

Zillionaire 1331

Chapter 1331:

Cutting her off, Gorman leaned in closer and whispered, “What I saw wasn’t some fantasy!”

The feeling of her warmth filled him with a joy he thought he would never have again, and his eyes shone at the miracle of it all.

Right then, he grasped the truth. Somehow, the universe had spun him back through the years. He found himself standing at the crossroads where his journey with Linsey first began.

A question gnawed at him—what would become of Collin?

Vivid memories flickered through his mind—Linsey’s visit to the quiet fishing village, how she was searching for ideas for her paintings, and, by coincidence, became his savior.

Once she returned home, she met Collin.

Remembering all of this, Gorman slowly let Linsey go, hope shining in his affectionate stare.

His voice came out gentle and hesitant. “Linsey, have you met Collin?”

She looked at him, utterly at a loss. “Who are you talking about?”

“Collin Riley.” Gorman said the full name, not hiding his urgency.

Confusion lingered on her face. “I really don’t know anyone named Collin. That name means nothing to me.”

That answer made laughter burst from Gorman’s lips.

A new beginning had been handed to him. Perhaps he could win back what he had once lost.

Linsey studied the happiness on his face, her brow knitting with suspicion. Ever since he opened his eyes, she had struggled to make sense of a single thing he said.

She started to suspect he might be one of those charming but slightly clueless men.

When she patched up his wounds earlier, she noticed marks across his chest, but nothing seemed wrong with his head. It led her to think that maybe this was simply how he was.

Breaking through her thoughts, Gorman spoke up. "I owe you for saving my life. It's good to meet you. My name is Gorman Green."

She brought herself back to the present and answered with a gentle smile. "My name's Linsey Brooks."

With a warm look and a playful glimmer in his eyes, he asked, "Would it be alright if I just called you Linsey?"

Only a moment of uncertainty passed before she gave a nod. "That's fine with me."

After their names were exchanged, her eyes drifted down to the shattered bowl on the floor.

He noticed where she was looking, and his demeanor shifted ever so slightly. In a gentle tone, he offered an apology. "I'm sorry about that. I got carried away and ended up breaking it. Please let me take care of it."

"Don't worry about it. I'll take care of it," she said, kneeling to gather the broken shards.

Chapter 1332:

It didn't take long before she reappeared, carrying a fresh bowl filled with steaming chicken soup.

Gorman reached out, ready to accept the bowl and thank her, but hesitated. His hands pulled back at the last second.

Turning away, he let out a cough and pressed his hand to his chest, sinking against the pillows as if the pain had grown sharper.

He lowered his voice, almost pleading. "Linsey, I really don't think I can manage the soup on my own. My injuries are acting up. Would you help me?"

She gave him a look full of innocent honesty. "That's odd, because you seemed plenty energetic when you jumped up and hugged me earlier." A flush of embarrassment crept over his face.

Recovering quickly, he explained, "I shouldn't have moved so suddenly. Now I've made my injuries worse, and I can barely lift my arms. That's why I need help with the soup."

Before she could offer an answer, he dropped his gaze and put on a mournful expression. "But it's fine if you don't want to. I'll just manage somehow, maybe drink it straight from the bowl. It'll be a struggle, but I'll get by..."

Her gentle nature won out, and she couldn't ignore how pitiful he sounded. "No, I'll help you."

Gorman's face, strikingly handsome in the soft light, turned to her. His words came out with pure sincerity. "Thank you. You really are the kindest person I've ever met."

His compliment brought a rush of color to her cheeks.

As she offered him the first spoonful of the soup, she decided to ask, "Gorman, can I ask you something?"

A gentle nod from Gorman signaled his openness. "Go ahead—ask anything you want. It makes no difference if it's just one question or a hundred."

That encouragement prompted Linsey to speak up, her curiosity getting the better of her. “When I found you near the water, you were in bad shape—blood everywhere and two gunshot wounds. What on earth happened?”

Memories tugged at Gorman, slowing his words as he replied, “Someone ambushed me on my way home. They chased me down relentlessly, and in the chaos, my only chance to escape was to dive into the sea.”

