

Zillionaire 1141

Chapter 1141:

Collin nodded meekly, his gaze fixed on her tear-streaked eyes, his brow still creased with concern.

He gently lifted his hand, brushing away the tears at the corners of her eyes with his fingertips. Feeling the warmth of his breath against her palm, still pressed to his lips, Collin murmured tenderly, "I love you, Linsey."

Linsey froze, stunned. Her hand recoiled instinctively, as if burned by Collin's touch.

In the next breath, a warm flush surged across her cheeks, and her mind momentarily went blank.

"Collin, how are you always so good at saying these things?" she murmured, barely able to meet his eyes. "I never know how to respond."

It wasn't the first time he had whispered such tender words, and yet, each time, it felt like the very first. Her heart fluttered uncontrollably, her face glowing with a shyness that made her feel like a lovestruck teenager.

Seeing her embarrassment chase away the shadows in her gaze, Collin finally relaxed. Then, gently, he reached out once more and wrapped her fingers in his own.

"Linsey," he said softly, "I know I can be possessive... jealous even. But if something were ever to happen to me—"

"You still dare bring that up?!" she snapped, glaring at him.

Unfazed, he continued with quiet determination. "Linsey, if that day ever comes, I want you to move on. I want you to live well, to forget me, to—"

Linsey's expression hardened in an instant. "No," she said through clenched teeth. "Don't you even think about saying things like that."

She clenched her fists, her jaw tight with emotion. "I know what you're trying to say," she added, her voice shaking slightly.

She understood him too well. This wasn't just talk. He was trying to prepare her for the possibility that he might one day be gone for good, that she would be left alone. But that future was one she refused to imagine.

"No matter what happens, you will stay alive, Collin. Do you hear me? And if you dare die—if you even think about leaving me behind—I'll curse you every single day for the rest of my life."

He raised an eyebrow, both amused and touched. "You'll... curse me?" he teased. "Is that supposed to be a threat? Because I wouldn't even hear you if I were gone."

"I don't care!" Linsey huffed. "I'll still do it. I'll ruin your reputation. I'll go around telling everyone what a terrible husband you were!"

Collin chuckled, eyes sparkling with mischief. "Oh? Really? And what exactly would you say?"

She met his gaze with mock seriousness. "I'd say you were impotent," she said matter-of-factly. "That you couldn't satisfy me at all."

A beat of silence followed. Then, without warning, Collin's hand tightened around hers.

Startled, Linsey glanced up to find his eyes narrowed dangerously, a smirk tugging at the corner of his lips.

"W-what?" she stammered. "Are you scared now?"

But Collin leaned in closer, closing the distance between them. His familiar scent—cool and sharp like winter rain—wrapped around her, making her heart skip a beat.

Chapter 1142:

“W-what do you think you’re doing?” she asked, trying to sound unbothered, though her voice had gone slightly shaky.

He smirked. “Funny... You’re the one who said I was scared. But from where I’m standing, it looks like you’re the one trembling.”

“I’m not scared,” Linsey retorted, lifting her chin defiantly. “I said what I said. If you ever dare to leave me, I will ruin your reputation.”

Collin’s voice dropped, deep and velvety. “I wouldn’t dare.” Then, in one fluid motion, he pulled her even closer, until she could feel the heat of his breath against her skin.

“To stop you from spreading such dangerous rumors,” he whispered, “I suppose tonight I’ll have to prove just how wrong you are about me.”

His voice, low and magnetic, threaded through her like silk and flame—intoxicating, impossible to ignore. And just like that, Linsey forgot how to breathe.

Linsey’s cheeks burned with renewed heat, the blush spreading like wildfire. Flustered, she tried to explain, her voice trembling. “I didn’t actually mean it when I said you were... impotent. I was just teasing, trying to threaten you—” Her voice tapered off to a whisper, the words dissolving into the air.

Collin tilted his head slightly, a thoughtful gleam in his eyes. “Hmm... so it was just a threat. Good to know you still think I’m good in bed.”

