

Zillionaire 1061

Chapter 1061:

Silence swept through the room, everyone caught off guard by her blunt honesty.

No one had expected Linsey—always so quiet, so seemingly content on the sidelines—to step forward with that kind of confidence and presence.

A burst of laughter escaped Alicia, unable to help herself. Once she composed her face, she said, “Honestly, I always figured you’d make a better boss than Jeffery ever could.”

Giving Linsey’s shoulder a friendly squeeze, she added, “It’s a relief knowing you’re stepping up. Otherwise, my child and I might have to start worrying about our future.”

The mood in the room lifted, a shared sense of ease settling over everyone.

Jeffery flashed his wife a grin. “Is that what you’ve really thought of me all this time? Am I just the hopeless one in your eyes?”

Moments later, the lawyer for the Lawson family appeared, paperwork in hand and ready to make things official.

After some serious discussion, Linsey finally agreed to accept five percent of Jeffery’s shares.

Myla followed suit, transferring half her own shares to Linsey as well. Just like that, Linsey secured a significant stake in the Lawson Group, and everyone in the room understood what that meant—she was the company’s future.

Pen in hand, Linsey finished signing the last document. “Taking on these shares doesn’t mean I consider myself a Lawson,” she said with a sly smile. “If I ever decide to turn the Lawson Group into the Brooks Group, don’t take it personally, Cruz.”

Cruz didn't lash out the way most expected. Instead, he let out a quiet chuckle and said, "If you've really got what it takes to reshape this company, I won't stand in your way. As far as I'm concerned, if you can take it to new heights, the name can be whatever you want it to be."

Then, with a gentle look toward Myla, he said, "We'll be here—waiting for you, no matter how long it takes."

In just one lunch, Linsey had stepped into the role of CEO of the Lawson Group.

Of course, Linsey hadn't revealed the whole truth.

Deep down, Linsey knew her decision to take over the company wasn't just about her own future.

She had heard Joanne boast about her plans to marry Jeffery and become his right hand in running the Lawson Group.

Linsey had no intention of letting those ambitions go unchecked. Taking control of the Lawson Group was her way of shutting down Joanne's schemes for good.

But it wasn't just about Joanne—now that she had the company behind her, Linsey could move through the world with a new sense of freedom.

As lunch drew to a close, Alicia rose from her seat, her movements slow and careful. "I'm going to step out and find the restroom," she said.

Jeffery looked ready to follow, already pushing back his chair.

A gentle smile played on Linsey's lips. "Actually, I need the restroom, too. I'll join you, Alicia."

She patted her mouth with her napkin, then looked at Jeffery. "You can't come with us. The ladies' room isn't for you, Jeffery. We'll be fine on our own."

That made Jeffery freeze, uncertainty flickering across his face. Linsey couldn't help but laugh. "What's wrong? Are you worried I'll cause trouble?"

Chapter 1062:

He stumbled over his words, clearly uneasy. "That's not it..."

Alicia slipped her hand into Linsey's, a small, reassuring smile on her lips. "He gets this way sometimes. Honestly, it's just a restroom trip. I could've gone by myself, but I don't mind the company."

Lifting an eyebrow, Linsey replied in a relaxed tone, "It's not every day you see Jeffery so protective."

Her eyes drifted to Alicia's stomach, and her voice softened. "You're expecting, so of course he's concerned."

She paused, letting her gaze linger a moment longer. "But trust me, I have no reason to hurt you. Surprising that Jeffery seems to think I would..."

Looking him straight in the eye, Linsey added, "You can relax, Jeffery. I have children of my own. No matter how I feel about someone, I'd never hurt a pregnant woman. To be honest, it's only you that gets on my nerves. Alicia and I are just fine."

As soon as he heard those words, the faint embarrassment on Jeffery's face gave way to mild resignation.

He didn't bother to argue. "Alright, you two go on. If you need anything, just call—"

Before he could finish, Linsey and Alicia slipped out the door, leaving the room quiet behind them.

