

Zillionaire 1381

Chapter 1381:

“Sure,” Linsey readily agreed, rattling off her location without thinking twice.

The moment Gorman heard she was at CR Corporation, his entire demeanor shifted. “What are you doing over there?”

Linsey answered without hesitation. “Just had a job interview.”

“No, you...” Gorman caught himself mid-sentence, something clicking in his mind that made him quickly pivot. “Let me come pick you up first. We should talk face to face.”

“Alright,” Linsey agreed without a second thought.

Twenty minutes later, Gorman pulled up to the curb. “Linsey!” he called out as he jogged up the front steps toward her.

Linsey remained completely oblivious to any underlying tension.

Before Gorman could get a word in, she was practically bouncing with excitement to share her news. “You won’t believe how amazing today was! Not only did I land the job, but I actually got to take a photo with my idol!”

“Your idol?”

“Yes!” Linsey practically glowed as she fumbled for her phone. “He was so sweet about it too. Look, I have to show you our picture!”

What she didn’t realize was that Collin had quietly emerged from the building behind them.

Dustin's relentless gossip session had driven him to the breaking point, making him desperate to escape the office. He had grabbed the first available elevator down.

Collin definitely hadn't expected to see Gorman standing way too close to Linsey.

The scene playing out in front of him made his jaw tighten with irritation.

How incredibly annoying.

Wasn't the world supposed to be huge? So why did it feel like he was trapped in some tiny bubble where he constantly bumped into people he would rather avoid?

Linsey stayed completely absorbed in scrolling through her phone, totally clueless about the figure lurking behind her.

Gorman, however, had much sharper instincts. Something in his peripheral vision made him glance up from Linsey's screen.

The moment he recognized Collin, his expression darkened considerably. Just his luck to run into Collin again!

Gorman couldn't understand why Collin kept appearing everywhere he went, trailing him like a bad penny.

Just as the thought crossed his mind, it struck him that something was off. Why would Collin be staring at him? He must be secretly watching Linsey instead.

A sharp wave of possessiveness rose from deep within Gorman's chest. At that moment, Linsey picked up a photo of herself with Dustin. "Look, this is me with Dustin. I really admire him, I—"

Before she could finish, a sudden pull yanked her forward, and her face landed against Gorman's chest.

Chapter 1382:

Pressed to him, she could hear his strong, steady heartbeat. Her mind went blank. “W-what are you doing?” she stammered, trying instinctively to push him away.

But with Collin right there, Gorman had no intention of letting her go. He wanted Collin to see—wanted him to know exactly who Linsey belonged to. Of course, he would never tell her the truth.

“Don’t move,” he murmured, one hand cupping the back of her head. Then he lied smoothly, “There’s a stray dog behind us, baring its teeth and ready to pounce.”

“What?” Linsey’s eyes widened, her voice trembling. “What should we do?”

Gorman’s gaze never left Collin, though his tone stayed calm. “We can’t run. Stay still, or it might attack.”

Linsey had always feared dogs. Back at the orphanage, strays sometimes wandered in through the broken fences. One had bitten her once, leaving her terrified of them ever since.

As he felt her tremble in his arms, Gorman’s lips curved in quiet satisfaction. He stroked her hair, his voice low and gentle. “Don’t be afraid. I’m here. I’ll protect you.”

When she finally relaxed a little, he glanced up to throw Collin a smug look—only to see that he had vanished.

“That’s strange. Where did he go?” he muttered.

“Who?” Linsey asked, still held close. Then she froze, suspicion creeping into her voice. “Wait... didn’t you say there was a dog?”

Gorman caught himself, pausing before replying smoothly, “I meant a dog.”

Not wanting to spark more questions, he loosened his hold and stepped back.

"It's gone now. Don't worry."

Linsey glanced around. No dog. She let out a relieved breath.

She stepped away, her cheeks flushed. "Thank you."

"No need to thank me. It's what I should do. Come on, let's go eat." Gorman tucked a strand of hair behind her ear, his voice soft.

The unexpected gesture made her heartbeat quicken, her cheeks burning even hotter. "Alright."

Later, they sat across from each other in an upscale restaurant, enjoying their meal.