Linsey nearly screamed internally. Even without a mirror, she could feel the heat radiating from her face, knowing it must be a deep crimson.

Meanwhile, Collin remained perfectly composed, his demeanor cool and infuriatingly collected—like a master puppeteer gently tugging at the strings of her emotions.

She closed her eyes, a wave of frustration washing over her. Why was she always the one left speechless, flustered, exposed? It felt like he had her completely wrapped around his little finger.

The more she thought about it, the more her pride rebelled. Taking a steadying breath, she pulled herself together and, with a calm flick of her hair, said coolly, “Yes, you’re definitely good in bed. Otherwise, why would I have married you?”

Collin raised an eyebrow, his gaze sharpening. “Is that really the reason you married me?”

“What else?” Linsey shrugged with mock defiance. “You’re easy on the eyes, your physique is decent, and you’re obviously in good shape. With all that going for you, how could I not fall for you?”

A sly smirk tugged at Collin’s lips. “So you’re shallow, is that it?”

“Absolutely.” Linsey gave him a playful wink. “I don’t care much about what’s inside. As long as the guy’s good-looking, strong, and has... stamina—”

Before she could finish her daring remark, Collin suddenly pressed her down onto the seat cushion, his tall frame casting a shadow over her.

“Collin—what are you doing?” Her voice was a mix of panic and disbelief, her earlier teasing now coming back to haunt her.

“Just doing what needs to be done,” he said, his eyes dark with intent.

That look—Linsey recognized it all too well. Her heart skipped a beat.

As he leaned in, Linsey’s breath caught.

What was he thinking? Was he really about to do this now, with people nearby? On instinct, she raised her hand, prepared to swat him away.

But before she could react further, a gentle kiss landed softly on her forehead. Time seemed to freeze.

Chapter 1143:

Their uneven breaths were the only sound in the hushed space, her hand frozen mid-air.

She blinked, stunned. That was not what she had expected.

Collin straightened, clearly amused by her dazed expression. "What did you think I was going to do?" he asked, lips twitching into a smirk.

Before she could stammer out a reply, he gently brushed a strand of hair from her face, his voice unexpectedly tender. "Don't worry. Even if I did want to do that, now wouldn't be the time."

With that, he helped her sit upright, handling her as if she were made of porcelain.

"Did I pull your hair?" he asked, carefully examining the ends of her long locks.

Linsey shook her head, still a bit breathless. "No..."

Finally catching up with what had just happened, she gave him a light punch on the shoulder, pouting. "You scared the life out of me, idiot."

Collin chuckled, the sound low and warm. Then, with uncharacteristic seriousness, he promised, "I was only teasing you. I won't do it again... unless you want me to."

"Don't forget your promise," Linsey responded.

Soon after, the car rolled to a stop right outside their building.

Together, Linsey and Collin made their way inside, walking side by side through the quiet hallway. Night had already settled in, and as expected, both Zenia and Zander were fast asleep.

Both parents paused to peek in on the children before quietly slipping away to the master bedroom, where they could finally unwind.

The moment she stepped into their room, memories of the car ride flickered across Linsey's mind. Her eyes darted toward Collin, uncertainty flickering in her gaze. She opened her mouth as if to speak, only to let the words dissolve.

Collin caught her uneasy look. Lifting an eyebrow, he asked, "Is something bothering you?"

She hesitated, her voice dropping lower. "Just now... didn't you say..."

It seemed Collin already knew her thoughts, their connection running deeper than words. With steady steps, he approached, giving her a searching look. "You want me?"

Quick to respond, Linsey shook her head. "No way. That was all you—" He was so sly.

A glint of laughter lit up Collin's eyes, his smile warm and easy. "Go get cleaned up. It's late and you'll need your rest."

"Really?" Linsey asked, surprise softening her tone.

His hand brushed her cheek, reassuring her with a gentle touch. "Of course. We're married now, Linsey. These things matter to both of us. What you want is just as important to me."

Gently, he turned her by the shoulders, nudging her toward the bathroom. "Go on. Take a shower. You need some sleep."

