

Zillionaire 1211

Chapter 1211:

“Could you please stop making wild assumptions?” Linsey forced herself to meet his cold stare, determined to defend her actions. “I wasn’t trying to provoke you. Why would I go out of my way to make you angry?”

Collin offered no answer. His eyes, impossible to read, remained locked on her face, making it impossible to guess his thoughts.

The longer his silence dragged on, the more uneasy she became. Fingers knotted into the fabric of her shirt, betraying her nerves.

The room grew heavier with every second, the quiet almost suffocating, until Collin finally moved.

Not bothering with a word, he spun his wheelchair and rolled toward the door. Watching him go, Linsey called out on instinct, “Hey! Where are you off to?”

He shot a glance back, his voice flat as stone. “I’m going to change my pants.”

Bitterness lingered in his tone, as if the day had dealt him a losing hand. When it hit her that he wasn’t going to lash out, Linsey couldn’t help but knit her brows.

This wasn’t what she had been aiming for at all.

If she wanted any hope of success, she would have to push her luck even further.

Soft words slipped from her lips as she scanned the room, plotting her next move.

Collin returned a few minutes later, opening the door to see Linsey bent over a mop, cleaning the floor.

A small smile flashed as she glanced up. “You’re back,” she greeted, making as if to approach him.

But her foot found a wet patch, and in a split second, she pitched forward, falling hard before she could catch herself.

A sudden crash rang out.

In a single motion, Linsey toppled onto the desk, sending the laptop and a stack of papers tumbling to the floor in a jumbled heap.

For a moment, nothing moved. The clatter faded, replaced by a tense silence.

Linsey scrambled up before Collin could even react, pretending to be flustered. “I’m really sorry. I noticed coffee stains everywhere and wanted to clean up, but I made things worse and ended up breaking your laptop.”

Blank-faced, Collin stared at her. Whether he bought her story or not was impossible to tell.

Instead of meeting his gaze, Linsey ducked to the floor, fussing with the mess as if she were too overwhelmed to look up. Secretly, her main concern was the laptop.

Despite the chaos, the device wasn’t completely wrecked—just a couple of cracks spread across the screen.

Wiping the coffee away, she tried to hoist the laptop back onto the table, using only one hand.

The weight seemed to catch her off guard. With a dull thump, the laptop slipped from her grasp, landing right in front of Collin.

That final fall proved too much. Broken pieces were scattered, one skidding all the way to his feet.

Collin's gaze dropped to the floor, then snapped up again, his tone frosty. "Linsey, did you do that on purpose?"

Her denial came fast, head shaking side to side. "No, I didn't."

He wasn't convinced. "Then why did it have to fall right in front of me?"

Chapter 1212:

"I wasn't trying to," she answered, trying to sound reasonable. "The first time, I lost my balance. The second, my hands were still wet from the coffee, and I couldn't hold on tight enough."

"Really? What a coincidence," Collin replied, his voice dripping with cold sarcasm as anger flared within him. His expression turned stormy in an instant, clearly refusing to believe a word she said. "Linsey, do you take me for a fool?"

Hearing his harsh tone, Linsey felt her confidence crumble. The composure she had worn moments before began to slip away.

She bit her lip, scrambling to find some excuse for what she had done, but her mind had gone completely blank.

Watching Linsey stand there in stunned silence, Collin took her speechlessness as a clear confession.

His mind immediately jumped to conclusions. She must be acting out because she was upset about his earlier mockery of Felix, leading her to this petty and clumsy attempt at revenge.

The mere possibility that she might have done this for Felix made Collin's knuckles turn white as he gripped the wheelchair's armrest. Veins bulged across the back of his hands like they might burst through his skin.

"Get out!" Collin snapped, his temper finally breaking. The words were exactly what Linsey had been secretly hoping to hear.

But before she could feel any sense of victory, Collin added, "From now on, you're forbidden from entering the study without my permission."

Linsey stood frozen, completely stunned.

Was she only banned from the study? How could that be possible? She had made one mistake after another right in front of him—actions that should have been utterly unforgivable in his eyes. She had been certain that he would be furious enough to throw her out of the house entirely.

Nothing was going according to Linsey's plan. She remained rooted to the spot, paralyzed by confusion.

Without allowing her more time to process, Collin curtly ordered her to leave immediately.

Linsey found herself escorted out of the study and trudged back downstairs, slumping onto the couch with a heavy heart.

