

## **Zillionaire 1271**

Chapter 1271:

Her flattery hit its mark, and Collin's ego swelled. It wasn't often that Linsey asked him for money outright, so he had no intention of denying her.

With a casual flick of his wrist, Collin signaled his bodyguard to fetch some cash.

The bodyguard, swift and efficient, returned in moments, presenting Collin with a tidy stack of coins.

"Mr. Riley, we don't have any 50-cent coins—only one-dollar ones. Will that do?" the bodyguard asked.

Collin arched a brow, then tossed a single dollar coin to Linsey with a flourish, radiating dominance. "You can go twice."

Linsey took the coin, her cheeks tinged with embarrassment. "Thank you."

"You're welcome," Collin replied with a playful smirk. "Need more? I can give you the whole stack."

"No, this is enough!" Linsey's face burned as she spun around and hurried off.

Collin watched her retreat toward the restroom, a grin playing on his lips. But as she vanished from view, his expression hardened into a scowl.

"Find out who's messing with Linsey," he commanded sharply. Charging for restroom access at an elite gala was far from standard.

The bodyguard behind him gave a curt nod. "Yes, sir."

Inside the restroom, Linsey slipped into a stall. Just as she shut the door, Kylee appeared, clutching her bag and stepping up to the mirror to refresh her makeup.

“Kylee!” Cynthia called out warmly, spotting her while touching up her own makeup.

Kylee offered a polite smile and a nod in return.

The two stood side by side at the mirrors, and Cynthia seized the chance to strike up a conversation.

Before diving in, she gushed, “Kylee, you’ve got such a generous spirit.”

Kylee raised a brow, curious. “What makes you say that out of nowhere?”

“It’s about Linsey,” Cynthia replied, her tone laced with indignation. “She showed up in a dress identical to yours, didn’t she? It’s obvious she was trying to outshine you. Yet you didn’t badmouth her—instead, you even complimented her taste.”

Kylee let out a soft laugh. “You think I didn’t want to call her out? But with all those guests around and Collin nearby, making a fuss would have just made people whisper that I’m small-minded. That’s when she would truly steal the spotlight.”

“Oh, I get it now,” Cynthia said, nodding with admiration and giving a thumbs-up. “Kylee, you’re so clever. I would have fallen right into her trap!”

Kylee’s lips curved into a self-satisfied smirk. “I’ve dealt with plenty of conniving women like her.”

With no one else around, they continued primping, openly ridiculing Linsey without restraint.

Unbeknownst to them, Linsey was still in the stall, overhearing every cutting word.

Cynthia, oblivious, kept piling on. "You probably haven't heard, Kylee, but that woman threw herself at Mr. Wells at our company to snag the design director role. And now she's wormed her way into Mr. Riley's life as his wife. Utterly shameless..."

Her words were cut short as a stall door flew open with a loud bang.

Kylee and Cynthia jumped, exchanging a quick glance before turning toward the stall.

To their surprise, it was Linsey who stepped out.

Chapter 1272:

Cynthia's eyes widened, and her lipstick slipped from her hand, clattering to the floor.

Kylee blinked in shock. Wasn't the cleaning lady supposed to keep her out? How did Linsey get in?

"Why did you stop talking?" Linsey asked, her voice cold and sharp. "Go on. I'm right here."

Cynthia froze, then crouched to pick up her lipstick, her gaze fixed on the floor. Kylee, recovering more quickly, forced a smile. "Linsey, we were just chatting. Nothing serious. Don't take it the wrong way."

Linsey let out a dry laugh. "Would you be this calm if I were the one calling you a shameless, scheming, manipulative woman behind your back?"

Kylee's smile stiffened.

Before she could speak, Cynthia stepped in, her voice shaky but bold. "Maybe we didn't word it nicely, but we were being honest."

"Do you have proof?" Linsey asked coolly, her eyes locked on Cynthia.