The bathroom door closed behind Linsey as she went in, leaving the quiet room behind. Exhaustion crept in after such a long, emotional night.

By the time Collin emerged from his own shower, she had already slipped deep into sleep.

Chapter 1144:

Careful not to disturb her, he sat at the edge of the bed, pulling the covers up around her. He watched her for a while, a soft smile playing on his lips, before quietly leaving the room, moving like a whisper in the dark.

Stepping onto the balcony, Collin slid the door shut behind him, making sure the hush inside stayed undisturbed for Linsey and the kids. Once outside, he retrieved his phone and, in a voice barely above a whisper, said, "Set the surgery date for me... Yes, I'll come in for the check-up tomorrow."

Sunlight filtered through the curtains the following morning as Linsey awoke to an empty side of the bed that still radiated Collin's warmth. A slight frown crossed her face, but she shrugged off her worry and headed to freshen up.

On her way out of the bedroom, she spotted Zenia and Zander already busy in their corner of the living room. That bright space had always been their own playground, a world apart from the grown-ups.

"Mommy!" Zander's eyes lit up the moment he saw her. He tossed his toy aside and wrapped his arms tightly around her waist.

Not far behind, Zenia joined in, clinging to Linsey's leg and saying sweetly, "Good morning, Mommy!"

"My sweethearts, good morning." Linsey bent down to shower their cheeks with kisses.

From the kitchen doorway, Glenda appeared with a bright smile, taking in the cheerful scene. "Mrs. Riley, what can I make for breakfast today?" she asked.

With a grateful smile, Linsey answered, "Just some bread and milk will do. Thank you."

"Of course." Glenda nodded, heading off to get breakfast ready.

Before Glenda reached the kitchen, Linsey called after her, "Glenda, do you know where Collin went?"

Last night, exhaustion had claimed her before she even heard Collin finish in the shower or slip into bed beside her.

She couldn't recall when he had woken up and disappeared that morning either. Questions began to fill her mind—what could have pulled him away so early, and why hadn't he said anything?

On top of that, not a single message had come from him, leaving her with a gnawing sense of unease.

Most mornings, Collin would share a gentle embrace and talk with Linsey, offering a proper farewell before leaving for work.

Caught off guard by the question, Glenda paused for a moment before shaking her head. "I didn't see Mr. Riley at all this morning."

That only deepened Linsey's confusion, her mind swirling with questions. A sneaking suspicion began to form that Collin was hiding something from her.

Trying to ease Glenda's worry, Linsey offered a reassuring smile. "Don't worry about it, Glenda. You can go get breakfast started."

"Alright," Glenda replied as she disappeared into the kitchen.

Her mind drifted for a moment, only to be brought back by Zenia's sweet, melodic voice.

“Will you play with us today, Mommy?” Zenia asked, hope shimmering in her eyes.

Looking into her daughter’s eager face, Linsey could feel how much the little one longed for her attention. She pushed her worries aside and didn’t hesitate to say, “Absolutely!”

Chapter 1145:

Reaching out, Linsey patted each of their heads. “Let’s have a little fun together.”

The last few weeks had pulled her in all directions, leaving barely any space for moments like this with her children. Fortunately, Zenia and Zander were always considerate, quietly letting her work when the days became overwhelming.

Thinking of their patience made Linsey both thankful and a little guilty for the time she had missed.

“Let’s make today special, sweethearts. I promise I’ll give you my time.”

With a gentle tug, she led the kids to their corner of the living room, ready to join their games. Games and laughter filled the morning, making the hours melt away.

Eventually, the scent of toasted bread drifted in, and Glenda returned with a gentle voice. “Mrs. Riley, your breakfast is ready.”

A gentle nod was Linsey’s response to Glenda. Her gaze swept over Zenia and Zander, still engrossed in their play, and she chose not to interrupt, deciding breakfast could wait a bit longer.

Soon enough, Zenia wrapped up her activity, and Zander finished just after.

“Mommy, come see what I did!”

“I finished mine too, Mommy!”