Just then, her phone buzzed, and a notification lit up the screen.

Picking up her phone, Linsey discovered it was merely a spam advertisement. She deleted it and, with nothing better to do, began mindlessly scrolling through her phone.

By pure chance, she stumbled across a post from Joanna.

It was a photo collage tagged at some upscale boutique, displaying an array of exquisite jewelry. The centerpiece showed someone's hand intertwined with Joanna's, both adorned with sparkling pieces.

The caption read, "Had the most wonderful day today. Thank you for the one-of-a-kind birthday surprise!"

Chapter 1213:

Seeing Joanna's post, Linsey couldn't help but remember what Dolores had mentioned about spotting Felix kissing another woman.

Could it be that the mystery woman Felix was allegedly seeing was actually Joanna?

Linsey sank into deep thought, gripping her phone so tightly her knuckles went white without her even realizing it.

She made up her mind to confront Felix and get to the bottom of this once and for all.

Linsey immediately dialed Felix's number, but the phone rang endlessly without any answer.

Refusing to give up, she tried calling two more times.

Both attempts went straight to voicemail.

Linsey's frown deepened as suspicion began to take root in her mind. Was Felix genuinely too busy to pick up, or was he deliberately avoiding her calls?

Her thoughts spiraled into chaos, leaving her feeling deeply unsettled. Linsey shot to her feet, deciding to act first and worry about the consequences later. With Collin still holed up in his study, she figured she could slip out quickly, rush back home, and return before he noticed. Unfortunately, Collin had already seen right through her plan.

The moment she pulled open the front door, two bodyguards materialized to block her path. One of them addressed her, his voice flat and emotionless. "Mr. Riley has given strict orders that you're not to leave without his explicit permission."

Reluctantly, Linsey was forced back inside, her frustration with Collin reaching a dangerous boiling point.

Hours drifted by, and before she knew it, noon had arrived.

Noticing Linsey sitting there, Roland approached with a polite inquiry. "Mrs. Riley, do you have any particular preferences for lunch today?"

The sound of his voice snapped Linsey out of her brooding, and she managed a strained smile. "Nothing special. I'm not picky."

"Very well then," Roland replied with a respectful nod and turned to leave. Just as he was walking away, Linsey suddenly had an idea and called out to stop him.

Pausing mid-step, Roland turned back around, his tone respectfully attentive. "Mrs. Riley, is there something else you need?"

Releasing her death grip on the sofa cushion, Linsey stood up and put on her most innocent smile. "Actually, what if I prepared lunch for Collin myself today?"

"What?" Genuine surprise flickered across the butler's face, but he quickly recovered, declining with practiced politeness. "That's very thoughtful of you, Mrs. Riley, but we can manage such tasks. There's really no need for you to..."

Before he could finish his protest, Linsey cut him off with a carefully rehearsed excuse. "It's really no trouble at all. I'm not doing anything anyway, and I accidentally upset Collin earlier. Cooking for him would be my way of making amends."

Faced with her reasoning, Roland found himself unable to refuse and reluctantly agreed with a nod.

Chapter 1214:

In the kitchen, Linsey threw herself into meal preparation with suspicious enthusiasm.

Her plan was refreshingly simple. Since her previous schemes in the study had failed miserably, she figured she might as well sabotage the food instead. Perhaps she could make something so terrible that Collin would finally lose his temper and throw her out.

To accomplish this, she deliberately cooked in the most revolting way possible, determined to make the meal absolutely unbearable.

After chopping the vegetables and meat, she made a point of not washing her hands. Despite having a perfectly good whisk within reach, she insisted on using her dirty fingers to scramble the eggs before slowly pouring them into the sizzling oil.

Next, she swapped salt for sugar and vinegar for chili sauce, cooking with reckless abandon and tossing in whatever random ingredients caught her eye. Several times, Roland opened his mouth to intervene. The thought of how this concoction might taste made his stomach turn queasy.

Before long, the catastrophic meal was complete.

Just as Linsey and Roland finished setting the table, Collin made his entrance. Slight surprise crossed Roland's face upon seeing him, and he quickly offered a respectful greeting. "Mr. Riley."

Linsey nearly jumped out of her skin but quickly remembered her masterpiece of culinary destruction was ready. Forcing herself to appear calm, she looked up to meet his piercing gaze. "The food's ready. Come and eat."

Collin's eyes swept over the dishes arranged on the table.

