

Zillionaire 1201

Chapter 1201:

His words clearly pointed to Felix.

Linsey had never ventured into such territory with Felix, which meant this kind of encounter was completely foreign to her.

Still, her loyalty made her bristle in defense. “Don’t be ridiculous!”

The quick reply reached Collin, his mood shifting in an instant. Without warning, he swept her onto his lap, dark intent in his eyes.

Linsey flinched, stunned, as Collin’s hand clamped around her neck—firm, cold, merciless. “How do you know?” he growled, his frosty eyes boring into her. “Did you two sleep together?”

The pressure on her throat coiled like a noose, and panic shot through her chest. She clawed at his wrist, gasping, barely able to draw breath. When she finally managed to wrench free, she staggered a step back, coughing through the burn in her throat.

“What does it matter to you?” she snapped, eyes glistening. “He and I are together. If it weren’t for you, we’d be married by now. So yes—it would be natural if we had sex.”

That hit like a spark to dry tinder. Something wild flared in Collin’s eyes—primal, unrestrained.

Without a word, he surged forward, crashing his mouth onto hers with punishing heat, like a man possessed.

“Mmmph!” Linsey whimpered, struggling beneath his weight. Her fists thudded against his chest, nails scraping in desperation.

But the more she resisted, the harder he kissed, devouring her like she was oxygen and he was drowning.

Her body wilted under the onslaught. Tears welled and slipped down her cheeks, the sting of them nothing compared to the helplessness seeping into her bones.

Without hesitation, she sank her teeth into his lower lip hard.

Collin jerked slightly, a guttural sound tearing from his throat. But instead of pulling away, he retaliated by biting down on her tongue.

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“Ah!” she cried out into his mouth, her body trembling violently from the sharp stab of pain.

The taste of blood—metallic and hot—spread between their mouths, and still, Collin didn’t stop. His tongue lashed against hers, fierce, unrelenting, fevered with something twisted.

In the midst of it, her voice broke through the frenzy, mumbled and trembling. “Your cock size is bigger than his!”

At that, Collin froze. His eyes narrowed, lips parting as if to confirm what he had heard. Slowly, he pulled back, his mouth still stained with the taste of her. The fury...

In his eyes dimmed slightly, but his grip on her waist remained iron-strong. “Did you have sex with him?” he asked again.

Linsey shook her head frantically, eyes misted with fresh tears. “No,” she whispered, “we never... we never even touched like that.”

Collin’s mind flashed back to that morning—her tearful confession about stealing her first kiss. If she had really given herself to another man, that moment wouldn’t have held such weight.

He inhaled sharply, drawing his conclusions in silence, then let out a soft scoff. "I'll believe you. This time," he said, eyes dark with warning. "But Linsey, if I ever find out you lied to me... You know what I'll do."

Chapter 1202:

Her voice cracked as she nodded, warm tears falling freely now. A tangle of emotions twisted inside her—hurt, rage, helplessness.

One tear slipped down and landed softly on the back of his hand. Collin glanced at it, then at her bleeding lips—swollen, trembling. Did he hurt her that much? For her to break down like this?

Without thinking, he reached up, intending to wipe her tears away.

But Linsey caught the movement from the corner of her eye—and instinctively turned her face aside, flinching from his touch.

His hand froze mid-air. A flash of annoyance flickered across his face. His gaze cooled once more, simmering with restrained frustration.

Then he let go of her. "Get out," he said coldly.

Linsey was caught off guard by his words. Then, as if burned, she scrambled off his lap, her limbs shaky as she stumbled backward.

Without another word, she turned, opened the door, and disappeared through it—closing it behind her with trembling fingers.

Collin sank deeper into the bathtub, water sloshing softly around him, steam rising into the air.

Linsey stood at the edge of the bed, shoulders tight with unease. She was meant to sleep here tonight with him.

But Collin was too volatile, too unpredictable. Sharing a bed with him was like lying next to a storm.

He had already stolen her first kiss. If she lost her virginity to him too... she wouldn't know how to face Felix.

And yet, she knew—Collin wouldn't care. He wouldn't let her refuse.

She wrapped her arms around herself, heart pounding. What now? What could she possibly do?

Worry creased Linsey's forehead, a wave of panic closing in around her, making every breath feel tight.

A sudden spark of inspiration flickered in her mind.

Relief replaced the panic in her eyes, and the faintest smile tugged at her lips. Without another moment's hesitation, she spun on her heel, flung open the bedroom door, and slipped outside.