Linsey offered genuine praise to both, her voice full of encouragement. “Great job, you two! I’m feeling a bit hungry, so I’ll have breakfast first. You can keep playing for now, okay?”

A sweet smile spread across Zenia’s face. “Okay, Mommy. Go ahead and eat.”

Zander, ever the earnest one, chimed in, “Mommy, remember to eat everything. Don’t waste any food!”

Linsey couldn’t help but find his advice both funny and touching. She gave him a serious nod. “You have my word—I’ll finish it all.”

After a quick wash, she headed to the table and finally sat down to enjoy her meal.

A gentle buzz in her pocket interrupted Linsey’s breakfast.

Expecting to see Collin’s name on the screen, she hurriedly wiped her hands and glanced at the caller ID.

Instead, Dolores’ name flashed across the display.

Surprise flickered in Linsey’s eyes as she picked up, a smile in her voice. “You’re up early—what’s the occasion?”

Dolores’ reply carried a weight Linsey immediately sensed. “I’ve got both good and bad news. Which do you want first?”

That serious note wiped the lightness from Linsey’s face. Her cheer faded, and suddenly the bread she had been enjoying tasted like nothing at all.

After a pause, she answered, “Let’s go with the good news first.”

Starting her day with something bleak was the last thing Linsey wanted; a little positivity felt necessary.

Clearing her throat, Dolores delivered each word with care. “All your hard work paid off—the Davidson Group just landed a place in the International Designer Competition. We’re about to step onto the global stage! You’re on your way to becoming a world-famous designer, and my company’s name is about to shine, too!”

The instant Dolores finished her announcement, Linsey’s thoughts burst with excitement, as if her mind had suddenly lit up with celebration.

A wide grin spread across her face, and tears shimmered in her eyes. “Wait, are you serious? Are you really telling the truth?”

Chapter 1146:

Dolores answered with a deep, cheerful laugh. “You better believe it! The competition’s organizing team reached out to me this morning. They even sent a ticket for the live event, so I get to see you on stage with my own eyes!”

For a moment, Linsey couldn’t even process what she had just heard. The news seemed too incredible to be real.

Barely able to find her voice, she whispered, “You mean I actually get to compete in the International Designer Competition? This isn’t a dream, right?”

The sound of Linsey’s disbelief brought tears to Dolores’ eyes. She could hardly speak, overcome with emotion. “Linsey, nobody deserves this more than you. You’ve put in years of hard work, and now it’s finally paying off. I am so proud of you! Honestly, you’ve done wonders for my company, too. I’m so grateful. I’m so happy, I can’t even think straight.”

Quiet sobs floated through the phone, and Linsey’s heart swelled with emotion. This was the moment she had imagined for so long, and it had finally arrived. Wiping away her tears, Linsey tried to steady herself. “Alright, I get it. This is truly incredible news.”

She sniffled, collecting herself, then said, “What about the bad news? Don’t tell me the email was just someone’s idea of a joke?”

Dolores was quick to put her at ease. “No way! There’s nothing fake about this.”

A heavy pause filled the line before she finally let out a sigh. “Honestly, I don’t even know if you’d call this bad news. But it’s all because of something Dustin pulled!”

Confusion flickered in Linsey’s eyes. “What did he do? Did you two get into an argument?”

All the excitement from earlier faded from Dolores’ voice, and disappointment crept in. “Joanne slipped away.”

Those words made Linsey’s heart skip a beat. “Wait—Joanne got away? She was only there one night. How did she manage that?”

Frustration grew as Dolores explained, “You can blame Dustin for this mess. He locked Joanne up at one of his hotels last night, put guards outside her door—”

Dolores thought everything was handled. But when they went to bring Joanne breakfast this morning, all they found was an open window. She’d tied sheets and blankets together, made a rope, and vanished right out the window.

The details hit Linsey hard, and she blurted out, “What floor was she on?”

There was a short silence before Dolores answered, “Third floor.”

