

Zillionaire 1371

Chapter 1371:

Before she could dwell on it, the woman asked, "Who is Gorman?"

Linsey quickly realized her mistake. "Then... who is your grandson?"

"The one who just left in a wheelchair," the woman replied without hesitation.

"Wait, what?"

Linsey stared at her in disbelief.

The argument she had had earlier... was it witnessed by Collin's grandmother?

As if reading her mind, Ivy smiled. "That's right. Collin is my grandson. I watched you two argue for quite a while."

Linsey froze, her earlier words to Collin replaying in her mind. Was his grandmother here to defend him? She felt a wave of embarrassment.

After a brief silence, she fiddled with the hem of her clothes and said softly, "I'm sorry, Mrs. Riley. I know I spoke harshly to your grandson earlier, but that was because—"

Ivy waved a hand, cutting her off. "No need to apologize. You did well. He needed to hear it."

Linsey's eyes widened. "What?"

Could this really be Collin's grandmother? How could she approve of someone scolding her own grandson?

Ivy explained, “Ever since he started using that wheelchair, he’s been impossible—always saying things to rile people up. Even I get fed up with him sometimes. I’ve been hoping someone would put him in his place. And you did!” As she spoke, she laughed. But she soon steered the conversation back. “So... are you seeing Collin?”

Linsey shook her head so fast it was almost comical. “No, not at all. We have no relationship whatsoever.”

Doubt clouded Ivy’s face as she spoke. “That’s impossible. Collin never reacts well to criticism. Anyone bold enough to say that about him wouldn’t walk away unscathed.”

Linsey found it challenging to convince Ivy that she had nothing to do with Collin. “But we’re really not that close.”

The look on Linsey’s face made Ivy pause. “So I had it wrong?” she asked.

“Exactly!” Linsey answered with an emphatic nod.

Before Linsey could feel any relief, Ivy continued, “Now I get it. You’re not interested in him, but he’s clearly taken with you!”

The remark hit Linsey so suddenly that it left her blinking in surprise. Her lips parted to object again, but a calm, steady voice chimed in, “Grandma.”

Linsey froze, startled to see Collin sitting in his wheelchair.

He had only stepped out to buy snacks for his grandmother. Yet in that short absence, Ivy had wandered out of her hospital room, crossed paths with Linsey, and somehow started a full conversation with her.

The moment his grandmother’s words hinted at him having feelings for Linsey, Collin’s brow furrowed, and his eyes locked on her with sharp intensity.

“What is this about?” Linsey asked warily.

Chapter 1372:

There was something about that look in his eyes—it always put her on edge, filling her with an uneasy sense of what might come next. As expected, he said, “While I was gone, did you go to my grandma and talk shit about me behind my back?”

A dry laugh escaped her. “Mr. Riley, what makes you so sure I’ve been talking shit about you?”

“I saw it myself,” Collin answered, his voice clipped and cold.

“You!” Heat rushed back into Linsey’s voice, her fists curling tight at her sides. If it weren’t for the memory of him saving her life once, and the fact that Ivy stood watching, she might have slapped Collin right then to snap him out of it.

The truth was, Ivy had been the one to strike up the conversation, and she had made it clear more than once that there was nothing between her and Collin. Even without...

Even without knowing every detail, Collin should have had enough sense to realize she wouldn’t have recognized his grandmother without an introduction.

A mix of irritation and disappointment churned inside Linsey.

Had she seen this coming, she would have lingered at the hospital entrance a few more minutes. That way, she could have dodged Collin altogether and spared herself the frustration. The tension in the corridor thickened.

Stepping forward, Ivy spoke quickly in Linsey’s defense. “No, you’ve got it wrong, Collin. I was the one who went to her.”

Collin’s expression didn’t change. “And why exactly did you approach her?”

Before she could answer, the door to a nearby hospital room swung open, and someone stepped out.

Dolores had planned to get a bit of fresh air after feeling trapped inside all morning.