Before long, Collin finished his shower and emerged from the bathroom, wrapped in a deep blue bathrobe.

He scanned the room the moment he entered, only to find that Linsey was nowhere to be found.

"Linsey?" he called out, his gaze sweeping across the wide expanse of the bedroom.

Crossing quickly, he pulled open the balcony door, half expecting to find her outside.

"Linsey," Collin called again, but there was no sign of her there either.

Something wasn't right.

Had he upset her so badly she had run off in tears?

The thought brought a deep frown to Collin's face. He didn't hesitate to pull out his phone, fingers moving quickly as he intended to order his staff to start searching for her.

Chapter 1203:

A sound broke his focus—the soft click of a doorknob twisting.

“Who's there?” Collin called out, his voice sharp with suspicion as he turned toward the noise.

The door opened slowly, and a weary voice drifted in. “It's me.”

Seeing Linsey reappear, Collin let out a breath he didn't know he had been holding. He quickly masked his relief behind a stern expression. “Where have you been?”

Instead of answering, Linsey just stood in the doorway, quietly rubbing her arm through her sleeve, a shadow of pain on her face.

Noticing something was off, Collin rolled his wheelchair closer, concern sharpening his features.

As he drew near, Linsey instinctively stepped back, fear flickering in her eyes. “Why are you backing away from me?” Collin's tone dropped to an icy chill as he caught her wrist.

She barely had a chance to protest before he tugged up her sleeve, exposing an angry rash on her arm.

“No...” Panic flashed across Linsey's face. She yanked her arm free, hurriedly pulling her sleeve down to hide the irritation. His eyes narrowed. “Tell me what happened.”

He clearly remembered her skin had been clear before his shower. How could something like this appear in just a short time?

Linsey's lips trembled, uncertainty flickering in her eyes as she fumbled for words.

Impatience building, Collin reached for his phone. "I'm calling a doctor."

"Don't!" Linsey shot out a hand to stop him, snatching the phone away, sweat breaking out across her brow.

Expecting anger for her bold move, she braced for his reaction. Instead, Collin simply stared, pressing her for an explanation.

A shaky breath escaped as Linsey bit her lip. "It's... It's something I inherited. Runs in the family. Every month or so, I get this rash. It's nothing serious. I keep some special ointment in my suitcase, so I don't need a doctor." She hesitated, then slowly added, "But—"

"But what?" Collin prodded, waiting for her to finish.

An excuse formed on her tongue. "The rash is super contagious. We probably shouldn't share a bed tonight—just to be safe." At last, the real motive dawned on him.

He didn't say a word, just studied her quietly, his gaze drifting to a faint yellow stain near her lips. The ghost of a cold smile played on his mouth.

A wave of panic swept through Linsey. She wondered if he saw right through her act.

The silence between them stretched, growing heavier by the second—until Collin broke it at last. "Alright."

Shock rippled through Linsey as she stared at him, barely believing he had accepted her story so easily.

“I like to go to bed early,” Collin said flatly. “Go shower, turn off the lights, and get some sleep.”

“Alright,” Linsey replied obediently, grateful for the reprieve. The thought of sleeping apart from him was a comfort.

After showering, she stepped out in her pajamas to find him on the sofa, his head bowed over his phone, fingers scrolling without pause. Approaching with quiet caution, she offered softly, “You can take the bed tonight. I’ll sleep on the couch.”

Chapter 1204:

Without waiting for a response, she moved to the wardrobe and pulled out a coat, intending to use it as a makeshift blanket.

Behind her, she heard the faint sound of wheels turning as Collin maneuvered his wheelchair toward the bed.

Just as she was about to shut the wardrobe door, his voice cut through the silence, “Come help me with the blanket.”

“Okay,” she answered simply, walking over and bending down to assist him.

But the moment her hand touched the covers, Collin suddenly seized her wrist. Linsey froze, her eyes wide in surprise. In a swift, seamless motion, he tugged her onto the bed. She fell against the soft mattress, and Collin leaned over her, his body caging hers with unmistakable authority.

“W-what are you doing?” she stammered, her voice laced with panic.

Collin’s gaze bored into hers, unreadable and intense. “Shouldn’t I be asking you that?” His voice was calm, too calm, like a taut thread before it snapped. “To avoid sharing a bed with me, you deliberately

ate mangoes to trigger an allergic reaction. Then you fabricated a hereditary illness, even went so far as to fake medication with a bottle of vitamins from your suitcase.”