Linsey’s patience nearly snapped, and she clenched her jaw. “If I were Joanne, I’d have jumped too! That’s barely a climb. Was Dustin actually trying to help, or was he giving her an easy escape?”

An exasperated sigh escaped Dolores. “I demanded answers from him. He insisted that he had no idea Joanne would have the guts to crawl out a window.”

She let out a tired breath. "He's out there now, searching for her with a whole team."

Linsey pressed her fingertips to her forehead, her headache growing. Each time something good happened, something even messier seemed to follow.

She remembered how stubborn Joanne had been last night, and still, Dustin had underestimated her. Regret lingered as Linsey realized she should have just let Collin take charge last night. At least Collin would have put Joanne somewhere safe, not in a third-floor hotel room.

Dolores' heart tightened with guilt as Linsey remained silent far longer than she had expected. "Linsey," she said, her voice low and remorseful, "I'm really sorry. I should've warned Dustin... Now that Joanne's vanished, there's no telling what kind of chaos she might unleash next."

Chapter 1147:

After a short pause, she added, "If she really takes this opportunity to smear me online, then... I'll just have to accept the fallout."

Linsey's brows drew together in a deep frown as she replied slowly, "You mentioned that Davidson Group just secured a spot in the International Designer Competition. If Joanne goes public with any damaging rumors, the organizing committee might disqualify the firm based on the negative press."

Dolores' eyes widened with alarm, her breath catching. "Oh no... I didn't even think of that! I was so caught up in the excitement I completely forgot about this! Linsey, I can't let Joanne destroy your chance to compete. You've worked so hard."

But Linsey shook her head, her tone calm but resolute. "No, Dolores. Listen to me. Even if I lose this opportunity to compete, there will be others. But if Davidson Group is publicly rejected by such a prestigious competition, the consequences will be devastating. We're talking about the company's reputation, its credibility. And once that's gone..."

She inhaled deeply, steadying her voice. “Think carefully. If the committee disqualifies Davidson Group, even the domestic market will start to question the value of everything you’ve built. Business partners will back away. Investors will grow cautious. The brand could collapse from within.”

Dolores fell into a heavy silence, her expression clouded with realization.

“You poured your soul into building Davidson Group,” Linsey continued. “You can’t let Joanne destroy it.”

After a brief moment, her voice turned sharp with purpose. “Does the hotel have surveillance footage? Anything that shows when Joanne escaped through the window?”

Startled by the clarity of Linsey’s thinking, Dolores nodded quickly. “You’re right—I’ll call Dustin now to check.”

But just as she reached for her phone, Linsey interjected, “Don’t hang up. Use someone else’s phone so I can listen in and stay updated.”

“Got it.”

Without hesitation, Dolores grabbed her assistant’s phone and dialed Dustin’s number.

The call was answered after just a few rings. Dustin’s voice came through, brisk and concerned. “Why are you calling from this number? Did something happen to Dolores?”

“It’s me, Dustin!” Dolores replied quickly.

“Dolores? Why are you using your assistant’s phone?” he asked, clearly confused.

Dolores pressed on, urgency quickening her voice. “There’s no time to explain. I need to know—are there any surveillance cameras near the hotel that might have captured Joanne’s escape last night?”

On Linsey's end, she stayed quiet, listening intently, her expression growing darker by the second.

Joanne's disappearance was already a major threat to Davidson Group's reputation—but Linsey feared something worse.

If Joanne felt truly cornered, who knew what she was capable of?

She might lash out as Haven had once done... when she had ordered Kylee to kill Linsey without hesitation.

The thought sent a chill down Linsey's spine. As the memory resurfaced, another image flashed through her mind—Alicia.

Chapter 1148:

Linsey's eyes narrowed, her heart beginning to race as dread curled in her chest like a storm cloud ready to burst.

And then, Dustin's voice cut through the line, frustration evident in every word. "I don't know how Joanne did it, but from last night till this morning, there's no sign of her on any of the hotel's cameras. Not even nearby. My team and I are still searching, but honestly... we have no idea when—or if—we'll find her."

