whenever you want. You don't need to be so polite; Make yourself at home.

At the Pedrosa residence, Abril had been depressed ever since Luciano kicked her out that day. In the past, Sonia had always sided with her and stood up for her, but that day she couldn't do anything about it. The young woman despaired when she remembered Sonia's inaction. She wasn't naive; after waiting for Luciano for years, she knew very well that he really did not want to marry her. However, she always wanted to test her luck and hoped that Sonia would help her. She always believed that Luciano would marry her as long as she waited for him; However, her hope faded when Roxana returned to the country and Luciano annulled her engagement.

April smiled, but she still looked embarrassed.

"You know...he used to call me his daughter-in-law, but not anymore. —As she spoke, she began to cry. She paused to wipe away her tears as she tried to calm herself. Mrs. Fariña, today I have come to apologize in person. I made a lot of mistakes when I was here and you all put up with it because of what my family did for Luciano. Now that he doesn't want anything to do with me, I just hope that the relationship ends well between us. I just want to apologize to him for everything I did and I hope he can forgive me. —The young woman even pretended to be sorry and to be the victim. I hope he understands that everything I did was with the best intention. All the decisions I made were for the family and I did it as if she really were Luciano's wife. There were times when my kindness was misinterpreted, but still I want you to know that I had no bad intentions. Even if we don't end up being family, I hope you can forgive me.

Sonia was very distressed to see the young woman like this. Over the years, she had treated April like her future daughter-in-law. Despite what the young woman said, Sonia was quite satisfied with everything she had done. She was also disconcerted when Luciano decided to abruptly cancel the engagement, so every word that Abril said about her anguished her because she remembered all the time that the young woman had spent with her family. Sonia sat next to her and held her shoulders.

"Calm down, April. No one has yet made a final decision.

The young woman smiled helplessly.

—Mrs. Fariña, I know Luciano. Since he has already made it clear that he is not interested in commitment, there is not the slightest possibility of going back. Alright; she still she can come to visit me

if she feels lonely since she is like a mother to me.

Sonia was even more moved when April said that. For an instant, she was lost in thought of her.

-Don't worry. Nobody knows yet about the broken engagement, so it can still be discussed. I'll talk to Luciano when he calms down.

Although April was delighted that she got what she wanted, she was distraught.

### [Chapter 296](#)

Abril's anguished attitude vanished as soon as she left the Fariña residence. Her expression was somber and she felt a lot of resentment as she got into the car.

Abril's anguished attitude vanished as soon as she left the Fariña residence. Her expression was somber and she felt a lot of resentment as she got into the car.

Noticing the change in her expression, Carlos thought hard before speaking.

"Where to, Miss Pedrosa?"

April gave him a somber look in the rearview mirror.

-To the office. —Just when the man was about to start, she Abril said annoyed—: You know what? We're going home.

He wasn't in the mood to deal with the large number of irritating people at the company. April had gone to Sonia with the hope that she would talk to Luciano immediately, as she always did when the young woman cried. However, the visit was useless when Sonia only told him that she would talk about the matter with Luciano when he is calmer. What she had promised to do was not enough because, by the time Luciano calmed down, the news that she had called off the engagement would be made public. "That can't happen!" April was very upset. «Roxana Jerez, it's all your fault! Since you came back, Luciano and Ela only think of you. I don't care if Ela wants to stay with you, but you can't have Luciano too! I won't let him take your side!" The situation at that moment reminded him of how everything had turned out six years before. At that time, Luciano ignored Roxana because of her, but the situation changed completely after the woman's return. It was as if they had changed position. "Damn! Something must have happened in the last six years."

Just when April was enraged, Gina called out to her and the young woman answered with a serious face.

"How did she do?" Did you talk to Mrs. Fariña? Her," she asked as soon as she answered him.

April's face was disfigured by her shame.

—Yes, I talked to her, but it didn't help so I prefer to take care of it myself.

-What are you up to? It seems to me that Luciano has a fixed idea of marrying that woman. I don't think we can do anything about it," Gina replied; she was a bit surprised by what her daughter had said.

"Is right". April clenched her teeth. I can't do anything if he's bent on marrying her. Grupo Pedrosa is nothing compared to Grupo Fariña; we are just a small company compared to them. I don't have what it takes to make him change his mind."

—Well, since Ela is the reason why Luciano wants to cancel the engagement, why don't we start with that girl? Gina suggested.

April had a great idea after her mother made such a brilliant suggestion.

-April? Gina was still waiting for an answer.

"We'll talk when she gets home." Bye," she responded immediately and ended the call. She then looked at Carlos and said, "Go to the office and have someone investigate Roxana Jerez." I want a detailed account of what she's been up to over the past few years. I also want to know who is the father of her two children.