Each time he revisited that night, a wave of emotion washed over him.

Surviving such an ordeal would have been impossible without Linsey’s gentle nursing and quiet support—her kindness had brought warmth to a life long starved of it.

Yet now, the notion that Collin had taken such a remarkable woman from him sent a shadow flickering through Gorman’s eyes.

Linsey listened with rapt attention, her imagination placing her right in the middle of his terrifying ordeal. Fear flickered in her gaze. “It’s hard to believe things like that still happen. Who could go to such extremes?”

Later, Gorman dug deep for the truth behind his near-death experience. Revenge had been the motive—a ruined president whose company Gorman had once forced into bankruptcy had hired assassins to hunt him down. Just as he was about to reveal the actual story, a new scheme took hold.

He spun a convincing tale. “Collin Riley—that’s the man responsible. He’s the oldest son in the Riley family, and he’s always been my enemy. Collin’s reputation is vicious; he’s driven plenty of people to ruin. You should treat him like a walking disaster—if you ever spot him, keep your distance. Don’t speak to him and, whatever you do, never get involved. Just look at what he’s done to me.”

Chapter 1333:

A look of astonishment widened Linsey’s eyes, every word of his story holding her spellbound.

She responded with an eager nod, "I'll make sure to remember. Thank you for looking out for me."

"That's what I should do." A small, knowing smile played on Gorman's lips; he was quietly satisfied with how deftly he had spun his tale.

Unable to hold back her curiosity, Linsey leaned in. "Can I ask something else? What made you hug me so suddenly? It seems you got carried away."

Silence hung between them as Gorman considered his answer. Should he reveal the impossible—that time had bent and brought him back to her, filling him with indescribable happiness?

Doubt crept in; the truth sounded far-fetched even to his own ears, and he couldn't imagine Linsey accepting it.

With this new beginning placed in his hands, he resolved not to overwhelm her with things she wasn't ready for.

Interpreting his pause as reluctance, Linsey quickly tried to reassure him. "You don't have to tell me if it's too personal."

He gave a small shake of his head. "No, I'm just figuring out how to put it into words."

Just then, a convenient excuse flickered into his mind.

Meeting her eyes, Gorman spoke earnestly. "It actually relates to Collin." That answer caught Linsey completely off guard. "Wait—Collin? How could this be about him again?"

A gentle cough broke the tension as Gorman said, "There was a time when I was engaged. I loved her deeply, and we had already chosen a date for the ceremony. Then Collin appeared, fixated on her, and he tore our lives apart without mercy."

A wave of sorrow colored his next words. “You remind me so much of her, Linsey. When I first opened my eyes and saw you, for a moment, I thought she’d come back to me—and I just reacted. Please forgive me if I crossed a line.”

A fervent shake of the head answered him. “Don’t apologize. Honestly, I can’t blame you for how you feel,” Linsey replied, her voice gentle.

“Thank you for understanding.” His eyes shimmered with gratitude, emotion threatening to spill over.

Not wanting to let the story end there, Linsey leaned in, her curiosity undimmed.

“And your fiancée? What became of her after all that?”

“She’s gone,” Gorman lied, unfazed. “She cared for me too much to give in to Collin’s demands, so she chose to end her own life.”

He figured it was safer to claim his imaginary fiancée had already died rather than admit she was still forced to stay with Collin.

After all, no one could challenge a story when the person in question was supposedly dead.

In Gorman’s mind, the fact that he had known Linsey longer than Collin worked to his advantage. By casting himself as the wounded victim and smearing Collin’s reputation, he was certain Linsey would side with him.

Predictably, Linsey swallowed his story, and her outrage flared up for him. “Collin really is heartless! He’ll stoop to anything!”

Chapter 1334:

Gorman barely concealed a self-satisfied smirk, keeping his voice low and filled with regret. “I share some of the blame. If I’d fought harder to protect her, maybe things would have ended differently...”

Saying those words actually stirred up genuine regret in him, reminding him of how he and Linsey had drifted apart in another life.

Linsey picked up on the change in his mood, something unsettled flickering inside her.

