

Marrying A Secret Zillionaire Happy Ever After

#Chapter 11 - Read Marrying A Secret Zillionaire Happy Ever After Chapter 11

Chapter 11 I'm Happily Married

Linsey's heart pounded with frustration, her day marred by the ill fortune of a car accident just as she was on her way to

a crucial job interview.

Yet, there was no time to dwell on her dismay. She swiftly unbuckled her seatbelt and stepped out of the car.

Her expression set in grim lines, she moved to inspect the rear of her car, only to discover a substantial dent marring the bumper-her car was significantly damaged.

From the luxury car behind, a young man emerged rapidly, his features twisted in regret. He approached her and said earnestly, "I'm terribly sorry, ma'am. It was completely unintentional. Please, let me cover the damages."

With deft movements, he extracted a checkbook and penned his name across a check. "I'm Dustin Wade," he continued, extending the check towards her. "Feel free to fill in the amount needed for the repairs, or even a replacement if necessary. Should you encounter any problems, don't hesitate to reach out."

As Linsey's eyes lingered sorrowfully on her battered car, a wave of nostalgia washed over her. The car, though just a mass of metal and wires, had been her steadfast companion through countless journeys.

Dustin offered her the signed check along with his business card, inquiring with polite curiosity, "May I have your name?"

"Linsey Riley," she responded in a subdued tone.

At her words, a flicker of recognition sparked in Dustin's eyes. Swiftly, he slid off

his sunglasses, his gaze sharpening as he studied her face more closely.

Indeed, this was the same Linsey he had learned about from Collin's investigation; her image was unmistakable from the

files he had seen.

How ironic it was that he had stumbled upon Collin's newly married wife just that day!

Dustin's gaze remained fixed on Linsey, making her shift uneasily. She edged back a few steps and asked with a hint of suspicion, "Why are you staring at me like that?"

Excitement flickered within Dustin as he muttered to himself, "How could I not be curious about the woman who made

Collin lose a billion dollars?"

He flashed her a mischievous smile and let his intense gaze relax. In a burst of spontaneity, he offered, "Since your car has suffered some damage, why not join me in mine? Where might you be headed? I'd be happy to drive you."

Linsey narrowed her eyes, carefully examining the carefree smirk on his face. She sensed he was plotting something.

Her stunning features often attracted those with ulterior motives, and she had learned to navigate these situations with caution. She wasn't about to be duped so easily, not with an important interview looming and no time for distractions.

"I appreciate the offer, but my car will manage. It's still in working condition," Linsey declared, turning to walk away.

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Chapter 11 I'm Happily Married

Dustin stood there, taken aback by her brisk rejection, momentarily questioning his own charm.

He hurriedly moved to intercept her, saying, "Hold on, please wait a moment. You still haven't picked up the check and my

card. Don't forget to reach out later."

While speaking, he attempted to hand the items over to Linsey.

Linsey skillfully sidestepped his advance, her voice cold and firm. "I'd suggest you refrain from any unseemly thoughts. I'm happily married, and my husband and I are deeply in love."

Her gaze cut through the space between them as she dismissed the check with a flick of her wrist. "Your money doesn't grant you any special privileges here. Leave now, or I will call the police."

Dustin reeled from her sharp rebuke, his surprise rendering him motionless, no longer obstructing her path.

With a measured breath, Linsey slid into her car, her movements swift and precise.

She knew too well the importance of maintaining a facade of indifference— showing any less could make her vulnerable.

Dustin watched her drive away, his earlier shock morphing into amusement. He sauntered back to his car, a grin unfurling

on his face.

As he started the engine, he turned to the passenger in the back, his tone playful. "Well, Collin, fancy that we just ran into

your wife on our way to the office. Did you hear her?"

Chapter 12 Why Doesn't

She Fall For Me Instead

Collin gave Dustin a blank look. "What did Linsey say?"

Dustin's grin widened, his eyes gleaming with mischief as he echoed Linsey's earlier words. "She actually thought I was

into her and gave me a heads-up that she's already married and they're deeply in love with each other."

His excitement escalated. "Did you catch that, Collin? Straight from Linsey's mouth. In her view, you're a cripple, right? Yet, she didn't think twice about marrying you right outside that church. Odd, isn't it? And now, barely a week into your

marriage, and you're already head over heels? Seriously?"

After pausing for a moment, he went on, "Collin, we've been tight for more than two decades, and you've kept this massive news from me? Out with it. Is what Linsey claimed true? You mean to tell me you've fallen for her this quickly?"