Linsey’s heart skipped a beat. “How... how did you know?”

To Collin, her scheme was amateur at best. Before inviting her to move in, he had conducted a thorough investigation into her background. He already knew she was allergic to mangoes—and that there was no family-related illness in her records.

Ironically, he was also allergic to mangoes. He knew precisely what kind of symptoms would appear after exposure.

Earlier, while she was in the shower, he had gone downstairs and checked the kitchen. The refrigerator was stocked with freshly delivered groceries, and the trash can told the rest of the story: mango skins and pits scattered inside.

For final confirmation, he had rifled through her suitcase. There, tucked in a side compartment, he found the supposed medication—a bottle of over-the-counter vitamins.

He gave a wry smile, brushing his thumb along her cheek. “You clearly don’t know me well enough. I don’t trust easily—and I verify everything.”

“Nice try,” he added. “But not good enough.”

Linsey opened her mouth to explain, but he cut her off, his voice turning steely. “I told you—I loathe lies. Yet you chose to deceive me. How should I punish you?”

She flinched. Terrified he might lash out at Felix again, she softened her tone, her eyes pleading. “I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have lied. You can yell at me, hit me if you must, but please, don’t hurt Felix.”

“Fine,” he replied, far too easily. “Then give me a kiss.”

Linsey blinked. “What?”

He raised an eyebrow. “What, you don’t want to?”

She faltered, and her gaze flicked to the phone on the nightstand. Seeing him reach toward it, she panicked. “Don’t hurt Felix—I’ll kiss you. Right now.”

Satisfied, he set the phone back down, then rolled over, pulling her into his arms.

Their positions shifted—he lay beneath her now, his eyes cool and expectant. Then, he issued the command again—low, firm, and undeniable. “Kiss me.”

Linsey’s hands trembled. But she had no choice.

With quiet resignation, she leaned in, closed her eyes, and brushed her lips against his. She pulled away instantly, as if she had touched fire.

Chapter 1205:

Collin clearly wasn’t satisfied with the way the kiss ended.

He looked her in the eye and asked without a hint of embarrassment, “Linsey, do you even know how to use your tongue?”

“Of course I do...”

A chill ran through her at Collin’s next words. “If you’re not going to put it to use, maybe I should just cut it out myself.”

Backed into a corner by Collin’s unyielding demands, Linsey finally gave in and kissed him with all the depth he expected.

Even though her movements were clumsy and uncertain, Collin seemed more than content.

His broad hand gripped the back of her neck, drawing her closer and leaving her no escape. The only thing that broke the silence was the sound of their lips meeting. By the time he finally let go, Linsey's tongue was numb, and she slumped against him, gasping for air.

Collin seized the moment to play with her hair and, with his free hand, flipped off the light.

A faint click, and the room was plunged into darkness.

Collin then shifted his position and pulled her close, his embrace making it clear that he wasn't about to let go.

Linsey squirmed for a moment, but in the pitch-black room, Collin found her lips once more. His warning was quiet but firm. "Go to sleep. Any noise from you, and you'll wish you hadn't."

Worried he would push things further if she protested, Linsey gave up struggling and let him hold her in silence. Soon enough, daylight crept into the room.

Linsey woke to an empty bed where Collin was already gone.

Her phone buzzed urgently from the nightstand.

Without thinking, she grabbed it and saw Dolores' name flashing on the screen.

She answered right away.

Dolores sounded frantic. "Linsey, it's a disaster!"

“What happened?” Linsey asked, confused and still half-awake.

There was no hesitation as Dolores responded, “Felix has cheated on you!”

Any trace of sleep vanished from Linsey’s face. “What did you just say, Dolores?”

Dolores rushed to explain, her words tumbling out. “I was out shopping and saw Felix getting into a car with a tall woman. He kissed her, Linsey. On the mouth!”

Linsey sat in stunned silence, her mind refusing to process the words. “Who was she?” The question left her lips before she could stop herself, though an unsettling image had already formed in her mind.

“I couldn’t see her face,” Dolores admitted. “She had her back turned the whole time. But there’s no way I’d mistake Felix.”

For a moment, Linsey tried to hold on to hope. “Dolores, are you sure? Maybe it’s just a misunderstanding?”

“Linsey, he kissed her! Right on the lips! There’s no way I’m wrong,” Dolores replied, sharp and angry. “If that jerk hadn’t jumped into the car so fast, I’d have taken a photo for proof!”

Just as their conversation heated up, someone knocked at the door.

