

# **Marrying A Secret Zillionaire Happy Ever After #Bride A Lifetime of Love 161 - Read Marrying A Secret Zillionaire Happy Ever After Bride A Lifetime of Love 161**

Chapter 161 He'll Protect

Me

Unfazed by the scar-faced man's menacing threats, Linsey grew bolder.

With an impassive expression, she retorted, "The Wade family holds considerable sway in Grester. I'm just an ordinary person; naturally, I wouldn't dare to cross them. But if you think you can harm anyone here, don't expect me to stand idly

by."

Linsey paused, then added forcefully, "Let me be clear-I'm not making threats. If you're willing to face the repercussions of escalating this situation, then be my guest. You'll only be giving me more ammunition to use against you."

"You little bitch! Let me..." The scar-faced man, consumed by rage, lunged towards Linsey.

Witnessing this, one of his lackeys frantically grabbed his arm, his face pale with fear. "Hold on, boss! We need to stay calm!" he pleaded.

Already furious, the scar-faced man spun around and slapped the lackey hard. "You idiot! How dare you stop me? Do you

have a death wish?" he roared.

The lackey yelped in pain, clutching his head. "Boss, we need to keep this under wraps, or we're screwed!"

The scar-faced man knew this all too well. Taking a deep breath, he forced himself to calm down, though his anger still

simmered beneath the surface.

The lackey cautiously gauged his boss's expression before suggesting, "Maybe we should back off for now and come up with a different plan. Linsey and Collin can't be here every day."

"Fine," the scar-faced man spat, his voice dripping with malice. Before leaving, he shot Linsey a venomous glare. "This isn't over. Next time I see you, you'll regret this!"

Linsey dismissed his threats. Watching them finally depart from the orphanage, she breathed a sigh of relief.

She hurried over and firmly shut the orphanage door.

She initially thought that given their aggressive demeanor, her words wouldn't be enough to deter them.

But it seemed they were constrained by their own internal issues.

She was grateful for the sudden inspiration to bring Collin along that day. Otherwise, who knew how Ella would have dealt

with them.

Just then, Ella emerged, her face etched with worry. "Linsey, you were too impulsive back there. Those men saw you; they know your name and who you are. Especially that one with the scar, he's bad news. You made an enemy of him because of

us, and he won't forget it."

Seeing the concern in Ella's eyes, Linsey offered a reassuring smile. "Ella, don't worry about me. I'm not alone; there's no

need to be afraid."

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Chapter 161 Hell Protect Me

She turned to Collin with a smile. "After all, my husband is here. He'll protect me," she said.

Collin's lips curved into a slight smile. He reached out and took her hand, his grip firm. Turning to Ella, he promised, "Ella,

don't worry. I won't let anything happen to Linsey."

Seeing the sincerity in Collin's eyes, Ella felt some of her anxiety dissipate.

Linsey glanced at the closed door. "Ella, we can't just sit here and do nothing. Now that those thugs are gone, we need to

call the police before they come back."

Ella sighed, her expression troubled. "It won't do any good. I've called the police before, but they didn't lift a finger. I even

tried contacting the media, but the reporters were all paid off. Nothing ever came of it."

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## **Marrying A Secret Zillionaire Happy Ever After #Chapter 162 - Read Marrying A Secret Zillionaire Happy Ever After Chapter 162**

Chapter 162 Perhaps I Can

Be Of Assistance

As Ella spoke, her gaze drifted towards the group of children huddled in the courtyard.

The earlier commotion had frightened them, and several teachers and volunteers were trying to soothe their frayed nerves, keeping them away from the classrooms for now.

"Those thugs keep showing up and causing trouble. A while back, they scared off several families who were interested in adopting, and now many of our volunteers are too terrified to come back." Worry etched deep lines on Ella's face, making her appear older than her years. "I know their game. They're deliberately trying to shut us down. If I can't stop them, these children will be shipped off to who- knows-where. They're so young... if they leave here, who knows what will become of

them?"

The thought of those vulnerable children filled Linsey with a sense of helplessness and anger. "Isn't there anything we can do to fight back? Is there no one in town who can stand up to the Wade family?"

Ella let out a heavy sigh. "We're just small potatoes, Linsey. All we can do is try to hold on as long as possible."

Linsey, dissatisfied with the lack of options, looked down, her frustration growing.

Just then, Collin's calm, steady voice cut through the tension. "Perhaps I can be of assistance."