Everything looked presentable enough, but Linsey's obvious eagerness immediately put him on guard. Something was definitely off. He was certain she was plotting some kind of mischief.

Collin's face remained completely expressionless as his piercing gaze shifted to study Linsey's face.

Linsey's breath hitched under his intense scrutiny, but she fought to maintain her innocent facade.

Roland vividly remembered Linsey's horrifying cooking performance and couldn't help but feel deeply worried.

Sweat beaded on his forehead as he desperately tried to think of some tactful way to warn Collin about the potential disaster awaiting him. An uncomfortable silence stretched between all three of them.

Finally, Collin broke the tense quiet with a simple command directed at Linsey.

“Come with me.”

“Where to?” Linsey asked, genuinely puzzled.

Collin’s response was characteristically brief. “To eat.”

Linsey’s eyes widened in complete surprise.

The meal was sitting right there in front of him, so why would he want to go out to eat?

Chapter 1215:

Had he somehow figured out that she had deliberately created a culinary disaster specifically for him?

As soon as the thought entered her mind, Linsey quickly pushed it away. Collin had quite the temper. If he suspected anything underhanded, he would have already exploded in anger rather than calmly inviting her out for a meal.

Unease crept through Linsey’s chest. After putting so much effort into the meal, she couldn’t bear the idea of Collin never tasting a single bite.

Pulling her scattered thoughts together, she suggested awkwardly, “How about another day? I’ve put so much thought into this meal for you. It would be such a waste if you didn’t try it.”

“Roland will eat them all.” Collin’s reply came swift and decisive.

Roland stood stunned by his words.

Linsey’s reluctance only deepened.

When she learned the dining venue was a high-end sashimi restaurant, she quickly grasped for another excuse. “I don’t like eating sashimi, so I won’t go.”

Collin saw right through her transparent attempt and reassured her calmly. “It’s okay. There are plenty of hot dishes too.”

Silence fell over Linsey. Perhaps his patience was finally wearing thin, Collin said bluntly, “Any more excuses? Spit them out all at once.”

Linsey remained quiet, unable to conjure another reason to avoid this dinner.

Left with no other choice, she reluctantly followed Collin out.

Inside the sashimi restaurant’s private room, Collin and Linsey sat across from each other.

Just as Linsey began eating, Collin’s voice stopped her. “Linsey.”

Her eyes instinctively rose to meet his.

Before she could ask what he wanted to say, Collin placed a small box on the table and slid it toward her. “This is for you.”

Surprise flickered across Linsey’s face. “What is it?”

Collin kept the contents a mystery, encouraging her with a subtle nod. "Open it yourself."

Linsey's fingers worked at the delicate clasp.

The moment she lifted the lid, a breathtaking necklace revealed itself. The large red diamond at its center caught the light, sparkling with mesmerizing brilliance. Even the box itself screamed luxury, bearing the unmistakable logo of one of fashion's most prestigious brands.

Bewilderment colored Linsey's voice. "Why are you giving me this?"

"Your birthday gift." Collin's response came with casual ease.

Linsey's heart gave a sharp flutter at those words. Today wasn't just Joanna's birthday after all. It was hers too.

Felix seemed to have completely forgotten, not bothering to send even a single message throughout the entire day. Yet here was Collin, not only remembering but being the first to prepare such a thoughtful gift for her.

Warmth flooded through her chest, emotions threatening to overwhelm her completely.

After they finished their meal and prepared to leave, Linsey suddenly realized she had forgotten her bag. She hurried back alone to retrieve it.

Chapter 1216:

However, just as she turned to rejoin Collin, her gaze accidentally landed on a scene that made her blood run cold.

Not far away, Felix and Joanna were wrapped in each other's arms, laughing intimately like lovers lost in their own world.

The sight hit Linsey like a physical blow. Her heart felt crushed by an invisible fist, the pain so intense she could barely breathe.

Dolores had been right all along. Felix had indeed been cheating on her. Fighting through the crushing heartache, Linsey fumbled for her phone with trembling fingers. She had to call him. She needed answers.

Felix's phone buzzed in his hand, and she watched as he glanced at the screen, clearly seeing her name. Without hesitation, he slipped the phone back into his pocket, deliberately ignoring her call.

Joanna's smile turned smugly triumphant, as if this was exactly what she had expected.

The casual cruelty of it all drove a knife straight through Linsey's chest. Hot tears spilled down her cheeks uncontrollably, leaving glistening trails of pain.