Linsey's eyes widened in alarm as she cut in sharply. "Dustin, after discovering the rope tied to the hotel room's windowsill, did you rush out immediately to look for Joanne? Did you even search the room thoroughly?"

There was a brief pause on the other end before Dustin responded, "Of course we searched the room. Every inch of it. She wasn't there. The window was wide open, and there were clear scuff marks on the sill from her shoes. Joanne must have climbed out that way."

He let out a frustrated sigh. "I didn't think she'd be that reckless. The third floor's pretty high, but she still made a run for it."

Given how close Linsey and Dolores were, he knew there was no hiding this from her. But he hadn't even had time to tell Collin yet.

Just last night in the lounge at the banquet hall, he had spoken so confidently, assuring everyone he had everything under control. And now? Joanne had vanished. Embarrassment simmered beneath Dustin's irritation as he spoke.

The moment Linsey had learned Joanne was missing, she had excused herself from the dining table and returned to her bedroom to call Dolores in private. Now, as she listened carefully to Dustin, something gnawed at her instincts.

"Don't worry too much," Dustin added. "I'm sending more people out. She's on her own and wouldn't dare go back to the Walton estate. She can't have gotten far."

But Linsey's voice came sharp and certain. "She must have gone to Jeffery."

"What?" Dolores and Dustin both exclaimed in disbelief.

Linsey frowned, gathering her thoughts. "I've been meaning to warn Jeffery to stay alert around Joanne, but before last night, I held back. I was afraid that if I said something too early, he'd let it slip, and Joanne would catch on." She clicked her tongue in frustration. "I need to get in touch with Jeffery right away. We have no idea where Joanne is or what she's planning."

Just then, her gaze landed on the pair of high heels sitting beside her dressing table—the ones she had worn to Dustin's birthday party last night.

After they had arrived, Collin had insisted on carrying her upstairs, saying her feet must have been sore after hours in heels.

He had carried her all the way to their room, leaving her shoes there.

Linsey's eyes lit with sudden clarity. "Dustin, listen to me—Joanne didn't climb out that window. At the banquet, she was wearing heels at least two inches tall. I saw them with my own eyes. There's no way she could have climbed down from the third floor in those. And the hotel slippers wouldn't have supported her either. Those marks on the sill must have been faked. If she disappeared from the room, she must have come up with another escape plan!"

Dolores gasped. "Linsey, you're a genius!"

"Thanks," Linsey said, her voice steady. "But I might not be right—I just don't want Dustin narrowing the search to the outside when she could still be nearby." She added quickly, "Dolores, I've got to hang up. I need to call Jeffery before it's too late."

"Alright," Dolores replied. "Let us know as soon as you hear anything."

Chapter 1149:

"I will. Talk soon."

As soon as the call ended, Linsey didn't hesitate. She immediately dialed Jeffery's number.

The dial tone rang again and again, each second amplifying the weight in her chest. "Come on... pick up," she whispered under her breath, trying to steady the unease rising like a tide in her heart.

A series of rings passed before the call finally connected.

Relief washed over Linsey as Jeffery's voice came through the phone. "Linsey? Is that really you? Did you mean to call me? I don't think you've ever dialed my number before."

With no time for small talk, Linsey cut straight to the point. "Where are you right now? And is Alicia with you?"

Jeffery's casual reply came easily. "Yeah, she's here with me. Want to talk to her?" He chuckled softly. "You know, it always amazes me how quickly you two became friends. Is it always this simple for women to connect?"

Irritation simmered within Linsey as she resisted the urge to snap back. Determined to stay focused, she repeated herself with emphasis. "I'll ask again. Where exactly are you?"

For a moment, Jeffery stayed silent, his eyes catching the sign for the prenatal checkup ahead. "We're at the hospital," he admitted. "Alicia has an appointment for her prenatal exam."

Nearby, a nurse wearing a surgical mask approached, balancing a tray in her hands. Her voice was gentle but firm. "Excuse me, sir, could you please move to the side?"

Without hesitation, Jeffery stepped aside. "Sorry about that," he murmured.