Stretching her arms, she noticed the small group gathered in the hallway. Her gaze stopped on Linsey, and a smile spread across her face. “Linsey!” she called out, her voice bright with surprise.

The sound drew everyone’s attention in an instant.

Collin’s eyes flicked toward the girl in the hospital gown, a glimmer of surprise breaking through his composure.

So Linsey wasn’t here to see Gorman—she was visiting a girl?

The moment Linsey spotted Dolores, her face broke into an unguarded smile, and she turned away from Collin without hesitation.

“Sorry, Mrs. Riley,” she said, turning to the older woman. “My friend came out to see me. If we’re done, I’ll head over to her.”

“Of course. Go on,” Ivy responded warmly.

Linsey ran toward her friend with a bright smile, and they slipped into the hospital room.

Ivy’s gaze followed her until she disappeared, then she let out an admiring sigh. “What a delightful girl.”

“In what way?” Collin asked, genuinely puzzled.

“She’s pretty, well-mannered, and has the sweetest voice. Far more adorable than you,” Ivy teased.

Her tone softened into a hint of reproach. “If I hadn’t stumbled upon the fact that you two know each other, were you planning to hide it from me forever?”

Chapter 1373:

Collin blinked, confused. “Hide what?”

“That you like her.” Her answer was firm. Seeing him about to deny it, she quickly added, “Don’t even try. Otherwise, why would you let her scold you without fighting back?”

“I just didn’t want to argue,” Collin replied helplessly.

But Ivy wasn’t buying it. “Then why did you utter her name in your sleep?”

Collin fell quiet.

He hadn’t rested much on the way back, too worried about his grandmother’s condition. Only after knowing she was safe did he finally drift off—straight into a dream.

Linsey had been there.

The details were hazy, but he remembered her being in danger and his voice calling out for her. At first, he thought it was only in his dream, but his grandmother’s reminder proved otherwise.

Dreaming of her was one thing. Worrying for her that deeply was something he couldn’t quite explain.

Ivy, ever eager to see him married, latched onto the name immediately. She had already grilled him in the hospital, and when he couldn’t take any more questions, he escaped for air—only to run into Linsey again.

Now, while Collin sat lost in thought, frowning slightly, Ivy's curiosity flared up again.

"That girl's name is Linsey, isn't it? How did you meet? Tell me everything. She's such a treasure. You should act fast before someone else does. This year would be perfect for a wedding, don't you think?"

Collin sighed at her eager smile. "I don't like her, Grandma. Please stop trying to match us."

Her smile vanished, and she clutched her chest dramatically. "You'll be the end of me."

She had just undergone surgery, and the doctors had warned against upsetting her.

Collin rubbed his temples and gave in. "Alright, I was wrong. I like her... a lot. I just haven't said anything."

Her pain vanished in an instant, replaced by a triumphant grin. "I knew it! You just didn't want to admit it."

"Mm," he muttered, admitting defeat.

"You can't keep holding back. Ask her out. Take her shopping. Buy her flowers. Treat her to nice dinners. The more time you spend together, the more she'll like you."

"Alright." Collin agreed out loud but didn't mean it.

Steering his wheelchair closer, he changed the subject. "The doctor said you need rest. Let's get you back to your room."

"Okay." Ivy, delighted to see even a hint of progress in her grandson's love life, returned to the ward with a spring in her step.

Meanwhile, in Dolores' room, Linsey rushed over the moment she arrived, her first question about her friend's health.

When she learned Dolores had gone through surgery alone, her chest tightened. Her eyes grew red with both worry and hurt. "Why didn't you tell me something so important?"

Chapter 1374:

Dolores smiled lightly. "It's nothing serious. Besides, you were feeling down and went abroad to relax. I didn't want to trouble you."

"Don't say that. Nothing is more important than you." Linsey gripped her friend's hand, tears sliding down her cheeks.

They talked for a while, their conversation drifting from Dolores' health to other matters.

Dolores had already heard about Linsey's harassment.

Concern etched her face. "So, what will you do now?"

"I need to find another job," Linsey admitted without hesitation.