No sooner had the door clicked shut than Myla clutched Jeffery's arm, worry etched into every line of her face. "Jeffery, did I hear that right? Did Linsey say she has children? What is going on?"

“You and Alicia didn’t look the least bit surprised. Did you already know about this, Jeffery?” Cruz said, his curiosity getting the better of him.

They were starting to see just how much of Linsey’s life remained a mystery to them.

For the last four years, she had vanished from their world completely, leaving no trace and no word.

Jeffery paused, the weight of it settling in as he realized something—they still had no idea that Linsey was a mother.

He nodded. “Yes, Dad. Mom. Linsey really does have children.”

During the drive to the restaurant, Myla and Cruz had taken a different car, which meant they had missed the earlier exchange between Linsey and Alicia about Linsey’s experience raising children.

Jeffery, on the other hand, had stumbled across the truth about Linsey’s pregnancy more than four years back.

A stunned silence settled over Myla and Cruz. Shock widened their eyes, and they exchanged looks, lost for words.

After a long moment, Myla found her voice. “So... is Collin the father? Or someone else?”

Her tone was a tangle of confusion and concern.

A glint of mischief sparked in Jeffery’s eyes as an idea popped into his head.

Putting on an exaggeratedly serious expression, he said with mock gravity, “The kids aren’t Collin’s. Word is, Collin wants to patch things up with Linsey—but only if she agrees to leave the children behind. He said he won’t marry her again unless she gives them up.”

Cruz's hand slammed onto the table, his anger echoing through the room. "Unbelievable! That bastard, Collin—how dare he treat Linsey like that? If he hadn't lied to her all those years ago, would she have been forced to leave everything behind?"

Chapter 1063:

For once, Myla's calm exterior disappeared, replaced by outrage. "Who does Collin think he is—royalty? Founder of CR Corporation or not, he has no right to walk all over Linsey. There's no way we're letting him hurt her again!"

She gathered herself, determination burning in her voice. "We need to speak with Linsey right away. She deserves so much better than a man who can't stand by her side. Our doors are always open. Linsey and her children will always have a home with us."

A solid nod from Cruz confirmed his support. "That's right. She's our daughter, and her children are our family. We'll give them all the love and protection they need."

He then turned to Jeffery, his face growing serious. "Jeffery, you're her brother. Since you and Alicia already know what's going on, it's up to you to find out what Linsey wants. Do whatever you can to help her bring the kids home."

A meaningful glance passed between Cruz and Myla. "For now, we'll keep quiet. Let Linsey come to us on her own terms. She shouldn't feel cornered or pressured."

Jeffery needed a moment to take it all in. Cruz and Myla pulling together such a well-thought-out plan so quickly caught him completely off guard.

Part of him wished he had recorded every word, just so he could replay it for Linsey later.

Maybe then she would finally see it for herself—that they cared more than she ever imagined, and in their hearts, she was already part of the family.

Gentle softness crept into Jeffery's expression. "Dad, Mom, I was just spouting nonsense. Linsey's two children both belong to Collin. Four years ago, during Linsey and Collin's divorce proceedings, she was already expecting. She later delivered twins while living abroad. I still haven't had the opportunity to meet those two little ones."

An apologetic smile crossed his face as he added, "Collin would never stoop to such shameless behavior. I believe Linsey has genuinely chosen to reconcile with him. They're madly in love and simply cannot exist apart."

Both Myla and Cruz listened, staring blankly at Jeffery.

"Jeffery! How dare you carelessly spread such gossip about Linsey's private affairs?" Sharp exasperation colored Myla's voice as she scolded him, though relief secretly flooded through her.

Relief washed over her as she knew the reality wasn't as Jeffery had painted it. Had his words been true, Linsey would have suffered another devastating blow from Collin.

Gradual relaxation settled over Cruz as well, his previously rigid and stern features softening. "That's good to hear."

A brief silence stretched between them before his eyes brightened, and his voice carried mingled joy and curiosity. "So Linsey delivered twins? Are those children staying with Collin currently?"

"Most likely, yes," Jeffery confirmed.