Linsey turned to him, her eyebrows raised in surprise.

Collin met her gaze, his expression serious. "If you trust me. I'll do everything I can to resolve this situation."

Linsey hesitated. She instinctively doubted that even someone as resourceful as Collin could truly challenge the Wade

family.

After all, she was well aware of his precarious position within the Riley family. Despite the Rileys having more clout than the Wades, Collin wasn't exactly a favorite son. What could he realistically do?

However, considering the dire straits the orphanage was in, Linsey couldn't think of any other viable options.

"Are you sure about this, Collin?" Linsey asked softly, her voice laced with concern. "I don't want you to get caught in the

crossfire."

Collin offered her a reassuring smile. "Don't worry, I'll handle it."

As she gazed into Collin's eyes, a wave of calm washed over Linsey.

At that moment, an inexplicable sense of peace settled over her.

Perhaps Collin could actually resolve this problem.

"Alright," Linsey said, a faint smile gracing her lips. "I trust you."

Collin wasted no time. He immediately pulled out his phone and made few calls, dispatching some of his men to the

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Chapter 162 Perhaps I Can Be Of Assistance

orphanage. "Keep an eye on things for the next few days. Make sure those thugs don't cause any more trouble."

Ella's eyes welled up with gratitude. "Linsey, Collin, thank you. I can't tell you how much this means to me, and to the

children. Thank you."

"Ella, please," Linsey insisted. "Don't thank us. It's the least we could do."

Collin nodded in agreement. "Ella, you took Linsey in when she had nowhere else to go. You gave her a second chance at life. You're family to her. It's only right that we look out for family."

He paused, his voice softening. "Please, trust us."

With their goodbyes said, Linsey and Collin left the orphanage and climbed back into the car.

As they drove away, Linsey's thoughts drifted back to the events of the day. A pang of guilt hit her. She turned to Collin, her expression apologetic. "I'm so sorry, Collin. I promised you a date today, and instead, we ended up dealing with all this drama. I not only ruined our plans, but I dragged you into this whole mess."

Collin reached over and gently took her hand, his thumb stroking her knuckles reassuringly. "Hey, if we want to go on a date, we'll have plenty of opportunities in the future. I'm just glad you brought me here. What happened today wasn't your fault. Don't worry about it. I'll take care of everything."

Linsey listened to the calm assurance in Collin's voice and nodded, the tension and worry slowly melting away.

She didn't press him for details about how he planned to resolve the situation. She had chosen to trust him, and she

intended to do just that-trust him completely.

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Chapter 163 This Is My

Fault

Upon returning to Vista Villa, Collin immediately retreated to the study.

The instant the door clicked shut behind him, his expression hardened.

Taking out his phone, he dialed Dustin's number.

Dustin's jovial voice greeted him as soon as the call connected. "Collin, to what do I owe the pleasure? What can I do for

you, my friend?"

Collin's voice was somber as he inquired, "What's happening with that plot of land on the outskirts of town?"

After a brief pause, Dustin responded, "It's already in the process of being developed."

A short silence followed before Dustin chuckled. "Why the sudden interest? Don't tell me you've had a change of heart and

want to reclaim it?"

Collin's voice grew heavy with suppressed irritation. "Are you aware that there's an orphanage that's been operating there

for years?"

Dustin dismissed it casually. "Yeah, I know about it. I sent someone to take care of the situation a while back. It's nothing

to be concerned about."

Collin's frown deepened, his voice sharpening. "So you actually sent people to threaten the orphanage?"

Dustin sounded genuinely surprised. "What? Threaten them? I don't know what you're talking about."

Hearing the genuine confusion in Dustin's voice, Collin relaxed slightly, sensing there was more to the story.

Having known Dustin for years, Collin understood his character implicitly.

While Dustin could be impulsive at times, he wasn't the type to intimidate the vulnerable or abuse his power.

Initially, when Collin heard about Dustin's involvement in the incident at the orphanage, he was dubious. Now, it was clear

there was more to the situation than met the eye.

Collin concisely relayed the information he had gathered.

"What the hell!?" Dustin exclaimed in shock. "I did send someone to resolve the issue with the orphanage, but my intention was to offer them financial assistance for relocation, not to resort to intimidation!"

Collin let out a cold snort. "It seems you've been too lax with your subordinates. They've clearly pocketed your money and exploited your name to cause trouble."