Dustin's incessant chatter drew a scowl from Collin. "Fall

in love with her? Ridiculous. Cut it out."

Yet, Dustin only laughed harder. "Yeah, yeah, it's just Linsey talking. Someone as ruthless as you falling quickly for someone? Unlikely. But Linsey? Just a few days as your wife and she's already this smitten with you?"

He furrowed his brow, genuinely confused. "Honestly, compared to you-a wealthy young man with a disability-here I am, single, fairly good-looking, and not to mention, wealthy. Why doesn't she fall for me instead? How can she overlook my appeal? It doesn't make any sense."

"Are you finished?" Collin asked, his brow furrowed in impatience. "I have no interest whatsoever in matters concerning her. If you continue to delay and hinder our work, I won't be forgiving."

His stare pierced through the air with a dangerous sharpness.

Aware of Collin's stern, business-focused demeanor, Dustin had no option but to quell his curiosity and ignite the engine.

A heavy silence soon enveloped the car.

Collin reclined in the back seat, his gaze drifting out the window, lost in thought.

He had declared his indifference to anything involving Linsey.

Yet, inexplicably, her words haunted his thoughts.

Linsey was convinced that he was a cripple, yet still accepted him as her husband, unswayed by Dustin's attempts to charm her.

Could it be that she truly overlooked Dustin's appeal?

As he mulled over this, a rare smile broke across Collin's usually stoic face, softening his entire expression.

Linsey feared the accident had ruined her chances of making it to the interview on time, 0.0%

Chapter 12 Why Doesn't She Fall For Me Instead

Miraculously, no further incidents occurred after the accident.

She reached CR Corporation right on time.

With a palpable sense of relief, Linsey settled in at the designated interview location.

Around her, a crowd had already begun to assemble outside the interview location.

"Have you heard? I overheard that the CEO of CR Corporation might grace today's interview," murmured someone close to

Linsey, their voice barely a whisper.

Another candidate nearby couldn't hide their astonishment. "Really? If that's the case, we definitely need to treat this

interview with the utmost seriousness."

Linsey's curiosity was piqued.

The CEO of CR Corporation? Could this really be the mysterious founder who single-handedly catapulted CR Corporation to

its pinnacle?

Her knowledge of him was confined to the snippets she found online; she had never encountered him face-to-face.

Suddenly, a voice cut through the mounting anticipation. "He's arrived; he's here! The CEO of CR Corporation has just

walked in!"

As a few employees passed by, they offered their respectful greetings to a man who had just entered. "Good morning, Mr.

Wade."

Driven by an irresistible urge, Linsey craned her neck, managing to glimpse the man at the center of everyone's attention.

A group had formed a tight circle around him as he advanced.

Catching a clear view of his face, Linsey stood frozen, utterly taken aback.

Chapter 13 Am I In The Wrong Place

Linsey's eyes flew open, shock etching her face.

Nearby, encircled by a bustling crowd, stood none other than Dustin-the same man who had recently tangled with her in

a car accident!

What a staggering coincidence!

She wrestled with her rising emotions, striving to keep her face impassive.

Subtly, she angled her head to the side, carefully avoiding Dustin's gaze to escape his notice.

The last thing she expected was to see him here.

Observing how the CR Corporation's executives deferred to him, she had no doubts left- Dustin was the mysterious

founder.

Accepting this twisted reality was challenging. She clenched her jaw, her mind replaying their abrasive encounter on the

street.

His carefree tone and brash demeanor had skirted the edges of disrespect...

The mysterious founder of CR Corporation had once been her inspiration, the very reason she had aspired to excel in

design.

Was it conceivable that her inspiration was as arrogant as Dustin?

As Linsey pondered this, a group of executives stepped up to Dustin, their voices tinged with respect. "Mr. Wade, if you

would follow us, please."

Dustin gave a slight nod and followed the group, oblivious to Linsey, who was tucked away in a shadowy corner.

From her vantage point, Linsey watched them disappear into the distance. She let out a soft sigh of relief, her face etched

with a mix of emotions that were hard to decipher.

As soon as the group left, the crowd waiting for the interview picked up their conversations again.

"You see that man? That's Dustin Wade, the acting CEO of CR Corporation. The founder's a no-show; it's always Mr. Wade

who shows up at these major events."

"Mr. Wade is not only strikingly handsome, but his aura is absolutely commanding. Even from afar, his presence is distinctly imposing."