What Gina had just said reminded April that she actually knew very little about the two children; she didn't even know who her father was. «I'm sure Luciano doesn't know either. Roxana wouldn't have time to think about Luciano if she managed to bring that man from abroad. In the same way, Luciano will be upset with her when he finds out that he has been with someone else. Ha, Roxana Jerez! If I'm not with Luciano, no one will.

"Perfect," Carlos answered when he saw how Abril's face was disfigured by the evil he thought of.

### [Chapter 297](#)

April had started to plot against her, but Roxana didn't know it as she was too busy with the investigation she had to do. Her anxiety wasn't just an excuse to send Estela home. If the kids hadn't insisted that she miss work one day because of her injured wrist, she wouldn't have taken a break from her investigative work.

April had started to plot against her, but Roxana didn't know it as she was too busy with the investigation she had to do. Her anxiety wasn't just an excuse to send Estela home. If the kids hadn't insisted that she miss work one day because of her injured wrist, she wouldn't have taken a break from her investigative work.

The next morning, Roxana woke up early to a call from her teammate. After a brief conversation, she hurried to the research center without even having time to eat breakfast.

The initial and final phases of a research project are usually the hardest. At the beginning of the project, Roxana had dedicated so much time to it that she spent entire days at the research center. Since they were then in the final phase of the project, she was busy again.

Conrado, who continued to help Roxana with the project, was alarmed when he saw the wound on her wrist while they were conducting an experiment.

—Doctor Jerez... Your hand...

Roxana was so absorbed in her work that she had forgotten about her wound; It wasn't until she looked in the same direction as Conrado that she remembered and smiled.

-It's nothing serious; it's just a scratch from an activity in my kids' kindergarten.

Conrado was relieved to hear that it wasn't serious, but he still did most of the parts of the experiment that he thought would be too physically demanding for Roxana while she stood aside and gave him verbal instructions. Their team dynamic was good and they continued to run experiments for almost a week until they finally got the results they wanted.

The whole group in the laboratory was upset and Roxana was very happy that they obtained the results they wanted. Although she already practiced for her when she was abroad, most of the projects in which she participated were in charge of her teacher. Most of the time she was just another independent investigator, but this time the situation was different because it was the first investigation she had conducted on her own.

"Are you free tonight, Dr. Jerez?" Conrado asked as he grinned and walked towards her in the research center.

The hesitation and caution that Roxana expressed when hearing the question caused Conrado to laugh out loud.

"Why are you looking at me like that?" You must have forgotten that you promised us all a celebratory meal if the experiment was successful. Everyone is waiting for you to keep that promise," she said mockingly.

"Oh, okay," she replied, smiling. I'm sorry; she had forgotten. Tell everyone to meet at El Muelle tonight at eight.

Conrado nodded and went back into the research center. Not long after he entered, everyone was very happy and excited. For them, that was a day worth celebrating because only good things happened. In the first place, they had made a breakthrough in completing such a formidable project; Second, Roxana had agreed to invite everyone to a banquet to celebrate.

Conrado nodded and went back into the research center. Not long after he entered, everyone was very happy and excited. For them, that was a day worth celebrating because only good things happened. In the first place, they had made a breakthrough in completing such a formidable project; Second, Roxana had agreed to invite everyone to a banquet to celebrate.

When Roxana returned to her office, she asked her assistant to make a reservation for a private room at El Muelle; then she called Magalí to ask her to take care of Andrés and Bautista that night.

The night before, the woman had promised the two children that she would pick them up when the project was finished; they were elated and even mentioned Estela when they heard the news. Suddenly, Roxana felt guilty as soon as she remembered the girl, since she was sure that her children should have informed Estela of her return that night. "She'll be heartbroken that I won't be coming home today."

—By the way, Maga, help me apologize to Estela if you see her tonight. Tell him I still have work to do here," Roxana added when she thought of the girl.

Magalí did not understand why Roxana wanted to apologize, but she just nodded smiling and did not inquire further about the subject.

### [Chapter 298](#)

At eight o'clock at night, Roxana and everyone from the research center went to El Muelle together. Once seated in the private room, they proposed a toast to Roxana.

At eight o'clock at night, Roxana and everyone from the research center went to El Muelle together. Once seated in the private room, they proposed a toast to Roxana.

—Dr. Jerez is a valuable addition to our research center. She has not only solved a huge problem in medicine, but she has also started many projects. We have come this far thanks to her.

-I could not agree more. To be honest, I thought that we would not be able to develop this project, but we survived thanks to her way of being and courage. She is as lovely a person as she is capable of.

Roxana smiled from ear to ear at the compliments; she stood up and looked at them.