Dustin seethed with rage. "Un-fucking-believable!" he roared. "Which goddamn idiot disobeyed a direct order?"

His initial outburst subsided, replaced by a sharp inquiry. "How in the hell did you even find out about this mess?"

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## Chapter 163 This Is My Fault

Collin paused briefly before responding. "That orphanage," he stated evenly, "is where Linsey spent her childhood. She took me there today, and we happened upon your crew causing a scene. That orphanage is strictly off-limits. You'd better get your subordinates in line, and fast, or I'll handle it myself."

Dustin drew a deep breath, his expression turning serious. "I apologize," he said. "This is my fault; I should have handled this situation with more care. I owe you and Linsey a full explanation."

Meanwhile, the scar-faced man slunk back to the office, where his boss, a portly, unkempt individual with a perpetual

scowl etched across his face, awaited him.

The moment the scar-faced man crossed the threshold, the portly man exploded. "You're absolutely useless! It's been days, and you still haven't cleared out that orphanage? How am I supposed to explain this to my boss now?"

He slammed a stack of papers onto the scar-faced man's chest. "It's just one old woman and a bunch of snot-nosed kids! How difficult can it be? If this drags on any longer, the big boss will hold us accountable, and you'll be out on your ass!"

The scar-faced man quickly scrambled to defend himself, his face twisting with frustration. "Boss, it's not my fault! It's all because of Collin Riley and that wife of his, Linsey!"

The portly man frowned, a look of annoyance crossing his face. "What in the hell do they have to do with this mess?"

The scar-faced man, still seething, explained, "They showed up at the orphanage today and stopped us dead in our tracks. They even threatened to go public with everything!"

He added, "I also found out that Linsey grew up in that orphanage. She's going to be a real pain in our asses, I can tell. So,

what are we supposed to do now?"

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Chapter 164 Nothing Will Threaten Your Billion-...

The portly man shot a disdainful glare at the scar-faced man. "You're utterly worthless. That Collin is nothing more than a

cripple, and Linsey? She's barely worth the effort. If she's so eager to throw her life away, why not expedite her departure?"

The scar-faced man's eyes widened in shock, betraying his alarm. "Boss, are you suggesting..." His voice trailed off as he

mimicked the motion of pulling a trigger. "That we resort to such drastic measures?"

He continued, his voice laced with concern, "But what about the Riley family? What if they retaliate?"

The portly man dismissed the concern with a careless wave of his hand. "Why would the Riley family bother? For all we

know, we might be doing them a service. They could end up thanking me!"

His eyes narrowed calculatingly. "Remember, we're dealing with a billion-dollar venture here. We can't afford any slip-ups.

Pull this off, and you'll see a handsome reward."

Eyes alight with the promise of wealth, the scar-faced man nodded. "Understood, Boss. I'll handle it immediately."

He exited the office, his mind racing with plans for dealing with Linsey and Collin. But as he strategized, a convoy of cars

suddenly lined up outside, their bright headlights slicing through the darkness, nearly blinding him.

His heart hammered against his chest, a chilling sense of dread enveloping him. "What in the world is happening?" he

muttered, eyes wide with apprehension.



Abruptly, a convoy of cars jerked to a halt, unleashing a group of men who moved with lethal precision. They quickly

formed a tight circle around the scar-faced man.

"What's the meaning of this?" he growled, his voice echoing with a mix of fear and defiance.

The group's unsmiling leader stepped forward, his gaze as hard as ice, and decisively commanded, "Subdue him."

Caught off guard, the scar-faced man barely had time to process the threat. He was about to react, perhaps to flee or fight,

when strong hands clamped down on him, forcing him to the cold, hard ground with brutal efficiency.

"Do you have any idea who I am? Touching me is a fatal mistake!" he bellowed, the rage in his voice tinged with

desperation.

The ruckus quickly lured the portly man outside.

The moment he saw the scar-faced man being restrained, his expression soured, and he growled, "Who the hell are you people? Do you even know where you are?"

At that moment, another silhouette detached itself from one of the cars.

The tension was palpable as the portly man and the scar-faced man tensed up, but their fury simmered down when they spotted Dustin approaching with a chilling, knowing smirk.

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Chapter 164 Nothing Will Threaten Your Billion-dollar Venture!

"What have we here? It's been a while, hasn't it? And now you don't even recognize me?" Dustin's voice cut through the chilly air with a sharp edge.