Rather than dwell on it, she reached out with gentle reassurance. "Don't blame yourself. You did all you could. Collin is the one at fault."

Their conversation continued a bit longer, with Gorman ready to further ruin Collin's reputation. But sleepiness crept in.

Linsey's voice softened. "You should get some rest. We'll talk more when you wake up."

Gorman hesitated, then quietly asked, "Would you mind staying here for a while?"

Linsey frowned in confusion. "Why do you need me here?"

His real worry was that she might disappear again while he slept.

But outwardly, he softly said, "My anxiety gets bad when I'm alone. When my fiancée was with me, it helped me sleep. It's been ages since I felt that safe..."

Even without a full explanation, Linsey seemed to understand exactly what he meant.

Determined to see her kindness through to the end, she gave her consent.

She took her seat beside the bed once more and spoke softly. "Get some rest. I'll stay right here."

Only then did Gorman finally drift off into a peaceful sleep.

When morning arrived, golden sunlight streamed through the window, pulling Gorman from his dreams. He blinked awake and automatically turned, expecting to find Linsey by his side.

But the empty spot next to him made his gentle smile falter.

“Linsey?” Forgetting his injuries, he tossed aside the blanket and hurriedly sat up, panic lacing his voice. “Linsey, where are you?”

Finding the room empty, he rushed to head outside in search of her. Just as he reached the door, a middle-aged woman entered, a bowl of soup balanced in her hands.

Gorman immediately recognized her as the innkeeper, the woman who ran the place where Linsey had been staying.

Hurrying to the woman’s side, Gorman anxiously asked about Linsey’s whereabouts. “Excuse me, do you know where the young lady from this room went?”

She answered honestly, “Linsey noticed your wounds were getting worse and realized I didn’t have the medicine she needed, so she set out early to find it.” After explaining, she lifted the bowl. “She also asked me to make sure you drank this soup. Since you’re awake, let me help you with it.”

But Gorman wasn’t thinking about soup. He pushed the bowl aside with a gentle hand. “Could I borrow your phone for a moment? I need to make a call.” An odd sense of anxiety gnawed at him.

Chapter 1335:

The innkeeper was just about to hand him her phone when a little boy burst into the room, breathless and alarmed. “Mom, something happened to Linsey!”

The innkeeper barely had time to process what was happening when Gorman lunged forward, his fingers clamping around the little boy's thin arm like a vice. "What happened to Linsey? Tell me everything!"

Panic stripped away his usual composed demeanor, transforming his voice into something sharp and desperate.

The child shrank back, tears welling in his wide eyes as he struggled to form words through his trembling. "I went with Linsey to the pharmacy, and these two men just burst in. They pointed guns right at her and dragged her away."

"And then?" Gorman's stare pinned the boy in place while questions poured from his lips. "What did they look like? Which direction did they go? Did they hurt her?"

Tears spilled down the boy's cheeks as he choked out his answer. "They were huge and scary, with guns and mean voices. Black clothes, masks covering their faces. That's all I saw, I swear..."

The words dissolved into desperate wails as the child turned toward the innkeeper. "Mama, make him stop! He's squeezing too tight!"

The innkeeper finally snapped into action, rushing forward to pry Gorman's grip loose and gather the sobbing boy against her chest. Her smile wavered as she faced Gorman. "Please, sir, he's just a child. Let's discuss this reasonably."

Gorman turned away, her words falling on deaf ears as his thoughts spiraled.

This never happened in his previous life.

They were in a foreign country where Linsey had no enemies, no connections that could bring danger. Who would want to take her?

Nothing made sense.

Cold sweat gathered on his palms and forehead as tension locked his spine rigid.

After fighting through death itself to find her again, he refused to lose Linsey to some unknown threat.

Moving with sudden purpose, Gorman gestured toward the innkeeper's phone. Linsey's number went straight to voicemail, forcing him to dial another contact.

"Mr. Green, you're alive?!" His most trusted subordinate's voice crackled through the speaker, alive with shock and relief.

Gone was the gentle tone Gorman reserved for Linsey. His voice turned arctic as he addressed his subordinate. "Deploy every resource we have. I need you to locate a woman named Linsey Brooks, and I need it done now."