Linsey was about to tell him about her interview when he cut in gently, "Linsey, can you promise me something?"

She blinked. "What is it?"

He set down his utensils, his tone serious. "Don't join CR Corporation."

"Why?" Surprise flickered across Linsey's features. She clearly hadn't expected such a request from Gorman. Silence stretched between them.

The truth weighed heavily on his tongue, but he couldn't bring himself to speak it aloud. Events seemed to be spiraling beyond his grasp.

Linsey had only just returned to the country and would soon begin her position at CR Corporation.

Chapter 1383:

She might remain unaware, but Gorman possessed knowledge that his second chance at life had granted him.

While Dustin held the CEO title at CR Corporation, the real authority belonged to Collin.

Should Linsey work there, crossing paths with Collin would become inevitable.

That scenario terrified Gorman more than anything else.

The question now was whether revealing this truth so early would be wise.

Lost in his spiraling thoughts, he remained frozen in indecision.

Linsey, seated across from him, grew increasingly puzzled by his extended silence and finally broke it. "Gorman, where did your mind wander off to? You've been completely quiet for several minutes."

"Nothing." A forced smile tugged at his lips. Tentatively, he ventured, "Linsey, if you're actively job hunting, why not consider joining my company instead? You could choose any position that appeals to you and name your own salary."

Despite the generous offer, Linsey shook her head without a moment's hesitation. "I appreciate your kindness, truly, but CR Corporation remains my choice."

"My company offers just as much opportunity." He pressed on, desperation creeping into his voice.

"I know." Her gentle laughter carried warmth despite her refusal. "But CR Corporation has been my dream destination for years. Without some compelling reason to change course, I can't accept your generous offer."

Realizing that no amount of persuasion would budge her resolve, Gorman lapsed into silence once more.

After wrestling with his thoughts, he made the difficult decision to reveal a portion of the truth. “What if I told you that Collin actually runs CR Corporation? Would that give you reason enough to reconsider?”

Linsey’s breath caught in her throat. Water splashed as she choked mid-sip.

“Are you alright?” Gorman rushed forward with a tissue, worry creasing his features.

Linsey accepted the tissue gratefully, pressing it to her mouth while waving to indicate she was managing.

Once her breathing steadied, disbelief filled her eyes as she stared at him. “Please tell me you’re not serious.”

Collin’s father owned Riley Group. How could he possibly be running CR Corporation behind the scenes?

If that was true, wouldn’t that make him the visionary founder she had admired for so long?

“That’s absurd.” Before Gorman could offer any explanation, Linsey burst out, “CR Corporation belongs to Dustin. He conducted my interview personally, and we even took a picture together afterward.”

Her phone appeared in her hands as she scrolled to show Gorman the photo he hadn’t seen.

His gaze flicked to the screen briefly before he turned away. His lips pressed into a thin line. “I understand this is difficult to process, but it’s the reality of the situation. If you need proof, I can provide evidence to back up my claims.”

Chapter 1384:

“But...” Linsey’s fingers shook around her water glass.

Words formed on her tongue, but her mind suddenly went completely blank, leaving her unable to voice them.

Honestly, accepting that Collin controlled CR Corporation felt almost impossible.

If he truly held that power, why maintain such secrecy about it? He had even sat there calmly while she gushed about Dustin right to his face.

For a brief moment, Linsey hesitated, but it dawned on her that Gorman had no real reason to lie.

Back at her earlier interview, the assistant had even mentioned that the last round would be conducted by the CEO in person.

So if Collin wasn't the CEO, what business did he have showing up there? The longer she mulled it over, the more tangled her thoughts became, and a slow ache started pulsing at her temples.

Across from her, Gorman kept studying her face, reading her unease. He pressed on, his tone careful, "Linsey, Collin isn't someone you should trust. He's dangerous. I don't want you stepping into CR Corporation and putting yourself at risk."

"Why would you say that?" Linsey blinked, still stunned by what she had learned about Collin.

Gorman's voice softened as he explained, "You remind me so much of my late fiancée. Back then, Collin tore her away from me by force. I can't shake the fear that he might..."