"It's fascinating that someone as remarkable as Mr. Wade chooses to work under such a mysterious founder. Whoever they

are must be extraordinarily compelling"

"I'd give anything to meet the mysterious founder."

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Chapter 13 Am I In The Wrong Place

"Be realistic. I've heard that even top executives at the company have never met the mysterious founder. Only Mr. Wade is

privy to the founder's true identity. We're probably never going to know."

"That's true. I wonder if I'll even make it into this company."

"Just stay optimistic! Give it your best shot."

As she overheard this exchange, Linsey's realization dawned on her.

Dustin was just the acting CEO, not the mysterious founder she had wondered about.

What was more, there might be a close connection or a strong rapport between Dustin and the founder.

When she realized this, a wave of relief washed over her.

Her startled reaction wasn't unwarranted; given the unsettling encounter earlier, her opinion of Dustin had soured

significantly. She had little patience for men who behaved carelessly.

Luckily, Dustin was not the founder.

This revelation piqued Linsey's curiosity further about the mysterious founder's identity.

Dreaming of joining the company and showcasing her skills, she fantasized about one day meeting the mysterious founder.

Linsey's thoughts were abruptly shattered by a scornful voice from across the room.

"Well, well, what have we here? Is CR really open to just anyone for interviews now? Am I in the wrong place? The

presence of certain individual here really brings into question the integrity of CR Corporation's selection criteria."

The voice dripped with venomous sarcasm, causing Linsey to frown at its piercing edge.

She turned to see a woman seated not far off, eyeing her with a look of contempt.

Chapter 14 I've Heard Your

Name

Noticing Linsey's gaze, Cynthia Keller scoffed and lifted her chin with a smug tilt. "What? You got a problem?"

The group around Cynthia quickly jumped in, their mocking voices overlapping.

"Who even is she? Never seen her before. Does she even have any work to her name? Or did she just wander in off the

street?"

"How does someone like her have the guts to show up here? She's probably fresh out of school. The audacity to apply at CR -what a joke."

"Right? CR only interviews real designers-people with credentials, portfolios. How did she even get past the resume

screening?"

Linsey instantly caught on. They were deliberately trying to humiliate her. But she kept her expression cool and shot back,

"So, I take it you're all famous, then?"

Cynthia let out a condescending laugh, her gaze dripping with arrogance. "New to the design world and already this clueless? Do you even follow the industry?"

She flicked her fingers toward the room. "Look around. You're already at a disadvantage, and now you're proving you don't

even know who you're up against."

A wave of laughter rippled through the group.

"Wow. That's just sad. No reputation, no clue who the top names are—why are you even here?"

"Let's educate her," a woman chimed in, regarding Cynthia with admiration.

"This is Cynthia Keller. You're from Grester, right? Then how do you not know her?"

With a dramatic flourish, she added, "She's from the esteemed Keller family- talented, and adored by hundreds of

thousands of followers online."

Linsey's eyes narrowed slightly before she spoke. "So, you're Cynthia Keller?"

Cynthia practically glowed under the attention, her expression brimming with pride. She lifted her chin higher and drawled,

"That's right. You've heard of me? Guess you're not entirely clueless after all."

Linsey smiled, her voice deliberate. "Oh, I've heard your name. Like how your design academy thesis was actually written

by a ghostwriter. And how it got exposed online when you refused to pay them. Is that true? I have to admit, I'm curious."

That scandal had been a major embarrassment for Cynthia. The ghostwriter had presented undeniable proof of her

academic dishonesty, but the Keller family had spent a fortune burying the story. Most had forgotten-until now.

Linsey hadn't given it much thought until someone emphasized Cynthia's reputation, triggering her memory.

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Chapter 14 I've Heard Your Name

Since they had gone out of their way to mock her, she saw no reason to be polite.

Cynthia's face burned with anger. She snapped, "What the hell are you saying?! Everyone knows I was framed! Son jealous nobody tried to ruin me!"

Her outburst drew quiet chuckles from the onlookers.

Most might have let the story fade, but the veterans in the design world remembered it well.

Cynthia couldn't find the words to defend herself, but her entourage jumped in, seizing the moment. One of them pointed an accusatory finger at Linsey. "What's your deal? You can't stand that you'll never measure up, so now you're throwin out baseless accusations? You better take that back and apologize to Ms. Keller right now-or get ready for a lawsuit!"