Meanwhile, across the city, two bodyguards shoved Linsey into the backseat of a waiting sedan. She fought them every step of the way, clawing at their arms and screaming for help until her throat went raw.

Her resistance ended the moment cold steel pressed against her temple.

When the car finally stopped, the taller bodyguard climbed out first. Rough hands yanked Linsey from the vehicle, the gun barrel never wavering from its position near her skull. "Keep your mouth shut and do exactly what we say, or I'll put a bullet in your brain."

Surrounded and outgunned, Linsey had no choice but to submit to their demands.

Chapter 1336:

Still, curiosity burned through her fear. "I don't even know you guys. Why would you want to kidnap me?"

To Linsey, there were only two possible outcomes to a kidnapping—either for her money or her beauty.

During the car ride, she had already offered them every cent she had, but they hadn't even blinked. Yet, if their intentions were darker, they would have acted already instead of dragging her to some unknown location.

Their motives remained a complete mystery.

The bodyguard ignored her question entirely, hauling her forward with bruising force until they reached an imposing villa.

The moment Linsey crossed the threshold, a thunderous crash echoed from somewhere upstairs.

Before she could process what she had heard, footsteps pounded down the staircase as a man appeared in frantic haste.

Once his feet hit the bottom step, the man strode right over to Linsey, tilting his head to study her face.

She tried to assess him as well, but between the hat pulled low and the mask stretched across his features, she found no clues to what he truly looked like.

"She doesn't look like someone from around here." His comment floated out before he glanced at the bodyguard. "You're certain she's the one?"

The one doing the questioning was Lowell Gilbert, head of the bodyguards, and not shy about throwing his weight around.

A respectful nod came from the guard beside him. "It was just her and a little boy inside the pharmacy when we walked in. No mistake about it."

Their conversation played out right in front of Linsey. She caught the words, but piecing together the meaning proved far more difficult.

Confusion settled over her while Lowell let out a low sigh, muttering, "Desperate measures. That's what this is."

His eyes snapped back to Linsey as he barked out, "You. Come with me." He wasted no time and started up the steps again, leaving her rooted to the spot, bewildered.

A rough shove from the guard's gun jolted her back. "What, you can't follow simple directions?" he growled, pressing her forward. "Move!"

"Ouch..." A sharp sting shot through her arm. She winced and stumbled after Lowell, no choice but to obey.

Reaching the third floor, Lowell halted in front of a door bolted shut, his hand hovering at the knob.

He stopped abruptly, a thought flickering across his face as he leveled her with a cold glare.

"We brought you here to heal our boss. If you want to walk away from this, you'll cure him and keep your lips sealed forever. Understand?" he warned.

Linsey shuddered at his words.

Realization finally dawned. They had kidnapped her because they believed she was a doctor from the pharmacy.

Chapter 1337:

Linsey threw up her hands in a rush, desperate to set the record straight. "That's not it at all. I'm no doctor. I just happened to stop by for some medicine."

A look of confusion flickered across Lowell's face as his brows knit together.

Without missing a beat, the bodyguard standing nearby firmly replied, “That’s a lie! When we came in, she was preparing medicine.”

An overwhelming sense of helplessness washed over her. She didn’t know how to clear things up with these people.

Back when she had entered the pharmacy, the shopkeeper had been nowhere in sight. Worry took over, so she dove right in and began preparing medicine herself. That, of course, led the bodyguards to jump to the wrong conclusion about who she was.

It was all one big misunderstanding.

She wanted to clarify everything, but Lowell had already reached for the doorknob, pulled it open, and stepped aside, gesturing for her to head inside.

“It makes no difference to me if you are a doctor. Since you know how to prepare medicine, you must know how to cure people,” he said flatly.

“But—” Linsey tried to explain further.

Lowell’s expression hardened as he interrupted her, saying, “Don’t forget. Your fate is tied to the boss. If he survives, you do. If he dies, so will you!” He gave her a firm push toward the room, guiding her all the way to a broad bed.