Dolores frowned. "You've been in that company for years. Are you really fine with leaving? It's unfair. The one in the wrong was that person, yet you're the one paying the price?"

Linsey's lips pressed together.

It might have been just a job, but she had worked hard for years, hoping for a promotion this year. All of it was wrecked by a supervisor parachuted into the role.

Saying she was fine would be a lie.

“I have no other choice,” she murmured, her gaze lowered. Disappointment was written in every line of her face. “He has powerful connections. I have neither family nor influence. I can’t fight him... I just have to live with it.”

Dolores’ heart ached for her, but there was little she could do.

Sensing the air turning heavy, she tried to lift it. “Let’s change the subject. This is too depressing. Tell me about your trip instead.”

Linsey’s expression softened. “It was wonderful. The scenery was breathtaking, and the locals were so warm. They introduced me to the most unique and delicious food.”

Midway through, a thought struck her. Her lips curved into a playful smile. “Oh—and I met someone there. He’s my boyfriend now.”

“What!” Dolores nearly jumped out of bed. “You were gone for such a short time, and you already have a boyfriend? How old is he? Are his parents alive? Does he own a house or a car? Any debts? Any ex-girlfriends? Has he cut ties with them? Do you know everything about him?”

Dolores fired off questions like bullets, her worry spilling over.

Linsey laughed and caught her hand. “You’ve got it wrong. It’s not a real relationship—we’re just pretending.”

Dolores blinked, baffled. “Huh? What do you mean?”

Linsey gave her the short version.

Dolores stared wide-eyed. “There’s actually something like that?”

“Yes. Quite something, isn’t it?” Linsey grinned.

But Dolores didn’t find it amusing. “Linsey, you should still be careful. There are too many men these days who play tricks to win women over.”

Linsey smiled faintly. “Don’t worry.”

“You have to remember something very important,” Dolores said, her tone turning serious.

The sudden seriousness caught Linsey’s attention. “What is it?”

Chapter 1375:

Lowering her voice, Dolores moved closer. “You have to look out for yourself. Never sleep with someone like that. There are people out there who target virgins on purpose.”

At those words, Linsey’s expression faltered.

Virgins?

After being forced into sex with that masked man, she was no longer one. The memory pushed its way back into her mind, leaving a heavy weight in her chest.

She wanted to tell her best friend everything, but Dolores had only just come out of surgery. Burdening her now would do no good. And even if she did share, it wouldn’t undo what had already happened.

After thinking it through, Linsey chose to keep the truth to herself.

“I got it.” Forcing a faint smile, she added, “Don’t worry, Dolores. There’s no chance Gorman and I will ever actually fall for each other.”

Not long after, the medication eased Dolores into sleep, and Linsey slipped quietly from the room to sit alone on a bench.

Those unwanted memories gnawed at her chest until her eyes began to sting.

That man had stolen both her first kiss and her virtue as if they meant nothing. She should have kicked his ass before walking away.

If fate ever brought him before her again, she wouldn't hesitate—she would make him pay, no matter the cost.

The thought had barely finished crossing her mind when her phone buzzed in her pocket.

She quickly reached in, thinking it might be Gorman, but the name on the screen belonged to an unfamiliar number.

Who was calling?

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The question ran through her mind as she picked up.

The call clicked alive, and a man spoke. "Is this Linsey Brooks?"

She hesitated for a second before responding, "Yes, I'm Linsey Brooks. Who's speaking?"

"I'm calling from the HR department at CR Corporation. I wanted to let you know your résumé and online interview have both been approved."

Linsey's breath caught. "Really?" she blurted out, springing to her feet on the bench in excitement.

A quiet laugh came through the line. "Yes, that's right. But there's still one last step—a face-to-face interview. Once you pass that, we can officially bring you on board. Would tomorrow work for you?"

"Absolutely," she replied without hesitation.

They confirmed the interview time for the next morning before ending the call. Joy kept her frozen in place, tears spilling down her cheeks in disbelief.

After being forced to leave her previous job, she had been sending résumés to countless companies.