The portly man froze, his eyes widening momentarily before he hastily composed himself, adopting a fawning grin. "Mr. Wade, to what do I owe the pleasure of your visit today?"

Oblivious to the altercation involving the scar-faced man nearby, he scurried over to Dustin, bowing deeply, his tone oozing exaggerated deference. "Mr. Wade, it's quite chilly out here. Perhaps we could discuss matters indoors?"

Dustin casually shoved his hands into his coat pockets, his posture radiating undisguised arrogance. "My concern is the

orphanage on the suburban lot."

A shadow of dismay passed over the portly man's face as the unresolved issue of the orphanage loomed back into focus,

and Dustin was evidently here to press for answers.

Casting a sharp, frustrated glance at the scar-faced man, he hastily assured, "Mr. Wade, rest assured, we'll handle that situation promptly. You won't have to concern yourself with it further,"

Dustin's gaze turned cold, his scrutiny piercing. "And how exactly do you intend to handle it?"

The portly man laughed nervously, leaning closer, his voice dropping to a conspiratorial whisper. "Naturally, we might have

to resort to... some unconventional tactics."

Dustin's gaze sharpened, his smirk hardening. "I bet I know what's next-you're going after Collin and Linsey, right?"

The portly man felt a chill run down his spine.

Dustin was already aware of the recent events at the orphanage.

He quickly attempted to reassure. "Mr. Wade, please, don't worry. I'll deal with

Collin and Linsey immediately. Nothing will

threaten your billion-dollar venture!"

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Chapter 165 Why Are You Doing This To Me

Dustin chuckled, his laugh dripping with indifference. "Don't worry about it. I've already got everything under control."

The portly man froze, eyes widening with curiosity. "What are you planning?"

Dustin turned to his subordinates, his voice sharp and unwavering. "Take this guy-and the one on the ground and get them both to the police station."

The portly man stood there, stunned, as if his brain couldn't process what was happening. In disbelief, he stammered, "Mr. Wade... what do you mean? You're actually sending us to the police? Why are you doing this to me?"

Dustin couldn't hide his amusement at the man's desperate expression. He dragged out each word like it was a slow burn. "I trusted you with the land project, but instead, you embezzled the funds I set aside for the orphanage. And as if that wasn't bad enough, you used my name to run illegal schemes, dragging my family's reputation through the dirt."

His gaze

turned ice-cold as he locked eyes with the portly man. "You really thought I was that gullible? That I'd let you two idiots play me for a fool?"

Before either the portly man or the scar-faced one could stammer a response, Dustin waved them off with a dismissive

flick of his hand.

These two reckless fools had confronted Collin and Linsey in his name.

The orphanage was where Linsey had spent her childhood. If it had been destroyed, Collin wouldn't have thought twice

about tearing him apart.

The portly man finally got it-Dustin wasn't playing. He was serious about sending him to the police.

Panicking, the portly man struggled against Dustin's men, his mind racing for a way out.

"Mr. Wade!" he shouted suddenly, his voice tinged with desperation. "Did Collin and Linsey say something to you? You can't let them turn us against each other! I see it now-this is a plot by the Riley family! They're trying to bring your family

down. You have to believe me!"

Dustin chuckled lightly, his tone calm and unhurried. "The Riley family isn't exactly innocent in all this, but this? This was Collin's idea. And of course, I'm cooperating with him."

The portly man froze, stunned. Was Dustin really listening to that crippled Collin? How could that even be possible?

For years, everyone in Grester knew that Collin, the eldest son of the Riley family, wasn't just physically disabled-he was also rejected by his own family. He had no power to speak of.

Dustin, on the other hand, was the sole heir to the Wade family-an immensely powerful man. Why on earth would he

take orders from someone like Collin?

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## Chapter 165 Why Are You Doing This To Me

As those thoughts raced through his mind, the portly man couldn't stop himself from voicing his disbelief. "Mr. Wade, you've got to be joking. Collin... he's just a cripple. How could he possibly have the authority to tell you what to do?"

But the moment the words left his mouth, a chilling realization sank in.

Could it be that the so-called powerless Collin had been hiding his true strength all along?

What was Collin really up to?

Dustin, noticing the growing panic in the portly man's eyes, spoke with chilling calm. "You don't need to know. You embezzled funds under my watch, and I have all the evidence I need. You'll be spending your time repenting behind bars."