Chapter 15 How Does She

Know All This

Linsey's lips twisted into a sneer. "Did I say something incorrect? Everyone is aware of it. I haven't slandered Cynthia in the

slightest."

Her eyes narrowed as she stared at the woman who had defended Cynthia, her voice dripping with scorn. "Moreover,

instead of scrutinizing me, maybe you ought to examine your own situation. I believe your surname is Rodriguez, isn't it? Ms. Rodriguez, wasn't your latest project embroiled in a plagiarism scandal just three months ago? The judgement has been passed-you're a plagiarist. Yet somehow, you managed to secure an interview with CR Corporation. Now, that's a real

mystery."

The accusation caused the woman's face to stiffen. "How did you come to know about that?"

Linsey didn't pause to let her respond; instead, she turned towards another designer. "And you-Ms. Jimenez, correct? I remember you boasted about winning a design award. Turns out, that recognition could be bought for a price. So, how much did you shell out for that recognition?"

Following that, Linsey proceeded to air the dirty laundry of several individuals. With her voice rising, she exclaimed, "Each of you has such a notorious reputation online. Next to you all, I'm practically invisible."

The room filled with faces turned scarlet, including Cynthia's, as they were overwhelmed with shame.

They struggled to match Linsey's brisk pace, and more crucially, they lacked concrete proof to counter her claims-which

were undeniably true.

Ceasing their taunts, they swiftly changed course and made their exit.

In the midst of the ensuing chaos, a voice grumbled, "Damn it! How does she know all this? She's just a newbie, isn't she?"

Overhearing the comment, a sly smile played on Linsey's lips.

She had prepared exhaustively for the upcoming interview at CR Corporation, making sure she was well-versed in every significant and trivial event within the design community over the past few years.

These designers had mistaken her for a soft target and had initiated this confrontation.

Unbeknownst to them, they had messed with the wrong person this time.

As Linsey wrapped up her encounter with these troublesome designers, a group of interviewers stepped forward.

"Everyone, please proceed inside and get ready for your interview," they instructed.

One by one, the designers filed into the interview room, each selecting a seat in the designated area.

The interviewers positioned themselves at the forefront, observing quietly as staff members handed out sheets of paper and drawing pens to the candidates.

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Chapter 15 How Does She Know All This

The lead interviewer cleared his throat and addressed the group. "You are all talented designers, handpicked from a rigorous resume screening process. Today, we've brought you here to gauge your foundational design skills in a real-time

setting. You have one hour to create a complete design draft. Let the countdown begin."

With that, a staff member beside him activated the timer.

A murmur of surprise rippled through the room. One of the designers, unable to hide his confusion, blurted out, "But you

haven't provided us with a design brief. What exactly are we supposed to design?"

Linsey, her gaze fixed on the interviewer, awaited his response with keen interest.

The interviewer offered a reassuring smile and explained, "Today's challenge is to assess your ability to make swift

decisions on the spot. Please work independently, ensure your ideas are your own, and avoid any form of imitation. Now,

please begin."

As silence enveloped the room, the designers bent over their papers, pencils scratching away.

Linsey, however, sat motionless, her eyes locked on the blank page before her. Memories suddenly flooded back-the

wedding day, the first time she had met Collin...

Chapter 16 You're All Too

Loud

Linsey's first impression of Collin was of a man dressed sharply in a wedding suit, seated in a wheelchair with an air of

quiet authority.

Despite the humiliating situation of being abandoned at the altar, he hadn't shown a flicker of unease or frustration.

A spark of inspiration struck Linsey.

She wanted to design something for him-something that mirrored his composed and dignified presence.

A small smile formed on her lips as she picked up a pen and began sketching with practiced ease.

Half an hour later, Cynthia rose to her feet, exuding confidence. She strode toward the interviewers, holding her design as

if it were a masterpiece.

"All done." She flashed the interviewers a self-assured smile as she handed over her sketch. "Cynthia Keller. My name's in

the bottom right corner."

The interviewers accepted it with polite professionalism. "Thank you. You may wait outside."

The other candidates exchanged uneasy glances. Cynthia had finished already? Only thirty minutes had passed, and most

of them weren't even halfway through their sketches.

Completing a design in just half an hour seemed almost impossible. Their growing anxiety rippled through the room.

"What do I do? I still have so much left to sketch."

"I shouldn't have picked this concept. It's too late to start over now."

"This is a disaster. I'm completely screwed."