Finding work lately had been almost impossible. Every job post online drew hundreds of applicants, and HR departments were pickier than ever.

Chapter 1376:

While staying in that remote fishing village, she would check her inbox now and then, but no company had ever written back. It was as if her applications had vanished without a trace.

She had been sure the struggle would continue after her return—but instead, fortune had placed an opportunity in her path. CR Corporation, known worldwide for its innovative designs, was within reach.

The company had assembled some of the best designers across the globe, and it had always been where she dreamed of working.

Her choice to study design in the first place had been sparked by the founder of that very company.

She couldn't help wondering if tomorrow's interview might give her the chance to meet the person who had inspired her career from the start.

Linsey was so thrilled that she couldn't help but spin around in place, her joy radiating like a child's.

Little did she know, every bit of her excitement had been silently captured by Collin's sharp eyes.

His grandmother had just drifted off to sleep, and while she rested, he had planned to take care of some business. Unexpectedly, he ran into Linsey again—and she was practically glowing with happiness.

A strange spark of curiosity flickered in his mind.

Was she really this overjoyed because Gorman had been in a car accident and was now teetering on the edge of death... possibly leaving her a fortune? No, that made no sense. Legally, only Gorman's wife would be entitled to his estate.

Then... what exactly was making her so happy?

Before Collin could untangle the puzzle, his phone buzzed.

It was a résumé from his friend, Dustin.

He opened it absently—until his gaze landed on the applicant's name and photo.

His brow arched.

Slowly, he glanced from the screen back to Linsey, who was still visibly giddy.

Just then, Dustin's call came through.

"I've found an impressive talent," Dustin teased after Collin picked up. "I'm scheduling an in-person interview with her tomorrow. Care to join me?"

The next day.

Linsey, dressed smartly in a crisp professional outfit, arrived early at CR Corporation for her interview.

She assumed she would be meeting an assistant and perhaps a few mid-level managers. But while chatting with the assistant in the waiting lounge, she learned something unexpected—the interview would be conducted by the CEO himself.

Her eyes widened in disbelief. “Does your company always have the CEO handle final interviews?”

“Of course not,” the assistant replied with an amused smile. “Our CEO is far too busy for that sort of thing on a daily basis.”

Linsey frowned slightly. “Then... why is he meeting me in person?”

“Well...” The assistant gave her a once-over, hesitated, then offered a small, apologetic smile. “I’m sorry, Ms. Brooks. He didn’t say, so I honestly couldn’t tell you.”

Chapter 1377:

Linsey decided not to press.

When the assistant left, she was alone in the lounge—hands wrapped tightly around a paper cup, her stomach fluttering with equal parts nerves and anticipation.

She had never crossed paths with the head of CR Corporation—and now she would be meeting him face-to-face. The thought made her pulse quicken.

The head of CR Corporation was famously private, rarely making public appearances.

But since the interview was taking place here at headquarters, he likely wouldn’t bother with a mask.

She might finally see his real face—something she had quietly been curious about for years. The idea sent a faint, unbidden smile to her lips.

Just then, the lounge door opened.

“Ms. Brooks,” the assistant said warmly, “the CEO has just finished his meeting. Please follow me.”

“Okay. Thank you.” Linsey rose quickly, smoothing her skirt before trailing the assistant.

The elevator glided smoothly to the 26th floor. When the doors slid open, she stepped into a space so elegantly designed that it almost stole her breath. They walked down a quiet corridor until stopping at a sleek meeting room door. The assistant knocked.

“Come in,” a deep, magnetic voice answered from within.

The assistant pushed the door open and gestured for her to step inside. “Mr. Wade, the candidate has arrived.”

“Thank you. You may go,” came the calm reply.

“Of course.” The assistant bowed slightly and left, closing the door behind her.

Now, Linsey stood alone in the spacious, high-ceilinged room. The long table stretched before her, the atmosphere thick with quiet authority.

Time seemed to slow.

She didn’t dare lift her gaze to meet the row of interviewers directly.