-Thank you. I just do my job. Thank you for believing in me and working as a team.

When he first returned to the country, he was almost completely unaware of the local situation in the field of research; in fact, he had prepared for the worst. He didn't expect the investigators to be so friendly and everything to turn out so well.

"Well, we hear a lot about you, Dr. Jerez. Doctor Galarza gave us very good references about him before she came and we were all impressed. Everything he said about you turned out to be true and we verified it when we finally got to meet you," replied one of her classmates.

Conrado's expression changed upon hearing that, but he immediately composed himself, feigned nonchalance, and raised his glass to Roxana.

"He was only telling the truth."

Saying that, he lifted her glass and drank the entire contents in one gulp. Roxana felt that the man was

not the same at that moment, but since she could not discover what was disconcerting her and since everyone was busy proposing a toast, she stopped thinking about it.

Meanwhile, Conrad was looking at her out of the corner of his eye. When he saw that she didn't seem bothered by what had happened earlier, he sighed in relief. It was true that he was in love with Roxana, but he knew that she was out of her reach and he wanted to hide her feelings from him until the day he became a man worthy of protecting her.

The clock was almost showing ten when the meeting finally ended. Everyone was in a good mood after dinner because they had not only eaten a lot, but also had a wonderful time with Roxana.

As for her, as she had held one toast after another during dinner, she felt dizzy and the alcohol caused her to pass out as soon as she left the private room.

"I'll take you home," Conrado said worriedly as he looked at her.

-I'm fine; it is not necessary, he answered; he had a little headache and frowned. Everyone should go home because it's already late. Bye bye.

She then turned around and walked towards the exit without even waiting for Conrado's response. When he came out, he realized that it was raining and many people from the hotel had stayed at the door waiting for him to stop raining. Since Roxana did not have an umbrella and did not know how to drive, she had no choice but to wait at the entrance along with everyone else while she looked for an Uber. However, it seemed that everyone there was also looking for one, so Roxana ended up waiting a long time. Just when she was thinking of canceling the driver she called and asking Magalí to pick her up, she heard a familiar voice next to her.

Then he turned and walked towards the exit without even waiting for Conrado's response. When he came out, he realized that it was raining and many people from the hotel had stayed at the door waiting for him to stop raining. Since Roxana did not have an umbrella and did not know how to drive, she had no choice but to wait at the entrance along with everyone else while she looked for an Uber. However, it seemed that everyone there was also looking for one, so Roxana ended up waiting a long time. Just when she was thinking of canceling the driver she called and asking Magalí to pick her up, she heard a familiar voice next to her.

—Mr. Fariña, it is raining. I have an umbrella, so I'll wait for him at the hotel entrance," Camilo explained.

He was standing not far from Roxana with a black umbrella in hand as he spoke cordially on the phone. He happened to look up when Roxana turned to see him and they both looked at each other.

"Miss Sherry!" He exclaimed as he continued talking on the phone.

On the other end of the call, Luciano didn't say a word and Roxana was very embarrassed, since she was sure that he heard her assistant.

### [Chapter 299](#)

Camilo noticed that the woman had blushed, but he didn't understand the reason. When he saw that Luciano had ended the call, he immediately walked over.

Camilo noticed that the woman had blushed, but he didn't understand the reason. When he saw that Luciano had ended the call, he immediately walked over.

"Do you have an umbrella?" Where is your car? I can take her home before Mr. Fariña comes. He will take a while.

Camilo tried to open the umbrella he was holding, but Roxana stopped him.

-There's no need; they will come looking for me

Her attendant nodded and stood by her in silence after that. Seeing that the man was not going anywhere, Roxana looked at the rain and hesitated as she distanced herself from him. «He is stopping raining; he should leave before he arrives ».

"Mr. Farina!" I thought you..." Camilo exclaimed.

Just as she took her first step in the rain, Luciano was already behind her. Although Roxana didn't know why Camilo hadn't finished her sentence, she was too nervous to turn around and check what was happening. When she felt the cold air, she fled into the rain without a second thought. Suddenly, she stopped raining; in reality, someone protected her with a black umbrella and held her hand tightly. They pushed her back toward the hotel entrance.

"Is she insane?" Luciano said.

He knew that Roxana would try to avoid him when he was talking to Camilo on the phone, so he said goodbye to his colleagues and left in a hurry. Just as she expected, she, in truth, dodged it. Luciano was upset when he saw that she would rather walk in the rain than spend time with him. When Roxana knew that she couldn't escape, she took a deep breath and looked at him calmly.

"Hello, Mr. Farina. What a coincidence.

At first, Luciano didn't know she was drunk, but as soon as he smelled her breath, he frowned.

"Have you had alcohol?"