If she hadn't witnessed this scene with her own eyes, she might have foolishly continued believing that Felix ignored her calls because he was simply busy with work.

Neither Felix nor Joanna had noticed her presence.

After they shared a tender kiss, Felix naturally took Joanna's bag and slung it over his shoulder. His large hand settled possessively around her slender waist as he led her toward a sleek black car, and together they disappeared into the night.

The black car had nearly blended into the afternoon traffic when Linsey finally shook herself free from her daze.

Her first instinct was to bolt after the car, but her desperate steps didn't stand a chance against the speed of the engine.

Linsey made it only a few paces before the vehicle vanished completely from view.

A shaky whisper slipped from her lips. "Felix..."

Panic washed over her features, her mind going utterly blank as emotion threatened to knock her off balance.

Forcing herself to stay upright, Linsey blinked away her tears and hurried to the curb, frantically waving at an approaching taxi.

The cab slowed, and the driver greeted her with a friendly smile, his accent coloring his words. "Where are you headed?"

Linsey dabbed at her eyes and tried to steady her breathing. "Sorry... Could you give me a second? I just need to think," she responded after getting into the taxi.

Noticing her distress, the driver quietly waited, giving her space instead of pressing her with questions.

With the car long gone, Linsey knew that finding Felix was now up to her. She took a shaky breath, searching her memory for clues. Years together had taught her plenty about his habits.

Felix was never drawn to crowds or noisy places. His world revolved around work and the quiet comfort of home.

Chapter 1217:

A chill ran down her spine as she remembered those sounds from the condo. There was no mistaking them now. They hadn't been a figment of her imagination.

A shiver worked its way down Linsey's back as the thought settled in her mind. "Sir..." she barely managed to whisper, her voice trembling. "Starwood, please."

The driver offered a simple nod before guiding the cab through the city, and in what felt like no time at all, they pulled up in front of the building.

After payment, Linsey stepped out, crossing the lobby to the elevator with her nerves unraveling. When she reached her floor, she fumbled with the keypad, her hands shaking as she punched in the code.

The door eased open, and she slipped inside without a word, straining to catch any hint of conversation.

It didn't take long as two unmistakable voices floated down the hall.

"Uh... Felix, you're incredible. I'm coming..."

"So soon?"

"Oh, stop teasing me..."

Joanna's breathless gasps tangled with Felix's taunting replies.

Drawn toward the noise, Linsey walked down the hallway, her footsteps soundless.

She paused in front of the bedroom, unsurprised by what she found.

She had imagined herself falling apart or crashing through the door, ready to confront the cheating pair.

Yet all she felt was a heavy numbness, as if everything inside her had frozen.

Without flinching, Linsey moved closer and, her expression unreadable, knocked on the bedroom door.

"Felix, open up!" she called out, her voice steady and cold.

The intense sounds of pleasure suddenly stopped in the bedroom.

A burst of frantic shuffling followed, every movement betraying their panic.

Though the door blocked her view, Linsey could picture the scene—clothes hastily thrown on, whispers of panic as they scrambled to hide the evidence of their affair.

A bitter smirk tugged at Linsey's lips.

She didn't bother rushing them. Instead, she waited outside the bedroom, her patience almost taunting.

It took two full minutes before Felix dared to open the door.

Linsey studied him, taking in every detail.

His shirt hung crookedly on his frame, his hair stuck out wildly, and his eyes darted to hers, overflowing with panic.

Felix spoke before she could utter a word.

"What are you doing here by yourself?"

The question drew a sharp, humorless laugh from Linsey.

She didn't hesitate. Her hand snapped up, delivering a slap across Felix's cheek, the force of it sending a rush of pins and needles through her own fingers.

Felix stood frozen, completely stunned by her reaction.

Chapter 1218:

Felix had always known Linsey as patient, gentle, and endlessly forgiving, never the type to lose her cool. But now, his eyes blazed with outrage as he shouted, "Linsey, are you out of your mind?"

Linsey didn't let him finish. Her hand shot up and struck his cheek for the second time. She snapped back, her voice sharp with anger, "You betray me and still think you can raise your voice at me?"

Felix looked shaken but quickly scrambled to defend himself. "You're making up stories! I haven't done anything. Show me your so-called proof!" For more chapters visit findnovel.net

Her patience snapped. "Still lying? Fine. I'll dig up the evidence myself." Without waiting for his response, Linsey brushed past him and stormed into the bedroom.