It was the first time Cynthia had faced Linsey's full glare. A chill ran down her spine. Still, she lifted her chin and stared straight at her. "You've been flirting with Mr. Wells. Everyone at the company has seen it. They just won't say anything because of your position. If you don't believe me, ask around."

"What exactly did I do to flirt with him?" Linsey pressed, unfazed.

"You smile every time you see him!" Cynthia blurted, her voice rising with confidence. "What else could it mean?"

Linsey let out a laugh, as if she'd just heard a bad joke. "That's it? For your information, Felix and I used to date. We just never went public."

"What?" Cynthia gasped, caught off guard.

Linsey continued, "And even if we hadn't dated, claiming I flirted just because I smiled is ridiculous. You smile and joke with male coworkers all the time. Should I say you're flirting with all of them too?"

Her words struck hard. Cynthia's face turned pale, and her hands trembled. She had no reply.

In desperation, she turned to Kylee. "Look at how arrogant she is! You have to say something!"

Kylee's brows knitted together.

To her, Linsey was just an orphan with no background, while she and Cynthia came from well-known families. There was no comparison.

Why should they care about what Linsey thought? Who gave her the nerve to talk back?

With a mocking tone, Kylee scoffed, "You act all sweet and innocent around Collin, but here you are showing your true colors. Isn't that two-faced?"

Linsey's lips curled into a smile. "Are you talking about me or yourself?"

"You..." Kylee choked on her anger, then snapped through gritted teeth, "Just because Collin is backing you, you think you can talk to us like that?"

"Why not? If I catch you gossiping about me again, you'll regret it!" Linsey said bluntly, turning to walk away.

"You really are a shameless, scheming woman!" Kylee shouted after her. "Collin and I had an arrangement! If you hadn't seduced him while I was abroad, I'd be the one married to him!"

Linsey stopped in her tracks.

Chapter 1273:

Linsey faced Kylee, her expression unreadable. "So you're the runaway bride from Collin's wedding?"

That question left Kylee completely confused.

She remembered having some sort of arrangement with Collin, but there was never an actual wedding. Did this mean Collin had been married to someone else before Linsey? A flood of questions spun in Kylee's mind. Then, as she met Linsey's eyes, an idea struck her, and she answered, "That's right."

With her chin lifted, Kylee acted as though she was above everyone else. "I may have left him at the altar, but now that I'm back, Collin doesn't hold it against me. He even brought you along to my birthday party. That's how much he cares about me."

A short, mocking laugh escaped Linsey.

She kept her composure, even now. No hint of jealousy slipped in as she retorted with crisp sarcasm, "If he loved you so much, he would've waited. Why would he end up marrying me?"

That single line landed like a blow.

Anger flared in Kylee's eyes. "You!"

Matching Kylee's haughty pose, Linsey showed no interest in her or Cynthia's reactions and turned away without another glance.

"Linsey—" Kylee called after her, eager to keep the exchange going.

Without acknowledging her, Linsey walked away and soon left the elegant restroom.

Kylee was never the one to lose face in a conversation. No one had ever managed to embarrass her like this, let alone an orphan.

A sharp scream burst from her lips, her delicate face contorted with fury. She pressed her hands down on the marble sink, her long nails dragging over the surface as if she wanted to crack it wide open. The screech of her nails across the countertop filled the air.

That grating noise sent shivers through Cynthia.

After a moment, Cynthia steadied herself and tried to coax Kylee away, forcing a smile for comfort. "Don't let someone like her get to you, Kylee. She isn't worth your time."

Kylee's anger spilled out as she exclaimed, "That bitch is going to pay!"

Cynthia's voice was soft as she tried to calm her down.

Once Kylee's breathing started to slow, Cynthia offered a suggestion. "Kylee, do you want me to help you get back at her?"

That caught Kylee's attention. She turned her eyes on Cynthia, studying her for a moment, her expression unreadable. "You'd do that?"

A confident grin spread across Cynthia's face. "Absolutely. I have plenty of ways to make her look bad. Who knows? Maybe Collin will be so disgusted that he'll end up divorcing her."