The restless murmurs prompted one of the interviewers to issue a sharp reminder.

"Please maintain silence. You have

twenty-seven minutes remaining."

Linsey, oblivious to Cynthia's early submission, remained engrossed in her work, her pen moving steadily across the page.

As the minutes ticked by, the others gradually completed their designs and turned them in, filing out one by one.

With just a minute left, Linsey was the only candidate still seated in the room.

An interviewer glanced at the clock. "You have fifty seconds remaining."

"I see," Linsey murmured, her voice steady as she signed her name at the bottom

of her design. She rose from her seat and walked forward, placing her work on the desk. "I'm done. Thank you."

The interviewer gave her a small nod of acknowledgment.

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Chapter 16 You're All Too Loud

Linsey stepped out of the interview room and leaned against the wall, letting out a quiet breath as she sat down.

Cynthia spotted her immediately, seizing the moment to taunt her. "Linsey, what took you so long? Did they throw you out because you couldn't finish in time?"

The sycophants who had rallied behind Cynthia earlier eagerly joined in.

"I bet they did. The interviewers probably won't forget her anytime soon."

"I bet she just scribbled something last minute."

Linsey's brows drew together in irritation. She shot them a cold look and snapped, "Shut up. You're all too loud."

With that, she closed her eyes, refusing to give them any more attention.

Cynthia clenched her fists, seething, but with CR Corporation's staff nearby, she had no choice but to swallow her anger

and glare in silence.

Once all the candidates had submitted their designs, the interviewers began sorting through them, matching the strongest pieces with resumes to determine the sole designer they would select.

The wait felt endless. When the interviewers finally emerged, all the designers gathered anxiously.

Linsey, having rested for a bit, suddenly felt her nerves creeping in.

Her pulse quickened, her breath shallow as she fixed her gaze on the interviewer holding the final decision.

Beside her, a designer whispered to Cynthia, "Cynthia, it has to be you. You're the most talented one here."

"I think so too. Cynthia, we should congratulate you in advance, right?"

Cynthia smirked, already picturing herself reveling in their admiration.

This was it. She would be the one CR Corporation chose.

The interviewer scanned the group before finally smiling. "After careful consideration, we have selected Linsey Riley for the

position. Congratulations, Linsey!"

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SHROUDED AFFECTIONS

WINNING BACK MY

CEO Wife

Shrouded Affections: Winning...

For two years, Bryan only saw Eileen as an assistant. ...

hapter 17 Why Is She Asleep Here

"What?! No way!"

Cynthia's voice shot up, her disbelief echoing through the room. She had been so certain she would be the one to pass. Yet,

against all logic, the arrogant newcomer-Linsey-had taken the spot instead.

Linsey, equally stunned, blinked in disbelief. Had she misheard? She wanted this so badly that her mind struggled to accept

it as reality.

But then, the interviewer stepped forward, offering her a warm smile. "Linsey, congratulations on passing the interview."

Joy flickered across Linsey's face, her chest tightening with excitement. It took her a second to find her voice. "Thank you..."

"Thank you so much!"

She had done it-she had gotten into her dream company. This meant she could finally help Collin with his debts.

Around her, the other designers murmured in shock.

"How is this even possible?"

"It's really her. I didn't expect her work to be that good."

"A newcomer outscored Cynthia? That's unreal."

Cynthia, frozen in place for several seconds, suddenly let out a furious cry. She stormed toward the interviewers, her face

twisted with outrage. "There has to be a mistake!"

Her glare snapped to Linsey, who was still basking in her victory, and her voice dripped with venom. "Linsey cheated! I demand a review of the results! There's no way my designs lost to hers!"

The lead interviewer's expression darkened, his patience wearing thin.

"Cynthia Keller, are you questioning our ability to evaluate talent? If that's the case, perhaps you should take my job instead."

Cynthia stiffened, her breath catching. She clamped her mouth shut, too intimidated to say another word.

This interviewer was a key figure in CR Corporation's Fashion Design Department, someone Linsey knew she couldn't afford to offend.

Internally, Cynthia seethed, "Curse you, Linsey."

Once the other designers had left, the lead interviewer motioned for Linsey to approach. "You don't have any conflicting plans, do you? If not, come by tomorrow morning to finalize the onboarding process. Someone will guide you through the company and help you get started."

"Alright. Thank you," Linsey replied, a smile tugging at her lips. After exchanging a few words, she exited the room, her

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Chapter 17 Why Is She Asleep Here

heart still fluttering with joy.