Linsey snapped out of her daze as the knocking grew louder. She quickly told Dolores, “Dolores, I have a situation here. I need to go.”

Chapter 1206:

“Alright,” Dolores replied. “Just promise me you won’t let Felix off the hook this time. Cheating and violence, they almost always repeat.”

Linsey's voice was quiet but steady. "I understand. I won't let myself get hurt again."

Once the call ended, the knocking resumed, a bit more insistent.

"I'm coming!" Linsey called as she got to her feet and opened the door.

Roland stood there, looking perfectly composed in his crisp uniform, hand paused midair. He offered a courteous smile. "Mrs. Riley, breakfast is ready. Please join us downstairs."

"Thank you," Linsey replied softly.

After Roland left, Linsey gently shut the door, her earlier smile disappearing as she slumped back against it, weighed down by exhaustion and heartache.

Linsey couldn't bring herself to accept that Felix had cheated on her. Their love had spanned years, and she knew his character inside and out. The idea of him betraying her with another woman seemed unthinkable.

Moreover, she had struck a deal with Collin to save Felix's company. Touched by her sacrifice, Felix had vowed to resolve the business troubles swiftly and bring her back home.

Given that he was consumed by his work and never adept at managing his time, Linsey reasoned that Felix couldn't possibly have found a moment to go shopping with someone else.

Yet, a nagging doubt crept in—Dolores, her trusted friend, wouldn't lie about something so serious.

Linsey's mind churned in confusion, her heart aching as if pierced by a blunt blade, the pain nearly unbearable.

Downstairs, Linsey spotted Collin seated at the dining table as she approached. Despite the sound of her footsteps, he didn't look up, his attention fixed on the stock market charts flickering across his tablet, his face set in its usual impassive mask.

Linsey had grown accustomed to his cold demeanor and had no intention of exchanging pleasantries. She pulled out a chair and sat to eat in silence. Roland's voice cut through the tense quiet. "Would you like milk or coffee, Mrs. Riley?"

"Coffee, please. Thank you," Linsey replied courteously, her tone warm in contrast to Collin's chill.

"Certainly," Roland responded promptly.

Sipping her coffee, Linsey decided to break the silence with Collin. "I need to talk to you about something."

Collin, seated in his wheelchair, gave no sign he had heard her, his demeanor as distant as ever.

"Collin, I'm talking to you," Linsey pressed, her voice sharper.

"I'm not listening," he replied, his tone icy.

Linsey paused, momentarily at a loss for words. She wondered who had gotten him in such a rotten mood this early in the morning.

Internally, Linsey grumbled, but outwardly she brushed off Collin's refusal and proceeded to discuss her matter. "I'd like to go home for a bit."

"Home?" Collin's gaze flicked toward her, heavy with an unspoken authority. "Isn't this your home? Where else do you need to go?"

In her heart, Linsey knew her true home was in Starwood, the one that belonged to her and Felix. She held back her true thoughts, wary of provoking Collin, and rephrased her request. "Fine, then I'd like to go out today."

Chapter 1207:

“For what reason?” he demanded.

Not wanting to share too much, Linsey kept her response vague. “Just some personal errands. I’ll be back once they’re handled.”

Collin’s expression remained unyielding, and he shut her down with commanding finality. “Stay here. You’re not going anywhere without my say-so.”

“Why do I have to obey you in everything?” Linsey’s voice rose, frustration spilling over. “I’m not your pet. Can’t I have a few hours to myself?”

With unshakable calm, Collin responded, “Because I’m in charge here, and you’re my wife. You’re mine, so you follow my rules.”

“Collin, you’re insane,” Linsey snapped, her emotions boiling over. “I’m a person, not your property. Why should I be under your control?”

The air at the dining table grew heavy with tension. Roland, overhearing Linsey’s heated words, felt a chill of fear, his legs trembling as he recalled the grim fate of the last person who dared insult Collin. The memory, vivid and terrifying, sent a shiver down his spine.

Fearing Linsey might end up suffering the same fate, Roland quickly interrupted, hoping to ease the situation.

“Mr. Riley, please don’t be upset. Mrs. Riley never meant to argue with you,” Roland said.

Collin remained unmoved by Roland’s efforts, his icy stare silencing him on the spot.

With nowhere else to turn, Roland glanced at Linsey, silently pleading with her to listen.

Linsey, however, was far too furious to heed any warnings. She locked eyes with Collin and said, "Say whatever you want. I'm going out today, whether you like it or not!"