Cynthia's plan wasn't spelled out, but the idea that Collin might cast Linsey aside instantly caught Kylee's interest.

Letting someone else handle Linsey sounded more tempting the more she thought about it. If it worked, she would have a chance to win Collin back. If it didn't, all the blame would fall on Cynthia, not her.

With that realization, a faint smile tugged at the corners of Kylee's lips. However, before she agreed to anything, there was one thing she needed to know.

Chapter 1274:

Crossing her arms, Kylee fixed Cynthia with a probing stare. "Why are you so determined to help me, anyway?"

Ever since she took her first step into the entertainment industry, Kylee quickly learned that there were no handouts waiting for anyone.

Family ties aside, she and Cynthia had never really shared any warmth, so Cynthia's sudden willingness to help felt suspicious to her. Her instincts told her to tread carefully.

Nobody could ever accuse Cynthia of being naive.

As soon as Kylee cast doubt her way, Cynthia caught the hint of suspicion and let out a light laugh. "Honestly, I'm just trying to get on your good side, Kylee. Besides, Linsey isn't exactly my favorite person either."

Kylee raised an eyebrow in response. “So, what’s your angle?”

With the cards on the table, Cynthia dropped all pretenses. “If things work out tonight, I want you to put in a good word for me with Mr. Wells. I’m after that design director position.”

Arranging that was a breeze for Kylee. She and Huntley had planned everything down to the last detail, even making sure Felix would be at the event.

Once the deal was sealed, Kylee could praise Cynthia in front of Felix, and she had no doubt Felix would grant the promotion Cynthia wanted.

“Fine,” Kylee responded, giving her agreement with a nod.

But Cynthia wasn’t quite finished.

A hint of hesitation appeared as she nervously added, “Kylee, there’s a bag I’ve been longing for, but my parents think it’s far too much. Would you buy it for me?”

Kylee didn’t flinch. “Which bag are you talking about?”

Without delay, Cynthia flashed her phone, showing the photo.

The handbag was from an exclusive designer’s collection, and the price tag read two million dollars.

That made Kylee purse her lips, thinking how wasteful it would be to drop that much cash just to inconvenience Linsey, especially since it wouldn’t actually solve anything.

After weighing her options, she turned her gaze from the screen and, though hesitant, finally said, “Alright.”



She figured that spending two million would be a small price to pay if it meant driving a wedge between Collin and Linsey.

With excitement bubbling up, Cynthia exclaimed, “Kylee, you’re the best!”

A quick flick of her wrist signaled Kylee’s impatience. “You have every promise I can give. Now, what exactly is your scheme?”

Cynthia’s lips curled in mischief. “Remember that gold bracelet I gave you? We’ll have a waiter slip it into Linsey’s bag, then accuse her of theft right in front of everyone.”

“Not bad at all.” Kylee grinned and snapped her fingers. “She’s just a small-town girl at heart. Even with Collin’s ring on her finger, she still gives off that desperate vibe. No one would doubt she’d go for something shiny.”

As she saw her plan being welcomed, Cynthia’s grin only grew wider. “I appreciate the praise, Kylee. I’ll set things in motion.”

“You may proceed,” Kylee replied, removing the bracelet from her wrist and handing it over.

Chapter 1275:

When Cynthia slipped out of the room, Kylee leaned in closer to the mirror, fixing her makeup with eyes brimming with contempt. “Linsey, I’ll make you look bad in front of everyone.”

Elsewhere, Linsey emerged from the restroom, looking for Collin.

She soon spotted him alone in the lounge, quietly enjoying his wine while security formed a shield around him.

Anyone hoping to chat—be it hopeful socialites or eager executives—found themselves blocked before they could even try.

But as Linsey approached, the head bodyguard stepped forward and said, "Mrs. Riley, Mr. Riley has been waiting for you."

After hearing the head bodyguard's words, Linsey's eyes automatically drifted over to Collin.

From his spot on the sofa, Collin's gaze locked onto hers, his eyes quietly inviting her in.