Securing a position at CR Corporation felt like the happiest event of the last six months.

Her thoughts turned to Collin, whom she hadn't seen in a while. If he was home, she couldn't wait to share this triumph

with him.

Perhaps it would help him trust her more and bring them closer.

As she stepped outside the CR Corporation building, Linsey spotted Cynthia waiting for her, looking furious.

"Linsey, don't get too cocky," Cynthia spat, her voice dripping with malice. "Just wait. I'll expose your true colors."

With that, Cynthia stormed off, leaving Linsey momentarily stunned.

Linsey blinked, confused, and chuckled under her breath. She had no idea what Cynthia meant, but her mood was so high

after the interview that she didn't feel like engaging.

Soon enough, Linsey arrived back at Vista Villa.

"Is Collin coming home tonight?" she asked the butler as she slipped off her shoes.

The butler smiled, his tone warm. "Mr. Riley mentioned he would be home for dinner."

He then looked at her expectantly. "Mrs. Riley, what would you like for dinner? I'll have the kitchen prepare it early."

Linsey thought for a moment before responding. "No need. I'll cook. Just have two maids help me."

Since there was nothing else on her mind, Linsey decided to cook and surprise Collin.

By the time the meal was ready, the sky outside had darkened, casting a soft, tranquil glow through the windows.

Linsey washed her hands carefully, then settled herself on the sofa, her eyes flickering toward the door every so often as

she waited for Collin.

But time dragged on, and there was still no sign of him at the entrance. Noticing Linsey's waiting posture, the butler hesitated before speaking up. "Mrs. Riley, it's getting late. Why don't you eat something first? Mr. Riley must still be caught up with work."

Linsey shook her head gently, her voice soft but firm. "No, I'll wait. I want to eat with him."

The butler, sensing there was little point in arguing, simply nodded and stepped away.

As the minutes passed, Linsey's eyes grew heavier. Gradually, she drifted off to sleep on the sofa.

It wasn't until late at night that Collin finally got home. He entered the living room and his gaze immediately fell on Linsey, asleep on the sofa.

He froze for a moment, surprised, and then, in a low voice, he turned to the butler,

a furrow appearing between his brows. "What's going on? Why is she asleep here?"

Chapter 18 I Found A Job

The butler instinctively lowered his voice, sensing the tension, and replied, "Mr. Riley, Mrs. Riley made dinner and has been

waiting for you ever since."

A flicker of irritation crossed Collin's features as he frowned, his voice sharp. "Didn't you tell her? I'm swamped with work.

She doesn't need to wait for me."

His gaze lingered on Linsey's sleeping face, and in a muttered, almost spiteful tone, he added, "So unnecessary."

Before the butler could respond, Linsey stirred slightly, her eyes fluttering open as she blinked groggily, still lost in the

haze of sleep.

When her blurry vision cleared and landed on Collin, she paused, confused for a moment, still processing the situation.

Collin's breath hitched unexpectedly, his heart skipping a beat as he caught sight of her. Her innocent, sleepy expression

made her look almost... endearing.

For a brief moment, he was caught off guard by the softness of his own thoughts, a surprising warmth spreading through

him.

As if to snap him out of his daze, Linsey fully awakened, her face lighting up as she threw the blanket off her, her eyes sparkling with excitement.

"Collin, you're finally back! I have something so important to share with you!" she exclaimed, her voice filled with

anticipation.

Collin's mind immediately raced back to the reports his subordinates had shared over the past few days.

He knew Linsey had been busy, but he had no clue what she was up to.

His thoughts darkened as he considered the possibility that she was about to announce her departure.

The butler had said she made dinner. Maybe it was her final gesture of care- something to soften the blow of her leaving.

Collin's lips curled into an inward sneer.

She was really deluding herself.

He didn't need her concern. It was completely unnecessary.

If she wanted to leave, the sooner, the better.

With a cold, unreadable expression, he asked, his voice flat, "What important thing?"

Linsey rose from her seat but didn't answer right away. Instead, she looked at him with a gentle smile and said, "It's getting late. Let's eat first. You've been working nonstop; you must be starving."

Collin opened his mouth to refuse, but as his gaze met Linsey's bright, hopeful eyes, his words faltered.

He exhaled sharply, steeling himself for this to be the last time he indulged her. "Alright."