Faint wonder touched Myla's smile as she spoke. "I never imagined Linsey would bear twins overseas. Those precious children must be four years old by now."

Melancholy crept into her features after a pause, and she whispered, "Linsey must have weathered countless struggles through the years. Caring for two babies single-handedly until they reached four, with no one to depend upon or confide in."

Bitter anger flashed through Cruz upon hearing that. "Collin is absolutely despicable, putting Linsey through all this!"

Myla nodded in agreement but pressed her lips together, cautioning him, "When we encounter Linsey later, avoid speaking ill of Collin in her presence. As her parents, we've likely contributed far less to her life than Collin has. We should remain silent and spare her any distress."

Chapter 1064:

Cruz nodded with sudden understanding. "You're absolutely right. I mustn't allow my anger to control me again."

As he watched them worry so deeply about Linsey's wellbeing, a bitter taste rose in Jeffery's throat.

"Dad, Mom, please don't worry yourselves. Someday, Linsey will know we truly care for her and return to us." Jeffery spoke while clasping their hands firmly. "Stop blaming yourselves for what happened. The events from over twenty years ago weren't your doing. Alexa alone bears responsibility for her greed and vanity. We must all heal and move forward together."

Linsey and Alicia emerged from the private room, walking side by side.

"Linsey, Jeffery sometimes speaks without thinking things through properly. Please don't let his words trouble you. He certainly never intended to question your integrity," Alicia explained gently, concerned that Linsey might have taken offense.

Linsey curved her lips into a gentle smile, her voice soft and soothing. "Don't worry, I know. Jeffery just wants to keep you under his nose to feel reassured. It's not personal. If someone else were accompanying you, he'd still hesitate."

Alicia turned her head slightly to glance at Linsey, her voice soft, her eyes filled with genuine admiration. "You truly have such a captivating personality. To be honest, from the moment I first met you, I felt a natural sense of closeness. I'm just relieved that you don't dislike me."

Linsey's expression remained unchanged as she asked, "Why would I ever dislike you?"

Alicia's tone was earnest. "Since you're not fond of Jeffery, it stands to reason you wouldn't care much for his wife either, right?"

Linsey replied with quiet assurance, "Jeffery is his own person, and you are yours. I don't judge people by association. Even if he and I were close, I wouldn't automatically warm up to you just because of that. That's never been my way."

As she spoke, Linsey watched Alicia closely, searching her face for any subtle reaction. "And besides, with all those shares Jeffery handed over, I'd have no reason to make things hard for him."

Alicia's laugh was soft, entirely untroubled by the mention of lost shares. "Jeffery's spent these years either fighting illness or living at his own pace, barely dipping into the company's business at all." They strolled down the wide corridor, passing staff and guests here and there.

Linsey listened as Alicia continued in a conversational murmur, "You've probably heard the Lawson Group has been losing ground lately. It's lagging behind the other players in Grester. The fact that it's even keeping up at all is mostly thanks to Cruz and Myla's hard work." She spoke without regret or the slightest hint of disappointment about the company's troubles.

That calm left Linsey more confused.

Alicia honestly seemed unfazed about the Lawson Group's stock or Jeffery's place in society.

That made Linsey wonder—maybe Joanne's story about Alicia demanding a big payout from the Lawsons was pure fiction.

The whole thing was baffling, and Linsey didn't feel comfortable asking Alicia directly.

She decided it was better to keep Joanne's words to herself.

There was no need to stir things up, and she didn't want Joanne's drama affecting Alicia's pregnancy.

Chapter 1065:

Instead, Linsey made a mental note to warn Jeffery to stay alert around Joanne when the chance came.

Soon enough, both women finished up in the restroom and made their way out.

But as they headed back toward their private dining room, raised voices from nearby caught their attention.

"You bitch! How long did you think you could hide from me? Trying to get yourself in trouble, are you?"

The coarse outburst made Linsey and Alicia exchange immediate frowns. Neither expected to hear such a vulgar scene erupt in a place that prided itself on refinement.

One of the staff hurried over, voice measured but firm. "Sir, please calm down. If there's a problem, let's talk things through quietly."