She let her eyes adjust, finally spotting the man lying motionless.

Most of his face was hidden beneath a silver-gray mask, though his strong jaw and sharp features still managed to stand out.

Although he was half-concealed, everything about him—from his tall silhouette to the air of authority around him—marked him as both young and impossibly good-looking.

“Can you tell me what happened to him?” she asked, her attention fixed on Lowell.

He answered honestly, “Our boss attended a banquet. After he drank something strange, his face turned bright red, and he kept talking about feeling hot, almost delirious with agitation...”

That explanation left her quiet. She moved to the bedside, knelt down, and stretched out her hand, hoping to check his symptoms.

Just as her fingers reached for him, his strong hand shot out and gripped her wrist, nearly crushing it.

Pain twisted across her face as she stared at the stranger stretched out on the mattress.

That man showed no sign of waking, his eyes pressed firmly shut against the world.

Lowell acted without hesitation, rushing forward to pry her wrist from the man’s iron grip. He explained in a steady voice, “You don’t have to be frightened. He’s always on guard. He hates when anyone gets close. That reaction’s just habit.”

She massaged the angry red marks on her skin, biting back a complaint. What sort of person stayed on high alert, even while knocked out?

The sight of those uniforms and all the weapons did nothing to calm her nerves, making her suspect they might be gang members.

Chapter 1338:

Could the man on the bed be the mastermind behind it all?

That chilling thought wormed its way into her mind, making her lips press together. She swallowed her questions, determined to focus on the motionless man before her.

The countryside had raised her, orphans like her learning to lean on the kindness of neighbors, and it was in that isolated village where she picked up a knack for design.

But medicine? She had never claimed to be good at that.

If she were facing something ordinary, perhaps she could offer some help. Otherwise...

Lowell's earlier words echoed in her thoughts, snapping her out of her panic. She clung to hope, wishing for some miracle to land in her lap.

Time ticked by as she examined the silent patient, and dread settled heavily in her chest.

What she saw made her suspect poison.

Trying to cure something like that could cost a life. She didn't even know what had caused it, which made the situation more dire.

Pushing herself to her feet, Linsey gave her opinion as earnestly as she could, saying, "Honestly, you need someone who knows what they're doing. I'm not your best bet for this."

Suddenly, Lowell pressed a gun to her temple, his face cold and unmoved. "Drop the act. If you can spot poisoning, then you can cure it."

"That's not how it works!" Linsey fired back.

Lowell cut her off with a cold glare. "Quit stalling and save him. If you waste another second, I'll put a bullet in you myself!"

With that threat hanging in the air, Linsey had no choice but to keep going, her hands trembling as she faced the task ahead.

She managed to piece together that the man's agitation was so intense they had to inject him with some rare drug to calm him.

Trying to stay calm, she said, "Would it help if you tried waking him? If I could see how he reacts, I might figure out what kind of poison he's been given, then do something about it."

"I'll grab a different injection," Lowell muttered, vanishing through the doorway with barely a sound.

Moments later, he burst back in, syringe in hand, moving with a sense of urgency.

Before he could start the injection, a guard barged in, leaned close, and murmured something only he could hear.

That private message turned Lowell's face to stone. He pressed the syringe into Linsey's palm and muttered, "I have to go take care of something. Keep our boss alive."

He didn't bother waiting for her agreement. He strode out the door, his men trailing behind, and locked it with a heavy click that made it clear she was not meant to leave.

Left with no one but the patient for company, Linsey could only sigh in resignation and slide the needle into the man's arm.

Chapter 1339:

Once the medicine had gone in, she recapped the syringe and tossed it in the trash, watching the man's face for any change.

Relief washed over her as the medication took effect much quicker than she dared hope.

A faint sound from the bed made her lean closer, her heart hammering.

When their eyes finally met, the cold fire in his gaze caught her off guard and stole her breath away.

Without warning, he seized her and dragged her down onto the mattress, his grip unyielding.

Startled, she blurted out, “What are you doing? Let—”

Her words disappeared as he caught her in a fierce, unexpected kiss.

Shock swept over her, eyes wide as Linsey realized no one had ever kissed her before.