Shock rang through Linsey's words, slicing into the conversation. "Who just spoke to you? Was that Joanne?"

Confusion furrowed Jeffery's brow. "Joanne? What are you talking about?"

At that moment, the nurse quietly pushed open the examination room door, pausing for just a heartbeat before slipping inside.

As the door shut behind her, a strange rush of anxiety gripped Jeffery. Something about Linsey's tone had set him on edge.

"Jeffery, listen to me," Linsey urged, her voice sharp with urgency. "You need to get to Alicia right now. Don't ask questions—just trust me. Joanne could be up to something dangerous."

Before Linsey could finish her sentence, a terrified scream tore through the phone.

Chaos erupted in the background, and Jeffery's voice, filled with fear, shouted, "Alicia!"

Instinctively, Linsey knew something had gone terribly wrong.

Without wasting another second, she sprinted for the door, phone clutched tightly in her hand.

Spotting her sudden rush, Glenda called out, "Mrs. Riley, are you leaving now?"

"Yes, I have to step out right away," Linsey replied urgently.

Turning to her children, she added, "Sweethearts, I need you to stay with Glenda for a little while. Be good, both of you."

Sensing their mother's anxiety, Zenia and Zander waved obediently. "Go ahead, Mommy!"

Chapter 1150:

Linsey's heart softened at their understanding.

With one swift motion, she closed the door behind her, still trying to reconnect with Jeffery.

Only jumbled shouting and crashing sounds came through the line. Jeffery's phone must have fallen, making it impossible to piece together what was happening. Still, Linsey was certain that Joanne had been the one speaking to Jeffery just before the chaos erupted.

That could only mean Joanne was attempting something reckless at Alicia's prenatal checkup.

Bolting to the elevator, Linsey didn't hesitate to call the police. "Hello? Yes, it's urgent. Grester Hospital, Obstetrics and Gynecology... Please send help right away. The woman in danger is pregnant..."

She ended the call just as the elevator doors slid open.

Short, ragged breaths escaped her as she rushed outside, still waiting for word from Collin.

In the dim parking garage, she slid into the driver's seat, every muscle tense with worry.

The engine roared to life, and as Linsey pulled out of the parking lot, she dialed Dolores, quickly explaining that Joanne was at the hospital and urging her to have Dustin hurry over to help.

When Dolores learned that Joanne had gone after Jeffery and Alicia, a wave of regret nearly brought her to tears.

"If only we had let Collin take Joanne away last night, none of this would be happening now," Dolores said, her voice heavy with remorse.

Clenching her jaw, she added, "I'm heading to the hospital right now. I have to make sure Alicia is safe."

Dustin, behind the wheel, spoke in a low, serious tone. "Stay cautious. Joanne's erratic and dangerous. There's no predicting her next move."

After a brief pause, he continued, "Linsey, you were right about the shoe prints on the windowsill—they weren't Joanne's. They belonged to the hotel cleaning lady."

Thanks to Linsey's insight, Dustin had finally pieced together the truth. That morning, Joanne had requested cleaning services. When the cleaning lady arrived, Dustin's team hadn't thought to intervene.

Once inside, Joanne had handed over all her jewelry to the cleaning lady, convincing her to climb down from the windowsill using a rope made from knotted sheets and blankets.

At first, the cleaning lady had hesitated, but Joanne fabricated a story about being held captive and needing to escape to get help.

Swayed by sympathy and tempted by the lavish reward, the cleaning lady had agreed. They swapped outfits, and Joanne, disguised in the cleaning lady's uniform, had slipped out the front door right under the noses of Dustin's men.

Hearing the full account, Dolores exploded with frustration. "Dustin, are your men all blind? How could they not notice it wasn't a cleaning lady but Joanne?"

Dustin owned up to the mistake, his voice steady but regretful. "It was my error. I take full responsibility. But I swear, I won't let any harm come to Alicia or Jeffery. I'm already on my way to the hospital."

Linsey pulled her car into a parking spot, grabbed her phone, and slammed the door shut.