"Back off! This is between me and my family. Mind your own business!" The man's words dripped with arrogance.

Unfazed, the staff member said more sharply, "Sir, if you don't release this lady right now, we'll have to call the police."

"Police?" The man let out a nasty laugh and jerked the woman's hair harder, making her shriek. "Call them! What do I care? The worst they'll do is lock me up for a few days. When I get out, I'll be right back here to wreck your place! Let's see how your fancy restaurant holds up."

With every word, his anger escalated, and the woman's panicked cries echoed through the hall, chilling everyone who heard them.

A crowd began to form, drawn by the confrontation and the rising commotion.

“Do you think we should check it out?” Alicia asked, catching the worry creasing Linsey’s brow.

Linsey shot a glance at Alicia’s stomach and said firmly, “You’re pregnant. It’s not safe for you to get mixed up in this.”

She reached out to steer Alicia back toward their private dining room. But just as they turned, a name drifted from the crowd—one Linsey knew all too well.

“Shari! You bitch! Get back home with me right now, or I’ll make you pay so badly you’ll never recover!”

The name hit Linsey like a lightning bolt, her heart skipping a beat.

She told herself it had to be someone else with the same name, but then a familiar voice cut through the commotion. “Harold, I’m begging you... Elva is so sick right now. I desperately need this job to pay for her treatment. I can’t afford to lose it. Please, just go home for now, okay? I promise you, as soon as I have some extra money, I’ll give it to you...”

That voice confirmed it instantly. This was definitely the Shari she knew, her close friend from college.

Without thinking twice, Linsey turned to Alicia and said hurriedly, “Head back to the private room. I need to check this out.”

Before Alicia could respond, Linsey had already taken off, moving quickly towards the scene. She moved so fast that Alicia didn’t even have time to stop her.

Sensing that something was terribly wrong, Alicia hesitated for a moment before pulling out her phone to contact Jeffery.

“Excuse me, let me through please,” Linsey called out as she weaved through the gathered crowd.

What greeted her next left her completely stunned. A burly man was brutally dragging a frail, disheveled woman in full view of everyone. Torn fabric hung from her body like rags, barely covering her bruised and battered skin. Crimson streaks painted her tear-soaked face.

Chapter 1066:

The woman was unmistakably Shari, her college friend.

Shock flashed across Linsey's features. Without a moment's hesitation, she sprang into action. Spotting a janitor who stood frozen, watching the horrific scene, she swiftly snatched the mop from their grip.

"Hey! What the hell do you think you're doing with my mop?" the janitor shouted, bewildered and indignant.

Both hands wrapped around the handle, Linsey raised the mop like a weapon. The instant the brute turned his head in her direction, she brought it down with devastating force, driving the filthy mop head directly into his startled face.

Completely blindsided, the man stumbled backward, crashing into the wall behind him before collapsing to the floor with a pained groan. "Ow!" A wave of shocked gasps swept through the crowd as onlookers witnessed the sudden turn of events.

While the brute was still writhing on the floor in pain, too stunned to retaliate, Linsey maintained her firm grip on the mop, prepared to strike again if necessary. Simultaneously, she gently helped Shari to her feet. "Easy now, take it slow."

Her gaze swept over the bruises marring Shari's body, causing her brows to knit together in deep concern. Anguish etched itself across her features. "Shari, what has he done to you?" Her voice wavered with barely contained emotion.

The question was rhetorical. Anyone with eyes could see that Shari was anything but okay.

This monster had shown no mercy whatsoever toward Shari.

Through her daze, Shari finally registered who had come to her rescue. Her eyes flew wide with shock and disbelief as she stared at Linsey. "Linsey, it's you!"

Joy sparked in her eyes at first, but within seconds, her face drained of all color as panic set in.

"Linsey, you have to leave! Get out of here right now!" Shari said frantically, pushing her away with desperate hands.

She had been too shocked to think clearly before. Now it hit her like a sledgehammer. Linsey had just attacked Harold Sanchez for her sake.