Unable to hold his stare, Linsey shifted her eyes away, pretending she hadn't noticed.

She didn't get far before Collin reached out and drew her close, enveloping her in a warm embrace.

She tried to wriggle free, her voice barely above a whisper as she said, "Not here... People are everywhere. This is a formal gathering."

"Let them stare," Collin replied, his voice unbothered, his hand confidently tracing her back.

A sly grin crept onto his face. "I'm just holding my wife. Last I checked, that's not a crime. Should I worry someone's about to report me?"

He always had a way of twisting any situation to his advantage. Rather than argue with him, Linsey finally gave in and perched on his lap. Something about her seemed off, and Collin picked up on it instantly.

"Something bothering you?" he asked, his cool fingertips tracing her soft cheek, his voice low and magnetic.

No answer came from Linsey's lips.

Collin didn't seem the least bit bothered by her silence. A crooked smile appeared, and he asked, "Did you step in something nasty on your way back from the restroom?"

That suggestion snapped her patience.

With a quick swipe, she knocked his hand away and glared, her eyes wide and furious. “Nothing around here is filthier than your mouth!”

Collin always managed to come up with the most maddening things to say. Her raised voice carried to the bodyguards nearby, making them stiffen and glance at one another, dreading Collin’s reaction.

Contrary to their fears, he seemed amused, quietly savoring her frustration like a child watching a ruffled bunny.

Instead of fuming, Collin laughed and pressed his wine-damp lips playfully against hers.

“Oh really?”

“Collin!” Linsey’s temper flared again as she balled her fist and landed a gentle punch on his solid chest.

Getting under her skin was Collin’s specialty, and he always managed to do it with hardly any effort.

Chapter 1276:

Her little punches were so soft against him, Collin barely felt them—each one was more ticklish than painful, stirring up a playful ache inside him.

“Okay, I’ll stop messing with you now.” The moment Linsey’s eyes shimmered with genuine frustration, Collin eased up. He caught her fist in his hand and gently asked, “What’s really bothering you? Is it because the cleaning staff refused to let you in earlier?”

The truth behind the incident had already reached the bodyguards.

Before Collin could offer another word, a new voice sliced through the air.

“Mr. and Mrs. Riley—”

A quick glance revealed a waiter, blocked by Collin’s bodyguards, holding a familiar-looking handbag.

With someone else in the room, Collin’s demeanor chilled instantly. He pulled Linsey a little closer and fixed the waiter with a steely look. “What do you want?”

Linsey’s eyes landed on the bag, and she quickly smacked her own forehead as realization dawned.

After a glance at Linsey, the waiter explained, “Mrs. Riley, you left your handbag in the ladies’ room. Two thoughtful guests handed it in and asked me to return it.”

Collin’s gaze slid over to Linsey, quietly prompting her to confirm the story.

With a sheepish smile, Linsey admitted, “Yes, it’s mine. I must have left it in the restroom earlier.”

Memories of Cynthia and Kylee came rushing back, and she realized their conversation had left her so frazzled that she had completely forgotten her things. If it weren’t for the waiter, she never would have remembered.

Once Collin had his answer, Linsey stepped forward, thanked the waiter sincerely, and retrieved her handbag.

“You’re very welcome. Just doing what I’m supposed to,” the waiter replied before heading off.

With her bag finally back in hand, Linsey started back toward Collin, but something stopped her in her tracks. Something was off.

Linsey recalled the waiter mentioning that two kind guests had found her handbag. Two guests?

Back in the restroom, the only ones there besides her had been Kylee and Cynthia.

Could it have been them who returned it?

Although technically possible, something about it felt off—almost too convenient. Could they really have gone out of their way to ensure the waiter returned her handbag?

The more Linsey dwelled on it, the more her instincts screamed that something wasn't right. She lifted the handbag slightly, inspecting it with narrowed eyes.

Its exterior was flawless, without so much as a scratch.

Still, her brows furrowed in growing suspicion.