The portly man was left utterly dumbfounded. As Dustin's men dragged him away, his mind replayed the events of the day,

each moment weighing heavier than the last.

Only now did he realize-Collin was someone he should never have dared to cross.

But it was too late for regrets.

Once everything was taken care of, Dustin wasted no time. He picked up the phone and dialed Collin.

"It's done. Are you satisfied now?" Dustin said, his tone light, almost cheerful.

The entire mess had been a result of his own negligence-giving his subordinates just enough rope to hang themselves.

Collin's voice on the other end was eerily calm, almost detached. "It's not like it was my house that got torn down. Why

would I be satisfied?"

Chapter 166 We Have

Visitors

Dustin grasped the situation immediately. "Tomorrow, I'll personally bring those guys to the orphanage to apologize. And

I'll make sure they apologize to Linsey too. Will that suffice?"

"Yes," Collin replied coolly. "Get it done as soon as possible. She's not in the best of moods right now."

And with that, Collin ended the call.

Dustin was momentarily taken aback. "Wow, you're really pulling out all the stops for Linsey," he muttered to himself. "I'm

the CEO, and I still have to personally apologize? What does that say about me?" After a moment's consideration, Dustin decided it wasn't such a bad idea after all. He had been curious for some time now-what kind of woman could capture Collin's heart so completely?

After all, Collin had been single for years, and now he had finally opened his heart to someone.

Dustin felt compelled to do whatever he could to support Collin.

Otherwise, he wouldn't have bothered to come over and deal with those two idiots personally.

The following morning, Linsey sat at the dining table, listlessly picking at her breakfast. She chewed each bite endlessly

without swallowing, her lack of appetite evident.

Collin watched her silently for a few moments before finally asking, "What's the matter?"

Linsey's thoughts were interrupted, and she offered him a weak smile. "It's nothing," she replied.

In truth, her mind was still consumed by the events at the orphanage.

But since Collin had assured her he would take care of it, she didn't want to pester him further.

Collin noticed the faint shadows under her eyes and surmised that she hadn't slept well.

He sighed softly. "You should try to eat something. If you don't like what they've made, tell the staff, and they'll prepare something different."

Linsey shook her head quickly. "This is fine, really. Don't bother them."

Collin smiled faintly. She was always so considerate of others, putting their needs before her own.

Linsey pushed the worries from her mind and tried to concentrate on her breakfast.

A short while later, her phone rang. It was Ella.

When Linsey saw who was calling, her heart pounded in her chest. Were those men back to cause more problems?

She quickly answered the phone, her voice filled with worry. "Ella, what's wrong?"

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Chapter 166 We Have Visitors

"Linsey," Ella said. "We have visitors."

Linsey's heart raced, and she jumped to her feet. "Don't worry, I'll be right there."

Noticing her distress, Collin immediately put down his fork, wiped his hands with a napkin, and prepared to go with her.

Dustin had assured him last night that the situation was resolved. Was there still trouble?

Collin frowned.

Ella was taken aback and laughed. "Linsey, it's alright! They didn't come to cause any trouble. They're here to apologize.

That's why I called."

Linsey froze, surprised. "Apologize?" she repeated.

So they weren't there to cause problems, but to apologize?

Had the problem already been taken care of?

Linsey instinctively looked at Collin, her mind whirling.

Just then, a man's voice came on the phone.

"Mrs. Riley? This is Dustin Wade. I want to sincerely apologize for the trouble we caused earlier. That's why I've come to the orphanage today to make amends. I understand you were raised here and have a strong connection to this place. I

was

wondering if you might have some time to stop by?"

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## Chapter 167 How On Earth Did You Manage That

The news of Dustin's personal visit to the orphanage took Linsey completely by surprise. For a fleeting moment, she couldn't shake off the suspicion that he might have an ulterior motive.

However, her worry for the orphanage and Ella overshadowed her doubts. After a moment of contemplation, she responded,

"Okay, I'll be right there."

Ending the call, Linsey turned to Collin. "I have to go to the orphanage," she informed him.

Collin nodded calmly. "No need to rush. Finish your breakfast. Making Dustin wait a bit won't hurt him."

Linsey blinked, a flicker of surprise crossing her face. "How did you know Dustin went there himself?" she inquired.

A moment of silence hung in the air as a realization dawned on her. Her eyes widened in disbelief. "Hold on... did you orchestrate all of this?" she gasped. "Is Dustin making a personal apology because of you?"