His words trailed off suddenly. His lashes quivered, and grief pooled in his eyes. Linsey took it as nothing more than a man mourning the woman he had lost. Biting her lip, she finally asked, torn, "Could you give me some time to think about everything?"

What Gorman truly wanted was for her to reject CR Corporation right then and there. But since he was trying to play the role of a kind, considerate man, he held back and nodded. "Of course. Take all the time you need. There's no hurry."

After a pause, something seemed to strike him, and he added earnestly, "Everything I've said is only because I want to protect you."

When their meal ended, Gorman offered her a ride to the hospital.

"You're certain you don't want me to come inside with you?" he asked.

"Please, don't let me hold you up any longer," Linsey replied, forcing a polite smile.

They parted ways with brief farewells.

After Gorman's car disappeared down the street, Linsey headed toward the hospital steps.

Just a few strides later, a voice called out behind her, "Ms. Brooks?"

She turned automatically and spotted an elderly woman leaning on a cane a short distance away.

Recognizing the figure, Linsey hurried closer, her surprise evident. "Mrs. Gilbert, why are you here by yourself?"

Looking pale, Mona Gilbert exhaled and offered a faint smile. "Age is catching up with me. My health is failing, and the doctor insists I stay here for treatment."

Chapter 1385:

That answer made Linsey scan the area, concern creasing her features. "Shouldn't your son be with you right now?"

"He's tied up with work," Mona replied quietly.

“How could he possibly be caught up in work right now?” Linsey frowned. She had always known he had a packed schedule. But with his mother lying ill, there was no excuse. He had turned his back on what mattered most.

Her disapproval showed in the frown she wore for a man she had never even met.

“Could you give me his number?” she asked firmly. “I’ll call him right away.”

As Linsey pulled out her phone, Mona reached for her hand and stopped her gently. “No, Ms. Brooks. Don’t trouble him. He’ll come when he’s finished.” Her tone softened as she changed the topic. With a fragile smile, she asked, “I heard this hospital has a lovely garden. Would you walk there with me for a while?”

Linsey couldn’t refuse such a simple plea, her heart too soft to deny her. “Of course.”

After agreeing, she sent Dolores a quick message, then accompanied Mona toward the garden.

The day was bright, and the air carried the sweet trace of flowers blooming nearby.

Linsey guided her to a bench and helped her sit down. With gentle curiosity, Mona asked, “Ms. Brooks, what brought you to the hospital today?”

“I’m visiting a friend who’s unwell,” Linsey explained gently.

Mona nodded with understanding. “No wonder I haven’t seen you around the nursing home these past days.” The two had first met there.

Whenever her schedule allowed, Linsey would volunteer on weekends—chatting, listening, and spending time with the elderly. Mona was one of the residents.

According to the staff, Mona’s son was too busy with work to look after her properly. Fearing for her safety if she lived alone, he had placed her in the nursing home.

Unlike many of the others, Mona was reserved and private, not easily letting anyone into her world.

It had taken Linsey quite some time—and patience—to earn her trust and become the first volunteer she truly opened up to.

Recently, Linsey hadn't been able to visit because she had been traveling abroad. Still, she didn't think that detail was necessary, so she simply said with warmth, "I'm really sorry, Mrs. Gilbert, for not visiting you at the nursing home lately. But I promise I'll come by to see you the moment I have some free time."

"That would be lovely," Mona replied, her fondness for Linsey clear in her tone. Yet her smile faded, shadowed by a troubling thought.

Lowering her gaze, she murmured, "I don't even know if I'll live long enough to return to the nursing home."

"Of course you will," Linsey reassured her quickly. "As long as you follow your doctor's advice, you'll be back on your feet in no time."

But Mona's eyes grew glassy with unshed tears. "The doctor said my condition is very serious. This surgery... it might not succeed. And if it doesn't—"

"It will succeed," Linsey cut in firmly, her tone filled with conviction, refusing to let despair settle.

Chapter 1386:

Before Mona could reply, a man's voice called out urgently from behind them. "Mom—"

Linsey instinctively turned toward the sound. The moment her eyes landed on the approaching figure, her eyes widened in shock. How... how could it be him?