She simply couldn't picture those two women acting out of kindness—not after the argument they had had earlier. Kylee had looked ready to explode.

No. There had to be something more behind this.

If the outside of the handbag was untouched, perhaps the problem lay within.

Had they slipped something inside?

As that unsettling thought struck her, Linsey moved to unzip the bag for a second inspection.

Chapter 1277:

But just then, an uproar erupted in the main hall.

Startled, Linsey froze, her hand still on the zipper. “What’s going on?”

“We’re about to find out,” came Collin’s steady voice behind her.

At his signal, one of the bodyguards stepped forward, bowing slightly. “I’ll check right away.”

But before he could move more than a couple of steps, a crowd surged toward them like a wave, loud and chaotic, their footsteps pounding like a storm.

Leading the charge were none other than Kylee and Cynthia.

Linsey’s eyes widened. A chill of unease crept down her spine.

Reacting instinctively, the bodyguards stepped forward, arms outstretched to keep the onlookers at bay. Cynthia was forced to halt—but she didn’t miss a beat.

Pointing an accusatory finger at Linsey from behind the shield of security, Cynthia screamed, “She’s the thief!”

“What did I steal?” Linsey shot back, clearly bewildered, confusion flashing in her eyes.

Cynthia scoffed at her response, as if the question itself was an insult. “With this many people watching, you still have the nerve to pretend you’re innocent, you bitch?”

Linsey’s confusion deepened.

Pretending? Wasn’t it natural to ask what she was being accused of? Before she could speak again, Collin positioned himself in front of her protectively. His eyes, cold as steel, fixed on Cynthia. “Say one more word against her,” he warned, “and I’ll cut your tongue out.”

Cynthia's bravado crumbled in an instant. Shoulders hunched, she shrank behind Kylee like a scolded child. "Kylee..." she whimpered.

Kylee, however, stood her ground and addressed Collin with forced calm. "Don't be upset, Collin. Let me explain. Cynthia gave me a gold bracelet earlier, and it went missing shortly after. So..."

"So now you think I took it?" Linsey snapped, a bitter laugh escaping her lips. "Why in the world would I steal your bracelet?"

Cynthia peeked out from behind Kylee, her tone sharp. "It vanished in the restroom. Only the three of us were there. If it wasn't you, who else could it be?"

"Maybe it was you," Linsey shot back, unflinching. "Maybe you regretted giving it away and decided to take it back."

"Ridiculous!" Cynthia snapped, her cheeks flushing with anger.

"Cynthia, enough," Kylee interjected, trying to steady the tension.

Then, turning back to Linsey with a sweet smile that didn't reach her eyes, she asked gently, "If you have nothing to hide, Linsey, would you mind opening your handbag so we can all take a look?"

All eyes immediately shifted to the handbag Linsey held.

Linsey's brow furrowed, but she stayed silent, refusing to respond.

"Go ahead, open it!" Cynthia exclaimed, stirring up the tension. "If there's no gold bracelet inside, I'll get down on my knees and apologize to you right here in front of everyone!"

The crowd jumped in, egging Linsey on to do what Cynthia asked.

With no way out, Linsey reluctantly opened her handbag for everyone to see, turning it upside down and emptying it completely. A hush fell as a gold bracelet tumbled out for all to see.

Chapter 1278:

Linsey's eyes went wide with disbelief.

She barely had time to react before the room erupted into a frenzy.

"She really did steal it!"

"Word is Collin's wife didn't come from money. If she saw something expensive, maybe the temptation was just too much."

"This is humiliating. If I were Collin, I'd divorce her on the spot."

Every whisper found its way to Linsey's ears, each one sharper and more cruel than the last.

Backing away, Linsey shook her head in desperation. "I didn't steal anything! I have no idea how that bracelet got into my bag!"

Cynthia folded her arms and sneered, her tone full of mockery. "If you didn't take it, then how did it get in there? Do you think the bracelet just grew legs and walked inside on its own?"