Her gaze immediately landed on the bed. She had spent every penny she had to buy this place, pouring her heart into every little detail. She had sewn those sheets and pillowcases herself, staying up three nights straight, believing that someday they would start their life together here. Yet, she had never spent a single night on that bed, while Joanna had already claimed it.

Just imagining them tangled up there made Linsey's stomach churn.

"Look for yourself. No one's here! Where's this other woman you're accusing me of seeing?" Felix said, gesturing around the room, trying to salvage what dignity he could.

Linsey didn't even glance at him as she moved toward the wardrobe, exactly the kind of spot someone might use to hide something.

Panic flickered in Felix's eyes. He lunged forward, grabbing her arm in a desperate attempt to stop her. "Have you completely lost your mind?"

As she saw his frantic reaction, Linsey's suspicions were confirmed. She gave him a cold smile. "Weren't you just demanding proof? Let me show you what I find."

For once, Felix had nothing to say.

Linsey tore herself free from Felix's grip and sprinted toward the wardrobe. Felix's tone turned desperate as he shouted, "Linsey, don't!" But he was far too late to stop her.

With one swift motion, she flung the wardrobe doors wide open, exposing Joanna, crouched awkwardly beneath a tangle of clothes. Unlike Felix, Joanna made no attempt to cover up her nearly bare state. She wore only a lacy bra and matching panties, bunny ears perched on her head, and a red silk ribbon tied around her wrists. Her cheeks were still flushed from their post-intercourse affair.

Linsey stared down at her, her face unreadable. "So, what's it going to be? Are you walking out on your own, or do I need to drag you out myself?"

Joanna's shoulders slumped as reality set in. Hiding was pointless now. But instead of answering Linsey's questions, Joanna glanced helplessly at Felix, her eyes filled with silent pleas.

Catching the look, Felix quickly wedged himself between them, pushing Linsey back. He reached for a jacket and gently wrapped it around Joanna's bare shoulders. "It's my fault, Joanna. I should've kept you safe."

Joanna, still clinging to her performance of innocence, pressed a hand to his mouth and shook her head. "Don't blame yourself, Felix. I was the one who insisted on hiding. If anyone's to blame, it's me. I got you slapped by Linsey."

The two of them seemed lost in their own little world, each scrambling to take the blame, oblivious to the pain radiating from Linsey. Watching the scene unfold, Linsey almost felt like an intruder. If she hadn't known she was Felix's actual girlfriend, she could have believed she was just the unwelcome guest interrupting their tragic romance.

Chapter 1219:

A sarcastic laugh escaped Linsey's lips as she found the scene utterly ridiculous, her hands twitching restlessly by her sides. Standing so close together, Felix and Joanna could clearly hear every word she spoke.

Joanna immediately slipped into her act. "Linsey..."

She adjusted Felix's jacket draped over her shoulders, stepping closer to Linsey with eyes brimming with pitiful innocence. "I'm sorry you had to discover our affair this way," she continued softly. "Felix and I share something deep and genuine. I hope you can find it in your heart to give us your blessing."

"Deep and genuine? Give you my blessing?" Linsey's voice dripped with disbelief as she repeated the words, emphasizing their complete absurdity. Her piercing gaze shifted to Felix, questioning him directly. "And what about me? Felix, what exactly do I mean to you?"

Felix remained silent. His eyes darted away from hers, betraying the guilt flickering beneath his composed exterior.

"If you truly loved each other from the beginning," Linsey pressed on, her tone laced with mockery, "you could have simply broken up with me. Why sneak around and create this pathetic mess?"

Felix fell silent under her calm yet relentless questioning, seconds stretching between them. Something about her composed demeanor irritated him beyond reason. He clicked his tongue, showing not a trace of remorse. "What's done is done. What's the point of rehashing it now? Just name your compensation, and I'll give it to you immediately. Let's pretend this never happened."

Linsey's smile turned bitter at those words. The Felix she once knew—brimming with youthful vigor and ambition, gentle and courteous—seemed to have vanished completely after his career success. Disgust churned in Linsey's stomach.

The two of them stood locked in silent confrontation. Observing the tension, Joanna deliberately stood between Linsey and Felix as if shielding him from harm, then pleaded with Linsey in a trembling voice, "Linsey..."

"This is entirely my fault. Hit me, scold me—I'll accept whatever consequences come my way. Just don't blame Felix."