Lowell, intent only on finding his mother, hadn't yet noticed Linsey.

His focus was entirely on Mona as he hurried over, worry etched across his face. "Mom, I've told you countless times you need to stay in your ward. Why do you keep wandering off?"

Feeling chastised, Mona explained, "It's too boring to stay in the ward all day. I just wanted to take a walk."

"You could have asked a nurse or a caregiver to go with you—or waited until I got back," Lowell said firmly, his brows knitting tighter with each word. "You can't wander off alone—what if you fell?"

"Alright, alright," Mona responded quickly, waving her hand as if to brush away his concern. "I won't do it again."

"There mustn't be a next time," he said, his voice edged with stern insistence.

"Yes, yes, I understand," Mona promised in quick succession, and only then did Lowell's rigid stance begin to ease.

As he moved to guide her back to her ward, his gaze shifted, almost idly, to the figure standing beside her.

At first, he assumed it was just another volunteer or perhaps a patient's relative. But when his eyes locked onto her face—his steps faltered.

His expression changed in an instant, surprise darkening into something sharper. What was Linsey doing here?

Before either of them could speak, Mona broke the silence, her face lighting up. "Oh, I almost forgot—I should introduce you two!"

She gestured between them, her tone cheerful. “This is Linsey Brooks, the girl I’ve mentioned so many times. She often visits the nursing home. She’s a sweet girl.”

Linsey curved her lips into a polite smile and said softly, “Hello. I didn’t expect Mrs. Gilbert’s son... to be you.”

“I never thought it would be you.” Lowell’s eyes lit with sudden recognition, then softened with gratitude. “Ms. Brooks, thank you for often keeping my mother company at the nursing home.”

“It’s nothing at all. I’m just a volunteer there, so it’s only right to spend time with them,” Linsey replied gently.

Mona, watching them, looked a little puzzled. “Do you two know each other?”

Lowell pressed his lips together before answering, “We met once while traveling abroad.”

“Oh, I see.” Mona’s gaze lingered on them, her expression thoughtful. Soon after, Linsey excused herself and left.

Lowell helped Mona back toward her ward.

On the way, Mona said with a sigh, “You’re not getting any younger. You should really find yourself a girlfriend.”

Chapter 1387:

In the past, Lowell would have brushed it off with excuses. But now, seeing his mother so ill, he could only nod. “Alright, I will.”

Mona eyed him with doubt. “Don’t just say it—do it.”

Before he could answer, she continued, "Linsey is beautiful and kind. I like her very much. If I had such a daughter-in-law, I'd count myself blessed. Why don't you—"

"Absolutely not." Lowell cut her off quickly, his face flashing with panic.

"Why not?" Mona asked, clearly confused.

"Because..." He hesitated, then lowered his voice. "She's Mr. Riley's girl."

At once, Mona gave up on the thought. "Mr. Riley has been so good to us. We mustn't cross that line."

"Exactly," Lowell agreed, though his mind was a storm of unease.

By then, they had reached the ward.

Just as they arrived at the door, Lowell caught sight of a familiar figure. "Mr. Riley, what brings you here?"

Collin replied calmly, "I just finished visiting my grandmother. Since your mother is on the same floor, I thought I'd stop by."

He turned to Mona with warmth. "Mrs. Gilbert, how have you been lately?"

"Thank you for asking. I'm doing quite well." Mona felt touched. She hadn't expected Collin, with all his standing, to personally check in on her.

Then, as if remembering something, she quickly added, "Mr. Riley, your girlfriend is truly a kind soul. You must cherish each other."

Collin lifted an eyebrow. "My girlfriend?"

“Yes, Ms. Brooks—” Before Mona could finish, Lowell cut in sharply, “Mom!”

Startled, Mona paused, staring at him in confusion.

Collin sensed something amiss, his gaze shifting toward Lowell, carrying a quiet weight that pressed on the air.

A bead of sweat slid down Lowell’s temple. He clenched his fists discreetly, trying to look calm as he spoke. “Mom, I just remembered—you need to take your medicine. Let me take you inside.”

He didn’t give her the chance to argue. Gently but firmly, he guided her into the ward.