Kylee's voice was softer but no less pointed. "If you wanted the bracelet, you only had to ask me, Linsey. There was no need to steal. You're Collin's wife. How could you stoop so low?"

She finished with a quick glance at Collin, gauging his reaction.

Most people looked on with shock, outrage, or disdain. Only Collin's expression remained unreadable, his face blank and his thoughts hidden.



After a moment, Kylee tried again. "Collin, isn't this embarrassing for you? Why..."

"I don't believe she's a thief," Collin remarked, cutting her off without hesitation as his cold gaze swept across the crowd.

His words sent another wave of murmurs through the crowd.

Kylee stared at him, stunned.

Everything she knew about Collin told her he cared deeply about appearances and hated drama. Yet here he was, not only calm but openly defending Linsey in front of everyone.

Linsey turned toward him, a quiet tremor running through her chest. While the room buzzed with whispers and judgment, he stood as the only one who believed in her without question.

Catching her gaze, Collin arched a brow and gently pulled her closer. "What's got you so rattled? Didn't I give you a gold bracelet last time? Just show it to them."

His words jogged her memory. Without hesitation, Linsey pushed up her sleeve and revealed the gold bracelet gleaming on her left wrist.

Collin faced the crowd and remarked calmly, "Linsey already owns a gold bracelet. I bought it for \$30 million at an auction. Why would she bother stealing a fake one?"

"You're making that up!" Cynthia blurted out, stumbling over her words. "Kylee's isn't fake!"

Collin shot her a cold look. "There was only one gold bracelet sold at the most recent auction in Grester, and I was the one who bought it. So, if Kylee's is real, are you suggesting mine isn't?"

"I..." Cynthia faltered, her words drying up as her eyes darted away.

Kylee, picking up on the shift in the air, opened her mouth to say something. But before she could speak, Collin gave a quiet command to one of his bodyguards.

Without wasting a second, the bodyguard returned with a jewelry appraiser in tow. The expert wasted no time, carefully inspecting both bracelets right there in front of everyone. After a short pause, he looked up and remarked, “The bracelet on Mrs. Riley’s wrist is authentic. The one Ms. Russell has is completely fake.”

Chapter 1279:

A sudden gasp escaped from Kylee as she shouted, “What do you mean, it’s not real?”

Cynthia naturally wouldn’t admit to giving a fake bracelet to Kylee in front of so many people. Therefore, she stubbornly said, “Why would I ever hand Kylee imitation jewelry? Clearly, something’s been mixed up!”

Cynthia glanced nervously at Linsey’s wrist, her accusation taking a sharp turn. “Hold on, Kylee’s real bracelet must have been switched! Someone’s playing tricks here!”

Refusing to let the slander stand, Linsey stepped up with confidence. “That’s nonsense! Collin has the means and reputation. He could give away a bracelet worth \$30 million without a second thought. Why would he bother with a fake?”

Collin watched Linsey’s unwavering support, a quiet grin forming as he studied her, a spark of admiration in his eyes.

Meeting Cynthia’s accusations head-on, Linsey looked unfazed, her composure restored.

With practiced calm, she unclasped her own bracelet, raising it for all to see. “Take a look for yourselves—my name is engraved right here. If I’d really stolen Kylee’s jewelry, how would my name be inside?”

Curious, a guest took the bracelet for inspection and soon spotted Linsey's name etched unmistakably within.

Now that the evidence was clear, the crowd's suspicion shifted, and whispers of disapproval surrounded Cynthia.

"How disgraceful! Not only did she give a fake birthday present, but she even tried to pin it on Mrs. Riley!"

"Exactly right, the Riley family holds far more influence than the Keller family. Did she really think she'd get away with such a cheap trick?"

Never in her wildest dreams did Cynthia imagine her plan would backfire so spectacularly, leaving her the object of ridicule.

Desperation etched across her face, Cynthia turned to Kylee, her voice trembling. "Kylee, you have to let me explain. I—"

"You've said enough!" Kylee yanked her hand away from Cynthia, her eyes brimming with open disdain.