Given his violent temper, she was certain he would never let Linsey walk away unharmed.

Confusion creased Linsey's brow. "What are you talking about? If I'm leaving, you're coming with me."

Pain flashed across Shari's features, but she spoke with urgent desperation. "Don't worry about me. Just run!"

At that moment, Harold staggered to his feet, his face twisted with murderous rage. He wiped his face roughly and snarled, "Leave? After crossing me, you actually think you can just walk away?!"

Harold's voice cut through the air, and in a sudden burst of anger, he lifted his hand and pointed sharply at Shari, his gesture laced with fury. "You filthy traitor! You even had the audacity to bring a helper? Just wait till I get my hands on you—I'll teach you a lesson you won't forget!"

Linsey glanced at him, her eyes turning sharp as ice. Though her tone stayed calm, it carried a weight that dropped like a hammer. "You still think you can drag her away? Let me make this clear—there's no way that's happening!"

Shari stood trembling, her eyes brimming with tears, caught in a storm of fear for Harold and deep concern for Linsey. The clash of emotions gnawed at her chest, pulling her in opposite directions.

Chapter 1067:

Shari addressed Linsey, her voice barely a whisper. "You need to go. Don't worry about me—I'll reach you."

But Linsey didn't budge. With a firm hand, she lowered Shari's trembling arm and said with quiet certainty, "You're not alone. I'm not leaving here without you."

The details between Shari and Harold remained unclear to Linsey, but her instincts wouldn't let her walk away from this.

Before Shari could protest, Linsey turned to face Harold again.

"You'd better listen," Linsey said coldly, gesturing casually toward the surveillance camera mounted in the corner. "That camera's rolling. And plenty of people here would gladly call the cops. Keep pushing, and you'll be in handcuffs before you know it."

A mocking laugh escaped Harold as he waved off the threat. "Go ahead. Call them. See if I care."

Harold didn't fear the police. In his mind, a few days behind bars was nothing more than an inconvenience. Once he got out, he would make this woman pay dearly for crossing him.

Linsey's face remained unchanged, not a flicker of emotion crossing her features. She stared at Harold with the cold, steady gaze of someone who already saw him as a man marked for death.

"For someone like you, jail is too easy," she said flatly, eyeing him up and down. "Honestly, with the way you're carrying on, I could hand over this footage to a psych ward and have you locked up under observation."

That single statement sent a jolt through the bystanders. Calling the police had been the obvious response. No one had even considered the idea of psychiatric commitment.

At first, some doubted her. Maybe she was bluffing—just trying to scare him off.

Still calm, Linsey lifted one brow and continued, “You were shouting like a lunatic, flailing around like you’d lost it. That’s enough for a psych eval. Once they get that report, they won’t let you walk out so easily.”

The moment her words hit him, Harold’s expression turned stormy, and rage surged through him without warning. “You crazy bitch! You think you can spew garbage like that and get away with it?!”

Unfazed, Linsey replied smoothly, not a hint of fear in her tone, “Who’s spewing garbage? I’m dead serious. Getting out of a psych ward isn’t like making bail, Harold—it’s a lot harder when they say you’re unstable.”

That hit a nerve. The sting from her earlier blow, when she had struck him with the mop, still throbbed on his cheek, fueling his humiliation.

And now, she was standing there, calm as ever, calling him unhinged and threatening to have him committed?

“You damn woman!” he snapped, his voice trembling with fury. “You think this is a game? I’ll make sure you regret ever getting in my way!”

No warning, no hesitation—Harold charged at Linsey like a bull, hands outstretched, aiming to beat her up.

Terrified screams erupted from the crowd as panic spread through the onlookers.

They could already envision the brutal scene about to unfold, watching this brave woman face certain defeat at Harold’s hands.

Earlier, Linsey had only managed to land her first strike because Harold hadn't expected the sudden attack with the mop.

Chapter 1068:

Now, with Shari wounded and helpless, how could Linsey alone possibly stand against Harold's superior strength?

What happened next caught everyone off guard. Linsey raised the mop once more, swinging it directly at Harold's head.