Before stepping in, he turned back to Collin. “I’m sorry, Mr. Riley. Please wait here for a moment.”

Time dragged, but at last Lowell came out.

The moment he stepped into the hallway, his face stiffened—another figure stood beside Collin.

Kylee wore an elegant white dress, her long, soft hair flowing down to her shoulders, her small face half-hidden behind dark sunglasses.

As a public figure, she was always cautious about her privacy, especially at the hospital, where paparazzi might lurk.

Spotting a figure in her peripheral vision, she turned, momentarily startled. When she recognized Lowell, her tension eased, and she offered a polished, gentle smile. “I was just mentioning you to Collin, and here you are.”

Chapter 1388:

“Miss Russell,” Lowell responded with a respectful nod. “What brings you here today?”

“I came to check on Collin’s grandmother. When I heard he was here, I thought I would find him first.” She paused, then added, “By the way, your mother’s surgery is scheduled. I asked my cousin to operate on her, so she should recover quickly.”

Lowell bowed his head slightly in gratitude. “Thank you for your help, and Mr. Riley’s too.”

“No need for formalities,” Kylee said lightly, her tone teasing. “Think of it as a favor. You can repay me when I need something down the line.”

Though Kylee spoke lightly, Lowell knew she was subtly hinting for him not to tell Collin anything about Linsey. Pressing his lips together, he nodded. “I understand.”

Kylee’s smile widened, their unspoken agreement sealed. She glanced at Collin. “I’ll head out now, Collin. Catch you later.”

“Alright,” Collin replied coolly.

Kylee’s heels clicked sharply against the floor as she departed.

Once she was gone, only Collin and Lowell remained in the quiet hallway.

“Mr. Riley...” Lowell began, but Collin cut him off. “What are you keeping from me?”

Collin asked, his tone unreadable.

Lowell’s pulse quickened. “I—I’m sorry, Mr. Riley.”

“I don’t want apologies. I want answers,” Collin said sharply.

“Are you asking about what my mother said regarding your girlfriend?” Lowell ventured carefully.

Collin stayed silent, his expression impassive.

Taking his silence as consent, Lowell hesitated before explaining, “I’m sorry, Mr. Riley. It happened when my mother met a woman downstairs and tried to play matchmaker. In a panic, I said she was your girlfriend, so...”

He apologized repeatedly. “I didn’t mean to overstep, Mr. Riley. I’m ready to face the consequences.”

To Collin, it was a trivial matter, one he could overlook. Still, curiosity tugged at him about the woman in question.

His fingers drummed lightly on the armrest as he asked, “Who was this woman your mother mentioned?”

If he had caught it correctly, Lowell’s mother had mentioned the name Brooks. For a fleeting moment, Linsey’s face flashed in his mind.

Lowell’s voice pulled him back. “I don’t know her. She might be a patient here.”

Collin’s curiosity faded, and he dropped the subject. “Your mother’s surgery is coming up. Take some time off to be with her.”

“Yes,” Lowell replied, gratitude in his voice. “Thank you, Mr. Riley.”

“If you’re truly grateful, show it through your actions,” Collin said, shifting gears. “Have you found that woman?”

Lowell faltered, his confidence wavering. “She...”

Lowell almost blurted out the truth, but the memory of Kylee's threats clamped down on his resolve, keeping him locked in a web of lies.

Chapter 1389:

Keeping his emotions tightly bottled, he ducked his head, refused to meet Collin's eyes, and offered up a flimsy excuse. "I actually had people looking overseas before I even got back to the country, but nothing's turned up so far."

Collin's reaction showed no surprise; he had clearly anticipated this. Without a word, he turned and wheeled himself away.

"Take care, Mr. Riley," Lowell said quietly, watching him leave.

Only when Collin vanished from sight did Lowell's carefully maintained mask crumble, guilt flickering across his features.

Back then, while his mother languished in that lonely nursing home, Linsey was the one who visited her and offered comfort. Once her condition turned severe, Collin stepped in to cover the costs of her care.

He owed them both, yet he had responded by weaving lies and keeping them apart, deliberately hiding the truth. The weight of his own betrayal pressed down on him.