Had the crowd not been watching, she might have given Cynthia the slap she deserved.

Frustration burned in Kylee's mind as she recalled Cynthia pleading for a two-million-dollar handbag just hours ago in the restroom.

It should have been obvious then—if Cynthia really had the means for a thirty-million-dollar bracelet, she wouldn't be short on cash for something so simple. What had been meant as a ploy to embarrass Linsey had spiraled out of control, leaving Kylee humiliated instead.

Now, the entire room knew her bracelet was nothing but a cheap imitation, while Linsey's was the real deal.

Humiliation and rage mixed within her, causing her hands to shake as she gritted her teeth.

“Security, escort Cynthia out. I don’t want her anywhere near my birthday celebration!” Kylee called out, not waiting another moment. No sooner had she spoken than the guards closed in, removing Cynthia from sight.

With the drama ended, guests gradually drifted back to their own conversations.

Adopting her sweet, gracious persona once more, Kylee made her way to Linsey’s side.

Chapter 1280:

Clasping Linsey’s hand and putting on her most apologetic tone, she said, “Linsey, please forgive me. I got caught up in the search for the bracelet and trusted Cynthia. I hope you won’t hold it against me.”

Linsey wasn’t swayed by the act, slipping her hand from Kylee’s grasp and stepping away. “If every problem could be fixed with an apology, there’d be no need for courts or laws.”

“You!” Kylee almost let her composure slip, revealing her true feelings. Gritting her teeth, she secretly clenched her hand into a fist at her side.

Quickly switching tactics, she adopted a wounded look and turned toward Collin. “Collin, I admit I made mistakes and I’ve already apologized, but Linsey refuses to let it go. I honestly don’t know what else I can do...”

Linsey couldn’t hide her frown as she listened, silently impressed and a bit annoyed, by how convincingly Kylee could play the innocent victim.

She wished Collin had witnessed Kylee’s true colors back in the restroom.

Out of nowhere, Collin called her name. “Linsey.”

“What is it you want?” Linsey asked warily, her mind racing with the suspicion that he might try to plead Kylee’s case. Their gazes locked for a tense moment.

After a brief silence, Collin finally said, “I need a word with Kylee. Why don’t you take a walk?”

Linsey’s eyes flicked to Kylee, who was still putting on her act for all it was worth. Heat rushed to Linsey’s cheeks as irritation bubbled up inside her.

Honestly, leaving sounded like the best option. She had zero interest in sticking around for Kylee’s performance.

Without another word, Linsey gave a stiff nod, turned on her heel, and walked away, not sparing them a backward glance.

Collin watched her go, leaning back in his wheelchair and tapping his fingers thoughtfully on the armrests.

That was when Kylee called out, her voice soft and sweet, “Collin...” Only then did he shift his attention to her.

Kylee flashed him a smile, ready to plead her case, but the icy edge in his eyes made her words falter, a shiver racing down her spine.

She took a steadying breath and gave him a look of desperate hope. “Collin, can’t you forgive me?”

A pause lingered before she rushed to explain herself. “It was all Cynthia’s idea. I swear, I had nothing to do with it.”

As Kylee spoke, her eyes shimmered with unshed tears, making her look even more pitiful.

But Collin's expression didn't soften in the slightest. He cut straight to the point. "So, was convincing the cleaning lady to pull that stunt on Linsey also Cynthia's brilliant idea?"

The question hit Kylee like a slap. Her breath caught, and her body went stiff. "Collin, how did you find out about that?"

A cold, dismissive laugh escaped Collin. He ignored her question, his tone dropping even colder as he said, "Let me make one thing clear: I don't tolerate anyone messing with Linsey. She's my wife now. This time, I'll let it go. Next time, you won't like my response."

His words struck deep, leaving Kylee shaken and on the verge of tears, her entire frame trembling.

She stared at him, eyes wide with disbelief. "I've known you for more than twenty years, and Linsey's only been your wife for days. You're really choosing her over me?"