A confident smirk crossed Harold's face. He had anticipated this clumsy attempt and effortlessly caught the mop head, stopping her attack cold.

The physical difference between them was undeniable. Linsey appeared completely overpowered.

Everyone braced for the inevitable beating when Linsey suddenly lifted her knee and drove it mercilessly into Harold's groin.

Agony contorted Harold's features as he let out a blood-curdling scream, his face draining of all color.

His grip on the mop faltered as excruciating pain overwhelmed his senses. Cold sweat beaded across his forehead within moments.

Linsey gazed down at Harold, who was now doubled over and barely standing, her voice carrying an icy calm. "Perfect. Now we can take this straight to the police station. Save whatever you want to say for them."

Pain consumed Harold completely, leaving him unable to form any coherent response as he gasped and wheezed.

"Get me an ambulance... This psycho is trying to murder me!"

Shari remained frozen in place, her mind reeling as she struggled to process what had just unfolded before her eyes.

“Damn, that kick was brutal. Poor guy might never have sex again.”

“Serves him right for being such a jerk! Though she might get in trouble for hurting him like that.”

A voice from the crowd murmured uncertainly, “Maybe it’s just me, but doesn’t that woman look familiar? Like I’ve seen her somewhere before...”

Those whispered comments jolted Shari back to her senses, tears threatening to spill from her eyes. She seized Linsey’s hand desperately, her voice shaking with emotion. “Linsey, you have to go. Right now. Let me handle this mess. I won’t let you suffer because of my problems.” No matter what happened to her, Shari refused to drag Linsey into deeper trouble.

Anxiety and terror marked every line of Shari’s face, yet her first concern remained Linsey’s wellbeing.

Linsey drew a steadying breath and squeezed her hand firmly. “Why would I run? The police will track me down eventually, whether I leave now or not.”

Her peripheral vision caught sight of someone in the distance already dialing emergency services. Notably, no one seemed interested in calling an ambulance for Harold. Panic overwhelmed Shari.

“You’re right; you can’t leave.” The reality of the situation hit her as she pressed on urgently, “I’ll clarify the situation when the police get here.”

“And how exactly will you explain this to them?” Linsey’s lips curved into a knowing smile as she gestured toward the security camera mounted in the corner. “Every second is recorded up there. I did kick him, and I’m not about to deny it. The bastard had it coming.”

Shari’s gaze dropped to the floor, her teeth worrying her lower lip before she whispered, “Harold is my husband. If I agree to handle this as a family matter, they won’t press charges against you.”

Chapter 1069:

Those words made Linsey's blood run cold, though she quickly masked her shock.

Four years ago, at that college reunion, Linsey had sensed something troubling Shari beneath her forced smiles. The pieces finally clicked into place. Shari had married an absolutely terrible man. One look at her battered appearance told the whole story. Years of domestic violence had left their cruel marks across her fragile frame.

Linsey kept her voice steady, not wanting to embarrass her friend further. "No matter who he is to you, the moment he raises a hand against you, just give me the slightest signal. I'll move heaven and earth to help you. I will do everything I can to assist you."

She reached out and squeezed Shari's trembling hand. "Don't worry about me. I'll be fine."

Collin rushed through the hospital corridors, finally locating Linsey in a private room with Shari.

"Linsey, these are just scratches and bruises. There's really no need for hospitalization," Shari said.

The moment she had been wheeled into this pristine private room, Shari had felt completely out of place and overwhelmed. Years of hardship had taught her to endure pain silently, rarely bothering with medication even when fever burned through her body. Hospital visits had only become frequent last year because of her daughter's deteriorating condition.

Linsey's voice carried both authority and genuine concern. "The doctor confirmed you're severely weakened. Not only are you malnourished, but your anemia levels are dangerously low. Rest isn't optional anymore."

Her expression softened slightly. "We're still waiting on the comprehensive test results, so please just focus on recovering for now."

Shari shifted uncomfortably, words caught in her throat. Elva Sanchez, her daughter, was still waiting alone in that cramped staff dormitory behind the restaurant. She couldn't keep Elva waiting for too long.