Collin merely offered a small, enigmatic smile in response.

Consumed by curiosity, Linsey couldn't help but press further. "Collin, how on earth did you manage that? Dustin is the heir to the Wade family, for crying out loud! How did you convince him to apologize in person?"

Amusement flickered in Collin's eyes as he observed her eagerness. "You really want to know, huh?" he teased.

"Absolutely!" Linsey replied without missing a beat.

Collin chuckled, but his expression remained serious. "Finish your breakfast first, and then I'll fill you in."

Linsey pouted playfully but obediently resumed her breakfast.

However, in her eagerness, she nearly choked on her food.

Collin sighed, wheeled himself closer, and gently patted her back. He then poured her a glass of water. "Here," he said,

concern lacing his voice. "Drink some water and slow down."

Linsey gratefully accepted the glass, took a few sips, and finally caught her breath.

As she placed the glass back on the table, a clean handkerchief materialized in front of her.

"Wipe your mouth," Collin instructed gently.

Linsey's heart skipped a beat as she took the handkerchief and dabbed at her lips.

A faint, refreshing scent emanated from the fabric, piquing her curiosity.

"One minute you're claiming to have no appetite." Collin teased with a chuckle. "And the next you're practically inhaling

your food. One would think I never feed you!"



## Chapter 167 How On Earth Did You Manage That

Linsey shot him a playful glare. "Well, you're the one who made me finish my breakfast first!" she retorted.

Collin chuckled, a hint of amusement in his eyes. "There's more to the story," he said.

"Dustin wasn't actually trying to kick the orphanage out. He had already found a new location for them-a much better one, with better facilities and equipment. He even set up a compensation fund for them."

Linsey's eyebrows shot up in surprise. "Wow, I had no idea he was being so thoughtful."

"That land on the outskirts?" Collin continued. "It's part of a huge project Dustin's working on. Once he acquired it, every greedy shark in town started circling, hoping to get a piece of the action. Dustin's really serious about this project, and he wanted to make sure everything was perfect with

no loose ends. The problem started when one of his own people tried to pocket the orphanage's compensation money. That's what caused this whole mess."

Linsey nodded slowly, absorbing the information. But then a frown creased her brow. "Okay, that makes sense, but if it was one of his subordinates who screwed up, why did Dustin feel the need to apologize in person?"

Collin observed, "He owes us an apology, that's for sure. But he also owes us a big thank you. We saved him from a major PR disaster. If news got out that his people were harassing an orphanage, his competitors would have a field day. They'd use it to sabotage his entire project."

He let out a low scoff, his voice dripping with disdain. "Those vultures would love to see him fail."

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## Chapter 168 Do You Two

### Know Each Other

"Ah, I understand now," Linsey said, finally grasping the situation.

Ten billion dollars! If she were in Dustin's shoes, she would be groveling, not just offering a simple apology.

"So, when you meet Dustin, he'll definitely apologize. If you have any requests, just let him know. He'll agree to anything,"

Collin assured her.

A blush crept onto Linsey's cheeks. "Honestly, as long as he doesn't cause any further trouble for the orphanage, I'll be satisfied. I'm just concerned that if we don't come to an agreement, he might become hostile and retaliate."

Collin reassured her, "You're the one who salvaged Dustin's ten-billion-dollar project. Believe me, you hold all the cards-

he wouldn't dare to retaliate."

Despite Collin's assurances, Linsey couldn't shake off a lingering sense of unease. Nevertheless, she hesitantly nodded in

agreement.

"Understood," Linsey conceded.

Confusion washed over her. Collin's words implied a certain familiarity with Dustin.

Most people would be at least slightly intimidated by the mention of Dustin. Yet, Collin appeared completely unfazed.

But then again, Linsey reminded herself, Collin always exuded an air of authority.

Perhaps this was simply the inherent pride of the Riley family's eldest son.

Linsey decided to dismiss the thought.

Meanwhile, Dustin had been waiting at the orphanage for a considerable amount of time. A sudden sneeze erupted from

him, accompanied by an unexpected shiver.

He frowned, an inexplicable sense of foreboding washing over him.

Could Collin be intending to exploit this situation to extort money from him?

The sound of a car pulling up outside finally broke the silence.

Dustin immediately approached and saw Linsey accompanied by Collin, who was seated in a wheelchair.