Lowell stood there in silence, lost in remorse, until at last he let out a long, heavy sigh and turned to leave.

He, however, didn't return to his mother's ward. Instead, his steps took him to the doctor's office.

There were details about his mother's upcoming surgery he needed to clear up. Just as Lowell reached the office door and lifted his hand to knock, Kylee's angry voice stopped him in his tracks. "What do you mean she can't have surgery? Why not?"

Lowell froze mid-motion, shock widening his eyes as he listened.

Kylee's cousin, the doctor, answered her in a low, grim tone, "I just went over her latest test results. Her organs are in the final stages of failure. Any surgery now would be extremely dangerous, and it wouldn't make a difference." He finished with a weary sigh. "Honestly, unless something miraculous happens, she doesn't have much time left. It's probably kinder to let her enjoy what days she has left, without putting her through any more suffering."

The shock of the news landed heavy on Lowell, rooting him to the spot, unable to move or even think for several long seconds.

Behind the door, Kylee's voice slipped into the hallway, measured and unwavering. "Don't tell her son a thing. Proceed with the surgery as though nothing has changed," she warned.

The doctor sounded completely lost. "Why would we do that?"

Inside the office, Kylee knit her brows and admitted quietly, "Her son works for Collin. I struck a bargain with him—the whole arrangement depended on this surgery and saving his mother's life."

"But you know as well as I do—" the doctor started to protest.

"I'm aware she doesn't have long left," Kylee cut him off sharply. "Just make it look convincing."

Without pausing, Kylee explained her scheme. "Stage a fake surgery, then keep her going with heavy medication so it looks like she's improving. Once she seems well enough, discharge her as if she's fully recovered. That way, our deal only covers her stay here. After she leaves, whatever happens is no longer my concern. The agreement will still be fulfilled."

Chapter 1390:

The doctor's voice was thick with outrage. "This is unethical!"

Kylee shrugged off his concern, her voice smooth and dismissive. "What's the big deal? She's not going to make it anyway."

Kylee waved away his objections with practiced ease, her tone almost persuasive. "Come on, just do this for me. Our family runs this hospital, so nothing's going to go wrong."

Before the doctor could muster a reply, a sudden noise outside made both of them stiffen.

"Who's there?" Kylee called out, panic flickering in her tone.

Silence answered her.

She and her cousin exchanged uneasy glances, both worried their conversation had been overheard.

"I'll go see who it is," Kylee said, getting up quickly and heading for the door herself.

Kylee was ready to confront whoever had been eavesdropping. But when she pulled the door open, the hallway was empty.

"Why is no one here?" she muttered, frowning as she tried to figure it out.

Just then, a janitor strolled past.

Kylee's cousin quickly asked, "Excuse me, ma'am, did you see anyone standing at my door just now?"

The janitor shook her head. "No, I didn't see anyone."

"Then where did the noise come from?" Kylee pressed. "We thought something got knocked over."

“Oh, that must have been me,” the janitor replied with a smile, pointing toward the nearby restroom. “I was rinsing the mop and tipped over the bucket by mistake.”

Kylee’s only fear had been that Lowell might have overheard them. Now that she realized it was nothing but a misunderstanding, the tightness in her chest finally eased.

“Thank goodness it wasn’t him,” she whispered under her breath. Turning to her cousin, she added, “I’ll leave this matter to you. I need to find Collin.”

Her cousin hesitated, then gave a small nod. “Alright.”

With that settled, they went their separate ways.

What neither of them knew was that Lowell was lurking in the shadows, watching everything unfold.

His fists tightened, his jaw locked, and his eyes burned with hatred.

He couldn’t believe Kylee had grown so heartless. From the very beginning, he regretted ever agreeing to her deal. Now that she had crossed the line, he had no reason to keep quiet any longer.

Pulling out his phone, he dialed a number. When the call connected, he spoke in a low voice, “Mr. Riley, there’s something I need to tell you...”

Meanwhile, Linsey had just finished visiting her friend and was waiting for the elevator when she unexpectedly ran into Ivy.

Ivy greeted her with warmth and insisted she come by her hospital room for some refreshments.