Still, mentioning Elva now felt wrong. The last thing she wanted was to burden Linsey with yet another problem.

The door suddenly burst open with a sharp bang. Collin stormed into the room, panic written across his flushed face. "Linsey!"

His voice cut through the quiet room, drawing Linsey's attention instantly. She rose from her chair, surprise flickering across her features as she instinctively stepped toward him. "How did you arrive so quickly?" Her message had been sent barely ten minutes ago. Even with his driving, the journey should have taken at least half an hour.

Collin closed the distance between them in swift strides, his hands finding her shoulders as his intense gaze swept over every inch of her. "Are you injured anywhere?" His voice carried barely controlled worry. "Feeling pain or discomfort? Did a doctor examine you thoroughly? What did they say?"

His frantic concern brought a soft laugh bubbling from her lips. "I'm completely fine, truly!"

She immediately stepped back and spread her arms wide, spinning in a slow circle to prove her point. "Look, not even a scratch on me." A mischievous glint sparked in her eyes. "I even managed to take down some aggressive thug who thought he could attack us!"

Rather than easing his tension, her words only deepened the furrow between his brows. "Tell me exactly what happened." Her text message had only contained the bare essentials, leaving him with more questions than answers.

Chapter 1070:

Instead of launching into explanations, Linsey guided him toward the hospital bed. "Shari, meet my fiancé, Collin Riley. I believe you two crossed paths before."

She gestured between them with a warm smile. “Collin, this is Shari Sanchez, one of my dearest friends from university.”

Collin straightened his posture and offered a respectful nod. “Hello.” A brief moment passed before he added with genuine regret, “I apologize for barging in like this. In my haste, I completely forgot to bring flowers or anything suitable for a hospital visit.”

Shari blinked in surprise, then quickly waved her hand dismissively. “Please, don’t worry about that.”

Her smile carried both embarrassment and deep appreciation. “Honestly, I shouldn’t even be taking up a hospital bed. Linsey insisted because she worried about me.”

Recognition flickered in her eyes as memories surfaced. Four years ago, at their reunion, Collin had left quite an impression on her and several other old classmates. Back then, he had been confined to a wheelchair. Seeing him standing here now, she assumed his condition had improved significantly.

“You don’t need to bring me anything. You and Linsey have already given me more than enough,” Shari said sincerely.

Sadly, the expensive gifts didn’t last—Harold had sold them off not long after.

Collin looked slightly taken aback.

Linsey gently reminded him, “Four years ago, I went to a class reunion. You came in later and made quite the entrance—flaunting your wealth.” Back then, she had no idea he was the founder of CR Corporation. Looking back now, she realized that the clues were all there. But she had been too in love to notice the signs.

Collin remembered the reunion and smiled softly. “Linsey is my girl. Her friends are my friends. No need to stand on ceremony.”

“Exactly. Don’t worry too much, Shari. I’ll help take care of the rest,” Linsey added warmly.

Shari gave a small smile, her eyes resting on their clasped hands. Earlier, she had quietly watched them—feeling admiration... and a quiet ache. She had already known that marrying Harold had been a mistake. But regrets were useless. All she could do now was find a way to escape his grip and protect Elva.

As for a love like Linsey and Collin's, she had long let go of any hope. "Linsey must've followed the doctor's advice and had you admitted. If you need anything else, just tell me. I'll take care of it," Collin said, relieved to know Linsey was well.

Before she could reply, a playful voice chimed in from behind. "Too late. I already took care of everything for Linsey's friend. You'll have to wait for another chance to play the hero." Linsey and Collin turned at the same time.

Jeffery strolled in with a relaxed smile, holding a medical report in hand.

He handed it to Linsey and raised an eyebrow at Collin, teasing, "Mr. Riley, long time no see."

Collin's face hardly changed at the sight of him.

Jeffery noticed the cool glance and how Collin looked away like he was no more than a stranger in passing.

Stunned, Jeffery blinked. "Seriously, Collin? You're just going to ignore me like that? I am—"