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Chapter 181 Found A Job

He washed his hands quickly and followed Linsey to the dining table, his eyes widening in surprise as he took in the sight

before him—an elegant spread of dishes, flickering candlelight casting soft shadows, wine glasses glimmering, and roses

scattered artfully across the table.

Linsey flashed him a bright smile, gesturing for him to sit. Then, she took a lighter and lit the candles with a flourish.

"So?" she asked, her voice playful. "How's my candlelit dinner? Up to standard?"

Collin stood frozen for a moment, caught off guard by the effort she had put in.

His lips pressed into a thin line, and with an air of stiffness, he asked, "Why prepare a candlelit dinner?"

"It's romantic," Linsey replied matter-of-factly, her eyes gleaming with sincerity. "We're married. Isn't it normal to add a bit

of romance every now and then, to spice things up?"

The soft glow of the candlelight danced over her face, making her look even more captivating, her smile full of life and

charm.

In the quiet of the moment, Collin felt a flicker in his chest, his heart skipping an unexpected beat.

He clenched his fists, his emotions warring inside him, then abruptly reached for the wine and drained his glass in one

swift motion.

Linsey blinked, momentarily stunned by his sudden action. "You haven't eaten yet. Please, have some food first."

With a soft laugh, she placed food carefully onto his plate.

"I know you prefer lighter flavors, so I made some dishes I thought you'd enjoy. Let me know if they suit your taste." Her

excitement was palpable as she eagerly watched him take his first bite. "How is it?" she asked, her voice tinged with hope.

Collin glanced at her and muttered, "Not bad."

Linsey's heart fluttered with excitement. For someone like Collin, she felt that getting such a compliment was already a

victory.

She watched him take a few more bites before she finally spoke up, her voice soft yet full of anticipation. "Oh, I got some good news."

Collin's fork paused midair, his chewing slowing down as his attention shifted toward her.

Linsey took a deep breath and continued, "I found a job. I passed the interview today, and I'll be starting tomorrow. The

salary's decent, and I can finally help ease some of your burden, so you won't have to carry everything on your shoulders."

For a brief moment, surprise flickered across Collin's face.

Chapter 19 Collin, What's

In Your Pants

It never crossed Collin's mind that the immense debt he had casually fabricated would weigh so heavily on Linsey.

What struck him even more was how genuinely she seemed determined to face it with him.

He fixed his gaze on Linsey, sitting across from him, trying to look past her cheerful smile, searching for any trace of

uncertainty beneath the surface.

Perhaps it was all just a front.

How could there possibly be a woman so selfless, willing to help him without expecting anything in return?

In the soft glow of the dim lighting, Linsey remained blissfully unaware of the shift in his expression.

Her spirits were high from the success of her new job at CR Corporation, and she was too excited to notice his internal

conflict.

She reached for the red wine on the table, matching Collin's earlier move, and downed it in one swift motion.

But unlike Collin, who remained composed, she immediately broke into a cough, her cheeks flushed with embarrassment

as her face turned a shade of pink.

"Why is this wine so strong?" She stuck her tongue out, making a playful face.

"You can't handle your drink?" Collin asked, his gaze cool as he observed her discomfort.

Linsey shrugged lightly, her laughter escaping in a small, embarrassed breath. "I don't usually drink, but tonight's different.

We're celebrating, right?"

With a mischievous smile, she tried to pour herself another glass.

After a moment's pause, Collin gently took the bottle from her unsteady grip, his tone calm and composed. "That's enough. If you don't enjoy drinking, you don't need to force yourself."

Linsey blinked, stunned by his rare display of concern, then quickly shook her head. "I'm not forcing myself. I'm just so happy today, I wanted to celebrate with a drink."

Collin glanced at her briefly, his gaze softening. For a moment, he was entranced.

Her face was radiant, flushed with the warmth of the wine, and her eyes shimmered with the haze of intoxication.

Her lips, full and inviting, reminded him of ripe strawberries, their softness promising the sweetness of a thousand unspoken desires.

He couldn't shake the thought that they would burst with juicy sweetness at the slightest press.

His throat tightened, and he involuntarily licked his suddenly dry lips, his voice dropping to a low, almost hoarse tone.

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Chapter 19 Collin, What's In Your Pants

"There are plenty of ways to celebrate. You don't have to drink."

His words came from a place of concern, but more than that, there was a gut instinct telling him that if she drank any

more, the night could take a turn he wasn't sure he was ready for.

Linsey, however, shook her head stubbornly, her laughter soft but firm. "No way. This wine cost a fortune! We can't just

waste it."