With the assistant gone, an uncomfortable silence settled over the room, making Linsey fidget nervously as she gripped her sleeve tighter.

After several seconds of hesitation, she finally broke the quiet with a tentative greeting. "Hello, Mr. Wade."

Dustin's eyebrow lifted as amusement colored his expression. "Hello there." Rather than projecting corporate intimidation, his demeanor seemed refreshingly relaxed and approachable.

He twirled a pen between his fingers while flashing her a teasing grin. "Ms. Brooks, do I really seem that scary? You've been staring at the floor this whole time instead of making eye contact."

"No, not at all." Linsey immediately raised her head, panic flashing across her features at the potential misunderstanding. "I apologize, I'm just incredibly nervous right now, so..."

Her words died mid-sentence as she finally registered that two men occupied seats at the interview table.

Chapter 1378:

The first wore a dark blue silk shirt with the collar casually unbuttoned, revealing an elegant collarbone that somehow enhanced his effortlessly charming smile.

The second was dressed in a meticulously buttoned black shirt, his refined features and composed bearing radiating mature sophistication.

Linsey felt her world tilt sideways.

Why would two CEOs from CR Corporation be conducting her interview personally?

What stunned her even more was recognizing the man in black as Collin.

Was her mind playing tricks on her?

Collin's father ran Riley Group. How could he possibly be the head of CR Corporation?

And if he wasn't, what was he doing here at all?

Confusion swirled through Linsey's thoughts.

She rubbed her eyes deliberately before looking again to confirm what she was seeing. The instant her gaze found him, he lifted his head with perfect timing. Their eyes locked across the space between them.

His stare held depths that seemed to pierce straight through her, causing her pulse to stutter unexpectedly.

Recognition hit her like a physical blow, and she quickly looked away as inexplicable heat bloomed across her cheeks.

Dustin's attention bounced between them as he observed their interaction. "Collin, I'm beginning to second-guess inviting you to sit in on this interview."

"Hmm?" Collin's confused expression shifted toward him expectantly.

Dustin grinned mischievously. "Every time you show up, all the women in the room become completely mesmerized by you and forget I even exist."

Linsey's cheeks deepened to an even more vivid shade of pink as she ducked her head in mortification. "I'm so sorry about that."

"Don't worry about it. I was just messing around." Dustin's intention was clearly to break the tension as he steered the conversation forward. "Ms. Brooks, are you and Collin already acquainted?"

“We—” Linsey stumbled over her words, completely at a loss for how to explain their complicated history.

Before she could formulate a proper response, Collin’s attention shifted to Dustin with obvious irritation. “Are we here to conduct a professional interview, or are you planning to launch a gossip column?”

“I was simply trying to help her relax by switching to lighter conversation.” Dustin’s explanation carried genuine sincerity.

Collin had zero interest in continuing this particular line of discussion, delivering a frigid ultimatum instead. “Start the actual interview immediately, or I’m leaving.”

“Okay, okay.” Dustin clearly couldn’t afford to lose the founder so quickly, especially since Collin rarely bothered returning to handle company business personally.

Recognizing that Collin’s patience was rapidly evaporating, Dustin forced himself to abandon his playful approach and concentrate seriously on Linsey’s interview.

Chapter 1379:

An entire hour melted away during the process.

Throughout the session, Dustin maintained an engaging dialogue with Linsey while Collin observed everything in complete silence.

When the interview finally concluded, Dustin appeared thoroughly pleased with the results. “Excellent work. I’m looking forward to a productive working relationship.”

Dustin’s chair scraped lightly against the polished floor as he rose, extending a hand across the desk.

Linsey blinked, startled by the gesture. “Does this mean I’ve passed the interview?”

“Of course.” His smile was easy, warm, and decisive, leaving no room for doubt.

Joy broke across her face, bright and unrestrained. She sprang to her feet and clasped his hand with both of hers. “Thank you, Mr. Wade! I’ll give my best from now on!”

Even without her vow, Dustin’s confidence in her was already set.