"Do as you wish," Collin answered, his tone measured, almost indifferent. "But if you disappear and I can't reach you, Felix's company won't see the light of day."

Rage trembled through Linsey. She glared at Collin, wishing her stare alone could set him ablaze. "Is this all you know how to do? Threaten me?"

Collin didn't even flinch. "I don't see the point in changing what works."

"You—" Linsey was so exasperated by his arrogance that she struggled to catch her breath, momentarily speechless.

The air at the table grew so tense it was nearly suffocating.

Roland wanted to say something more, but Linsey had already turned her back on everyone, storming off, her appetite gone.

Collin watched her leave, then called out after her in a low, commanding voice, "Don't take another step. Did I say you could leave?"

Linsey stopped in her tracks, refusing to even glance back at Collin.

The sound of cutlery hitting the table echoed through the room as Collin, clearly irritated by her attitude, spoke up. "Don't think for a second I haven't figured you out. Planning to run back to that loser? Over my dead body."

Before Linsey could shoot back a response, Collin cut her off with another demand. "Go to the kitchen and make me breakfast."

“What’s wrong with you?” Linsey turned around, her patience nearly gone. “There’s already food right here. Why should I cook again?”

Collin met her glare with a cold stare. “I lost my appetite thanks to your attitude. Since you’re the reason breakfast tastes so bitter, making another one is the least you can do.”

Chapter 1208:

Linsey was so furious she could barely find the words. For a split second, she actually pictured smashing the plate over his head. All he ever did was twist everything to suit himself.

Why did he act like he was the only one who felt wronged? If anything, she was far more upset.

Still, Linsey knew better than to push him further because she knew Collin always had a way of getting what he wanted.

Left with no choice, Linsey swallowed her pride and gave in, stomping off to the kitchen to do as he ordered.

Not long after, Linsey returned with a freshly cooked steak, dropping the plate on the table with a heavy thud and a look that could kill. “Here. Satisfied?”

Collin picked up his knife and fork, moving with the same poised elegance as always while he cut into the steak.

Linsey watched every move, her expression tense but a spark of mischief flickering in her eyes. She had gone out of her way to douse the steak with a secret blend of fiery chili sauce—subtle enough to hide, but sure to ignite his senses.

Just picturing Collin’s reaction nearly made her laugh, and she bit down on her lip to keep it in.

By then, Collin had already sliced off a bite of steak and brought it to his lips. The moment the spicy meat hit his tongue, he hesitated ever so slightly, barely a flicker.

In the blink of an eye, he regained his composure and carried on as if nothing had happened.

Linsey missed the fleeting change on his face. Still oblivious, she ventured, "So, how is it?"

"Not bad," Collin said, his tone steady and compelling, betraying nothing. "This steak actually tops Roland's. From now on, breakfast is your responsibility."

"What?" Linsey couldn't hide her shock.

Collin actually complimenting her steak was the last thing she expected. It made no sense. Did he secretly have a taste for spicy food?

Linsey was genuinely confused.

With a sly glint in his eyes, Collin carved off another piece and brought it to her lips, his voice smooth and inviting. "See for yourself. It's fantastic. Have a bite."

Curiosity got the better of her, so Linsey didn't refuse. She leaned in, tasting the steak straight from his fork.

The instant she began to chew, heat burst across her tongue, scorching her senses like an erupting volcano. Her head spun, her skin tingled, and the fiery flavor rocketed straight to her brain.

Linsey clamped a hand over her mouth, turning away as she coughed, her throat tightening until she could barely breathe. Watching her struggle, Collin finally dropped the act.

He set down his utensils and downed his coffee in a single gulp. The sharp bite of black coffee smothered the fiery heat lingering on his tongue.

As the truth dawned on her, Linsey's eyes flew wide, and she asked, "You set me up?"

Collin's reply was icy. "You tried to pull a fast one first."

He handed her a glass of milk, his gaze cool. "Don't make a habit of it."

Chapter 1209:

Linsey clenched her jaw, refusing to respond.

Once they finished eating, Linsey's phone buzzed. Felix's name appeared on the screen.

She answered, happiness in her voice. "Felix—"

But before she could say another word, a barrage of insults exploded from the other end.

"Linsey, what's your problem? You thought I was having an affair and even had someone break into the condo to look for proof?"

Linsey froze, stunned and bewildered. "I never sent anyone! What are you talking about?"

Felix's rage didn't let up. "Still lying? You're unbelievable!"