She pouted slightly, her lips forming an adorable frown, ready to argue more, but then her eyes widened in a drunken haze.

She raised a slender finger and pointed at Collin, swaying slightly. "Hey, why are there two of you?"

Collin, resisting the urge to correct her, merely reached to take her glass away.

"My glass! Give it back!" Linsey protested loudly, standing up, trying to snatch it from his hands.

But the moment she tried to stand, her legs betrayed her, and she stumbled straight into Collin's arms with a surprised

gasp.

Instinctively, he tightened his hold on her to steady her, his hands firmly gripping her waist.

Before he could say anything, he felt the soft pressure of her hand against his thigh.

"Collin, what's in your pants?" Her voice was a dazed whisper, her eyes hazy as she tried to look down.

Collin's heart skipped a beat, and a wave of discomfort rippled through him, his face hardening.

What the hell was happening?

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Chapter 20 You're Hurting

Me

"Don't touch me," Collin warned, his voice low and tense. He grabbed Linsey by the collar and yanked her back into

another chair.

In the process, her arm knocked against the wine glass in front of him.

The glass tipped over, and dark red wine spilled across his pristine white shirt, the stain spreading like ink on paper.

Linsey sat back, blinking at him, still dazed.

Collin inhaled sharply, his jaw tightening as he fought to maintain his composure- and suppress the heat stirring inside

him. Turning to the side stiffly, he added, "Stay seated. Don't come any closer."

The cold liquid seeped through his shirt, chilling his skin, though it did little to cool the fire burning within him.

Linsey suddenly pouted, her tone turning sharp. "What do you mean? You won't even let me near you? Is that really how

you treat your wife?"

Her righteous indignation left him momentarily speechless.

"We're married. Why should I stay away from you?" she continued, her eyelids growing heavier. "Your shirt is soaked in

wine. You can't clean it yourself. Let me bathe you."

Ignoring the fact that they were still in the dining room, she reached out, fingers brushing against the fabric of his shirt as

she attempted to remove it.

"Don't move!" he snapped, catching her wrist in a firm grip.

He was ready to scold her when he noticed the slight crease in her brow, her expression shifting with discomfort.

"Collin... you're hurting me," she murmured softly.

At her words, his grip loosened instinctively. The moment he let go, she twisted free and, without hesitation, grabbed his

collar with unexpected force,

"Linsey!" Collin gritted his teeth, his voice sharp with frustration. Unable to tolerate

it any longer, he struck the back of her

neck with a swift, controlled blow,

Already intoxicated, she had no resistance against his strength.

The next moment, her body slackened, and she began to collapse toward the floor.

With a cold, unreadable expression, Collin pushed himself up from his wheelchair, catching her effortlessly before she

could hit the floor. Without hesitation, he carried her to her bedroom, his steps steady and sure.

She had been staying in this room for almost a month, and the moment he stepped inside, a soft, lingering fragrance wrapped around him.

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20:19

Chapter 20 You're Hurting Me

He paused, glancing down at the woman in his arms. Linsey was deep in sleep, her breaths even and slow.

She was drunk, her clothes slightly askew, her flushed cheeks tinted with a delicate shade of pink.

Collin exhaled quietly, then gently laid her down on the bed.

As he withdrew his hands from beneath her, she suddenly murmured in her sleep and reached out, wrapping her arms around him sluggishly.

He froze. The warmth of her body pressed against him, her soft curves unmistakable beneath the thin fabric of her shirt.

Linsey, completely unaware of what she was doing, nuzzled her heated face against his chest, the coolness of his shirt offering her relief.

The material of his shirt was luxurious, tailored to perfection, yet at this moment, he realized even the finest fabric couldn't compare to the softness of her skin.

Collin remained still, forced to sit stiffly at the edge of the bed.

His gaze drifted to her face, and despite himself, he found his focus lingering.

He had to admit-she was breathtaking. Her features were delicate and lively, effortlessly beautiful, even without a trace of makeup.

Linsey continued clinging to him, her lips slightly parted, the tip of her tongue barely visible.

As she shifted in her sleep, the distance between them disappeared, and he caught the faint, intoxicating scent of her breath a mix of sweetness and wine.

His eyes darkened slightly. She was right. They were married.

There was no reason to push her away.

In fact, they could be even closer, just like this.

His Adam's apple bobbed as he leaned in, his gaze locked onto her lips, hovering just above them.