Heat and fury crashed together inside her, and she shoved at his chest with everything she had. Instead of releasing her, he crushed her closer, kissing her harder, a strange punishment written in every touch.

Breath ragged, Collin murmured close to her ear, his fingers sliding down her back. “It’s too much... Make it stop. I’ll make it up to you, I swear.”

The blood drained from her cheeks, and her heart pounded so loudly she thought it would burst.

That was the moment clarity dawned—she had gotten it wrong. The signs pointed not to poison, but to something else entirely. He had been drugged. Panic grabbed hold, the realization flooding her as she struggled beneath him.

“Get a grip!” Linsey cried out, her voice shaking as she twisted away.

Against his strength, her efforts barely made a dent, especially now, when the drug stripped away all sense and reason, leaving him impossible to fight off. He seemed lost to everything except the moment, his kisses never faltering, his grip insistent, as if she belonged to him alone.

By the time the struggle ended, tangled sheets covered the chaos left behind. Eventually, Collin slipped into an exhausted slumber. She peeled herself away, jaw clenched, every limb heavy and aching, as if her body had been squeezed dry and left behind.

With no rescue in sight and the door still firmly locked, escape felt like a fading hope. Yet, waiting any longer simply wasn't an option.

Emotions clashing inside her, she forced herself to search the room. The window, cracked open to the night, offered the only hint of freedom.

When the haze lifted and Collin came to, Linsey's presence had vanished entirely.

A dull ache throbbed behind his eyes as he pressed a hand to his head, grasping for memories of her face that drifted just out of reach.

The door creaked open, and Lowell entered, surprise brightening his features when he saw Collin awake. "You're finally up, Mr. Riley!"

His amazement lingered as he still tried to believe the gentle stranger could pull off a recovery so swift.

Lowell's gaze landed on Collin, who sat up with his upper body exposed, and surprise froze him on the spot. "Mr. Riley, I—"

Chapter 1340:

Before he could finish, Collin peeled off his mask and cut in, his tone cold. "Your timing couldn't be better. Who was that woman who just left?"

Understanding dawned on Lowell instantly. "She came from the pharmacy. After you were attacked so suddenly, and with you stranded in enemy territory with hardly anyone watching your back, we feared that word of your condition would spread. Somebody might try to take advantage, so we snuck her in to treat you without anyone knowing."

"And where is she now?" Collin pressed on.

A quick scan of the room revealed no trace of her. Lowell blinked in confusion. "Wasn't she supposed to stay here?"

He glanced around, his voice tinged with disbelief. "That can't be right. I locked the door myself..."

Across the room, Collin's sharp gaze picked up on a trail of footprints by the window. Not a flicker of emotion crossed his face as he said, "Go see if anyone is below the window."

Lowell faltered for a split second, then hurried to obey.

After scouring the area, Lowell returned with news. "Nobody's down there, Mr. Riley."

So, she managed to make her escape. Climbing down from the third floor wasn't exactly for the faint of heart.

Without a word, Collin studied the red stains on the sheet, a storm gathering in his eyes.

Without hesitation, he commanded, "Track down the woman from the pharmacy. Bring her to me."

His promise to make it up to her resurfaced in his mind. He felt determined to see it through.

Not long after, a bodyguard shuffled back in and said, "Mr. Riley, the owner of the pharmacy insisted that woman isn't employed there..."

Lowell's surprise showed on his face. So she had been telling the truth the whole time?

Collin's brow tightened, and he snapped, "Search everywhere. I don't care if you have to tear apart this city. I want that woman found."

Linsey took a cab back to the quiet fishing village, only to be met with an unexpected sight—several men in sleek black suits scattered across the area, pacing with the kind of sharp alertness that only spelled one thing—trouble.

The moment she saw them, she froze. Fear flickered across her face.

Was the gang leader really that powerful? Had he already tracked her down? Wasn't it enough that he had stolen her first kiss—and her virginity? Why couldn't he just leave her alone?

Was he planning to silence her now, erase her completely?

A cold dread slid down her spine.

She turned to slip away before they could spot her.

But she was too late.