He continued to hurl accusations at her, his words sharp and relentless. Collin, sitting near Linsey, caught every word. Without warning, he plucked the phone from Linsey's hand, his expression turning deadly. In a voice like steel, he snapped, "And who do you think you are, speaking to my wife like that?"

The moment Felix realized it was Collin on the line, the stream of curses stopped. Not a sound came from his end.

Collin ended the call without a word and tossed the phone onto Linsey's lap. Before she could say anything, he fixed her with a cold glare. "Why do you even bother with guys like that? He's all bark and no bite. Are you seriously that naive, or do you just enjoy being treated like dirt? How can you let someone walk all over you without fighting back?"

Linsey jolted, snapping out of her daze, fingers tightening around her phone. She shot him a fierce look. "Why do you care?"

She jumped to Felix's defense, her voice sharp. "Felix loses his temper, sure, but he's still better than you. You're even worse. He yells when he's mad, but you, when you snap, it's more than just shouting—"

Before she could finish, Collin pulled her into his arms and pressed a punishing kiss to her lips.

Linsey tried to break free, which only made Collin kiss her harder, both refusing to give an inch in their stubborn standoff.

When he finally let her go, Linsey's eyes were blazing, tears threatening as she lifted her hand to slap him.

Collin saw it coming and grabbed her wrist in midair, his grip unyielding. His voice was icy. "A kiss is the least of what I can do. If you mention that loser again, I'll drag him here and end him right in front of you."

Linsey froze, shock and fear clouding her expression.

Collin let go, turning away without another word, and made his way towards the elevator.

A heavy silence settled over the room after he left.

Trying to steady her nerves, Linsey took a deep breath and dialed Dolores' number.

Felix had earlier claimed she sent someone to the condo, but the truth was—she hadn't. Linsey had a feeling Dolores was involved somehow, so she decided to call her and find out.

Dolores picked up quickly. She already knew why Linsey was calling and jumped straight into an apology.

“I'm so sorry, Linsey. I went to your condo hoping to find evidence of Felix cheating, but he was home. I got caught on the spot... The truth was out.”

Chapter 1210:

Linsey was shocked by what Dolores had done, but she knew her friend meant well. She didn't hold it against her.

They stayed on the phone for a while, talking everything through.

After the call ended, Linsey sat in silence, thinking over Dolores's words. Something felt off. She needed to go home.

But she frowned, knowing Collin wouldn't just let her leave. How could she convince him?

While she was lost in thought, Roland walked by with a cup of coffee.

She stopped him. “Where are you going?”

Roland answered honestly, “Mr. Riley is in the study, I'm taking him some coffee.”

Just then, an idea lit up in Linsey's mind. She stood up quickly. “How about I take it for you?”

He looked surprised but nodded and handed her the cup without asking questions.

Inside the study, Collin was busy working when Linsey stepped in. Her voice was soft and calm. "Roland had something else to do, so I brought the coffee instead."

Collin stared at her without a word, his face unreadable.

After a few seconds, he gave a faint nod.

Linsey walked over and carried the cup to his side. Just as she was about to set it down, she spilled it on purpose.

Coffee splashed onto his pants. Silence filled the room.

Linsey froze, clutching the cup as her heart pounded.

She knew he would be angry. But this was her only chance to be sent away—and maybe get home.

As expected, Collin looked down at the mess, his eyes turning sharp and cold.

"Linsey!"

She jumped slightly, then hurried to set the cup down, her hands trembling. "I'm so sorry. I don't know what happened. My hand just shook and—" she babbled, pretending to panic as she grabbed tissues to wipe his pants.

She didn't mean any harm. She just wanted it to look like a mistake.

But as her fingers brushed against him, Collin's body stiffened. A sudden heat surged through him.

Linsey, unaware, reached for more tissues to continue wiping.

He caught her hand, stopping her. Then he leaned in close.

Their breaths mingled in the tight space between them.

Her hand froze mid-air. Her eyes widened in panic. “What... What are you going to do?”

“What am I going to do?” he echoed with a cold laugh, his eyes still hard. “I should be asking you. Are you blind? How can you be so clumsy? You couldn’t even place a cup on the desk without spilling it all over me!”

A sudden jolt sent Linsey’s pulse racing.

Suspicion lingered in Collin’s eyes, making her wonder if he had seen straight through her motives.

It was true—she had acted intentionally. Still, letting him catch on would only bring her trouble.

Reminding herself to stay composed, she worked to slow her breathing. Shaking free from his hold, she moved back, her posture guarded.