Linsey's brows furrowed as she listened to Joanna's deliberately tender tone. "Really?" Her expression remained completely blank as she looked at Joanna, beckoning her forward with a single finger. "Come here."

Panic fluttered in Joanna's chest, but she forced herself to step closer. The next moment, Linsey's hand moved with swift, decisive precision, delivering a sharp slap across Joanna's face.

Caught completely off guard, Joanna let out a piercing cry of pain and crumpled to the floor, disbelief and rage blazing in her eyes. The words "you bitch" nearly spilled from her lips, but she bit them back, maintaining her facade of wounded vulnerability.

"Felix, it hurts..."

Felix finally jolted from his stupor and immediately pulled Joanna into his protective embrace, pointing an accusatory finger at Linsey. "You bitch!" His harsh words brought sudden, oppressive silence to the bedroom.

Felix himself seemed startled by his own outburst, freezing momentarily before collecting himself and turning his fury on Linsey. "Linsey, I never thought you could stoop so low. Joanna is nothing but a fragile, innocent girl. If you need someone to blame, blame me. Why would you...?"

Linsey silenced him with a sharp gesture, her hand whipping across his face in a resounding slap.

"Felix!" Joanna's voice cracked with anguish as she scrambled to cup his stinging cheek. "Does it hurt badly?"

Chapter 1220:

Revulsion churned in Linsey's stomach as she witnessed their sickening theater of devotion. Before they could utter another word, she spoke with ice-cold finality. "You both deserve far worse than this. Take your pathetic romance and get out of my sight. I don't want to breathe the same air as either of you ever again!"

The words hit Felix like a physical blow. Ignoring the throbbing pain across his face, he released Joanna and whirled toward Linsey, his voice sharp with demand. "What exactly do you mean by that?"

“What I mean is...” Linsey’s stare turned glacial, every trace of former warmth vanishing from her voice. “We’re done.”

Satisfaction flickered in Joanna’s eyes at those words, while Felix stood frozen in disbelief. Never in his wildest nightmares had he imagined that Linsey would actually break up with him.

Fury erupted in Felix’s chest like molten lava. His voice cracked with barely contained rage. “Linsey, are you absolutely certain you want to end things with me? Don’t forget your place. You’re an orphan. Without me backing you, you’re completely alone in this world.”

“My own strength is all I need,” Linsey shot back with steel in her voice, every word ringing with conviction.

Felix’s chest constricted painfully, the urge to explode nearly overwhelming him. Joanna, terrified the breakup might fall through, decided to pour gasoline on the flames, her whisper dripping with poison.

“Felix, don’t waste your energy trying to win Linsey back. She’s probably not ending things over what happened here. She’s found someone better, someone like Collin. She’s clearly social climbing and just using this whole mess as her escape route.”

The manipulation worked like a charm. Felix’s glare turned murderous as he spat at Linsey, “Fine, break up it is. I was getting sick of you anyway! But you’re the one packing your bags and getting out, not me.”

“What gives you the right?” Linsey’s composure finally cracked. “I bought this condo with my own hard-earned savings. It belongs to me!”

Felix’s smile turned venomous. “Too bad the name on the property deed says otherwise.”

Linsey’s entire body shook as her defiance crumbled to dust. She had been painfully naive, swept away by Felix’s honeyed words, and she had made the catastrophic mistake of putting his name on the deed. Waves of regret crashed over her, threatening to drown her completely.

Defeated, Linsey found herself cast out as Felix pulled Joanna into his embrace, slamming the door with brutal finality as they claimed her home without an ounce of shame.

The moment she left the neighborhood, the bright sky began its cruel transformation. Ominous clouds gathered overhead, promising a merciless storm. Other pedestrians scattered for shelter, but Linsey drifted through the streets like a ghost, her eyes hollow and unfocused.

Within minutes, the heavens opened, soaking her to the bone. Raindrops and tears became indistinguishable as they streamed down her face. Homeless and penniless, she stared into an uncertain void, wondering what fragment of her life remained.

Could she swallow her pride and return to Collin?

While she wrestled with that thought, her phone's shrill ring cut through the storm. The caller ID made her heart skip. Collin's name glowed on the screen.

Linsey stared at Collin's name flashing on her screen, making no move to answer. She knew exactly why he was calling. By now, he had been waiting at the restaurant for ages, wondering where she had vanished to, probably growing more concerned by the minute and wanting her to rush back.