He rarely handled interviews himself, and anyone who sat across from both him and Collin was already marked as an exceptional talent.

They had first crossed paths months ago, when Dustin attended a project launch at her former company.

In just three hours, her designs had left a deep imprint on him—not only for their elegance but for the poise with which she handled every curveball on stage.

Back then, he had quietly considered making her a lucrative salary offer. What he hadn’t expected was that she would resign of her own accord and walk straight through the doors of CR Corporation.

The thought still pleased him, though outwardly he kept his composure. He was just about to release her hand when her fingers tightened unexpectedly around his.

His brow lifted. “Ms. Brooks, is there something else?”

Her voice faltered as heat rushed into her cheeks. She couldn’t quite meet his eyes.

After a brief silence, she bit her lip, gathering her nerve. “Mr. Wade, I’ve... actually admired you for many years.”

“What?” Dustin’s laugh came lightly, touched with surprise.

From the side, Collin—silent until now—turned sharply at her words, his brows knitting.

Wasn't this the same woman who was supposed to be Gorman's girlfriend? And now she was flirting with Dustin?

The audacity was unflattering. This woman wanted two men at once.

Linsey, realizing she still clung to Dustin's hand, dropped it as if burned. She waved her hands quickly, the words spilling in a rush. "Oh, no, not in the romantic sense. It's... it's more like the admiration a fan has for their idol, or a deep respect for someone they look up to."

Her voice trembled as she forced the explanation out, carefully, word by word. "Back in college, I used to read every interview and report about you—about how you built CR Corporation from the ground up, the designs you personally crafted, the charisma you showed. That inspired me to pursue a career in design. You've been my only role model since then."

Chapter 1380:

Dustin raised an eyebrow as he listened.

He cut a glance toward Collin, who sat like a statue, face hardened and unreadable.

The truth was simple: those stories weren't about him—they were about Collin. Linsey had mistaken him for Collin.

But Collin had always preferred the shadows, leaving him to take the spotlight. Very few knew who the real founder was.

And when it was clear Collin wouldn't correct her, Dustin stepped into the role she believed him to be.

"I'm honored to hear that," he said warmly. "Keep chasing your dreams."

Her eyes lit up like a sky at dawn. That encouragement from her role model was enough to melt her earlier nervousness.

“Mr. Wade, may I... make a small request?” she asked, almost shyly.

He didn’t hesitate. “Of course.”

Her wish was modest—just a single photograph with him for keepsake. For Dustin, it was nothing at all, and his ready agreement came with an easy smile.

After the photo session concluded, Linsey departed with obvious satisfaction lighting her features.

Dustin observed her exit with growing amusement before turning to Collin with a mischievous grin. “You’re absolutely incredible, you know that? She’s been completely devoted to you for years, yet you stay completely unaffected?”

Collin’s response was typically blasé, his shoulders lifting in an effortless shrug. “Plenty of people admire me. Nothing special about it.”

Dustin let out an exaggerated groan of frustration. “God, I’m so jealous! How come nobody ever looks at me like that? I’ve got talent too, you know!”

Collin had absolutely no interest in entertaining this conversation.

The interview was done, which meant he could finally get out of here. Dustin stepped directly into his path, arms spread wide. “Whoa there, I’m not finished grilling you yet.”

“What is it now?” Collin’s stare could have frozen water as he waited for whatever ridiculous question came next.

Dustin's eyebrow climbed higher, curiosity practically radiating from his pores. "So what's the deal with you and Linsey? How do you two actually know each other?"

"There's no deal. We don't know each other," Collin replied, his tone brooking no argument.

"Bull. There's definitely something going on." Dustin wasn't buying it for a second. "I've been begging you to come here for months, and you always have some excuse. But the minute Linsey's involved, suddenly you show up. And don't think I didn't notice you checking her out when you thought nobody was looking!"

Meanwhile, Linsey had just pushed through the building's revolving doors when her phone buzzed with Gorman's name.

She swiped to answer, immediately greeted by his familiar warm tone. "Hey, Linsey, where are you right now? Want to grab some food together?"