—Yes, I was having dinner with my colleagues.

"I'll take her home," the man continued while he still held the woman's hand.

Roxana tried to let go of her, but she did not succeed and her face was disfigured.

-No, thanks. Someone comes looking for me; I can go back alone. Let me go, Mr. Fariña, please.

"Who are you waiting for?" To a driver? I doubt I'll get one anytime soon," Luciano argued candidly as he surveyed the people around him.

He didn't know what to answer and tried to explain.

"I applied for one before the rain. People are watching us, Mr. Fariña. I don't want to make a scene.

Luciano seemed to have a darker face than before and released her; Roxana nodded to him and went back to walking through the rain. Behind her, Luciano followed her in a hurry with her umbrella.

Luciano seemed to have a darker face than before and released her; Roxana nodded to him and went back to walking through the rain. Behind her, Luciano followed her in a hurry with her umbrella.

She—still she wasn't healed of her wound. Let me take you," he yelled into the rain.

Roxana didn't turn around and quickened her pace.

-Slowly! It's slippery," Luciano said.

Although Roxana was under the umbrella, she was trembling because it was pouring down and her thin clothes didn't keep her warm enough. Also, since Luciano was right behind her, he tried to walk faster and faster.

"I'll walk slowly if you stop following me," he replied.

Behind her, the man's footsteps slowed to a halt. Stopping following her, Roxana was left under the rain that mercilessly beat her body as she headed to the parking lot. Then she sat in the back seat of her own car and waited for the driver.

She couldn't stop thinking; she wondered if God was playing a trick on her. The more she wanted to avoid Luciano, the more she ran into him and the way he treated her made her feel uncomfortable.

### [Chapter 300](#)

When Roxana finally got home, Magalí had already looked for Andrés and Bautista and the two children were playing in the living room. Seeing that Roxana was soaked, they ran worriedly towards her.

-Mother! Have you walked in the rain?



Roxana was exhausted, but she still gave them some caresses on the head.

"I forgot my umbrella, so I got wet running to my car. I'll be fine," she replied.

After asking Lisa to take care of the children, Roxana went upstairs to shower and change her clothes. She then went back downstairs to play with her children before going to sleep.

Roxana was very tired when she went to bed; she fell asleep right away, but in the middle of the night she woke up with a fever. Dazed, she got up from the bed to pour herself a glass of water, but, getting to her feet, her legs were weak and she fell back onto the mattress. She frowned as she gradually regained consciousness of her. "I think I have a fever". Since it was already midnight, she didn't want to wake anyone up. "I'm going to bed; maybe tomorrow will be better ». With that in mind, she lay back down and fell asleep.

The next morning, Andrés and Bautista got up early because they were excited. Lisa and Magalí had been taking them to school because Roxana had been very busy the last few days. When the woman finally returned home, they were looking forward to her mother taking them to kindergarten; however, they were disappointed when she did not get up even after breakfast.

When Roxana finally got home, Magalí had already looked for Andrés and Bautista and the two children were playing in the living room. Seeing that Roxana was soaked, they ran worriedly towards her.

Seeing that they were getting late, they ran upstairs and knocked on the door, but no one answered. The children rushed downstairs and called for Lisa.

—Miss Landa, mom doesn't answer us. Could you go up and see it?

Lisa got scared, so she immediately went upstairs and opened the door with the key. In doing so, Andrés and Bautista ran into the room only to see Roxana lying on the bed; she was very weak. Her eyes were closed, her cheeks hot and flushed, and her lips dry; it was evident that she had a high fever.

-Mother! the children yelled.

As Roxana continued without responding, Lisa approached; she touched his forehead and her face was disfigured. This is so much worse than the last time she was sick. What should I do? It doesn't look like she's going to wake up anytime soon and we can't get her to the hospital either." Lisa was very nervous.

Seeing her, Andrés looked at the clock.

"Miss Landa, could you help Bautista and me apply for a leave of absence today?" We will take care of mom at home.

Lisa nodded immediately and went to call Pilar. Then, she took a wet towel and put it on Roxana's forehead to try to bring down her fever. As for the children, they stayed by her mother's side for a long

time until she finally came to her senses.

Roxana felt that she had fallen into a deep sleep and could not wake up. It was the voices of her children that finally made her wake up.

-Mommy! Hers," her children yelled and came to her as soon as they saw her move.

The woman was stunned, but little by little she recovered herself and tried to get up.

"Sorry, I fell asleep.

She was still thinking about taking Andrés and Bautista to school, but the children pushed her to go back to bed.

"Mom, you're sick. We have already asked for permission to stay at home to take care of you today," they answered seriously.

It was then that Roxana realized how sick she was and was moved to see that her children cared so much for her.