Recalling that he was supposed to feign ignorance of Collin's identity, Dustin disregarded him and extended a hand

towards Linsey with a warm smile. "Linsey, it's a pleasure to see you again."

In the blink of an eye, Collin seized Dustin's wrist in a firm grip.

"I'd be careful where you put those hands," Collin cautioned, his voice low and menacing.

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## Chapter 168 Do You Two Know Each Other

"Ah!" Dustin yelled in pain, his face contorting in agony. As he met Collin's glacial gaze, his heart skipped a beat.

He yanked his hand away from Collin's grasp, rubbing his wrist with a grimace. "It was just a damn handshake! Was that

really necessary?"

Collin let out a harsh snort. "Your grubby hands aren't fit to touch my wife," he stated coldly.

Dustin's eyes widened in surprise. He hadn't anticipated Collin's intense jealousy.

Still rubbing his wrist, Dustin glanced at Linsey, a mischievous glint in his eye. "Linsey, have you and Collin always been

this... close?" he asked, deliberately needling Collin.

Before Linsey could answer, Collin cut him off sharply. "Enough with the pleasantries, Dustin. Don't forget why you're here."

Dustin rolled his eyes, clearly irritated by Collin's possessive behavior.

Collin, Dustin thought, put his wife over his friends.

Linsey watched the exchange, a nagging feeling that something wasn't quite right tickling her senses.

"Do you two know each other?" Linsey asked, her curiosity piqued.

Dustin glanced at Collin, ignoring the warning glare he received. He turned to

Linsey, a wide, almost too-friendly smile plastered on his face. "Of course we know each other!" he exclaimed. "Didn't Collin tell you? We're friends. I'm here today

because of him..."

Collin's expression immediately hardened, his icy gaze fixed on Dustin.

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Chapter 169 Is That Still On

The Table

Dustin suddenly felt a shiver crawl down his spine.

He cleared his throat and forced a chuckle, trying to regain his composure. "Well, to be honest, Collin once did me a massive favor-saved my neck, basically. So, you could say I'm just repaying the debt."

Linsey nodded, the pieces clicking into place.

So that was the link between Collin and Dustin. It all made sense now; no wonder everything had been resolved so

smoothly.

Even though Collin wasn't exactly a power player, he was still a Riley. It wasn't surprising that he had connections with

someone like Dustin, the Wade family scion.

But Dustin was the face of CR Corporation... could Collin's billion-dollar debt be somehow connected to him?

Sensing Linsey's curiosity, Dustin swiftly steered the conversation in a different direction. "Right, about those incompetent

fools who work for me... Collin filled you in, I presume?"

Dustin's usual playful demeanor vanished, replaced by a serious expression. "Bottom line, I failed to judge those idiots.

properly and handle the situation correctly. Linsey, name your terms. I'll agree to whatever you ask."

Linsey's thoughts snapped back to the present. She recalled Collin's words before he left.

As if on cue, Collin gave her a subtle nod, confirming that she had the green light to make any demand she wished.

Dustin was clearly desperate to salvage this land development project.

Wasn't he worried she might take him for a ride with an outrageous ask?

After a moment's consideration, Linsey decided to take it easy on Dustin, considering his connection to Collin.

"No need for grand gestures," Linsey said softly. "All I want is for the children at the orphanage and Ella to be safe. You

mentioned relocating the orphanage and providing compensation. Is that still on the table?"

"Absolutely. It's the least I can do," Dustin confirmed without missing a beat. He then paused, a flicker of uncertainty

crossing his face. "Are you absolutely sure there's nothing else you want?"

Linsey shook her head calmly. "No, that's it."

Dustin looked genuinely surprised. "You're serious? Nothing else?"

Linsey frowned. "What else would I possibly want?"

She had been crystal clear about her demands. Why was he acting so shocked?

Dustin blinked. "Well, money, of course."

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## Chapter 169 Is That Still On The Table

After a short pause, he continued, "Or maybe you planned to drag my name through the mud online and ruin my reputation, just like you did with Marisol Wells."

Linsey was surprised that her clash with Marisol had become such widespread gossip. It seemed even the wealthy couldn't resist a juicy scandal.

"Marisol brought that on herself. She started the fight, and I simply finished it," Linsey retorted.

"As for you," Linsey continued calmly, "you claimed this was your subordinates' fault and that you were also a victim. Now that the situation at the orphanage has been resolved, I see no reason to escalate things further."

"Linsey, you're truly a kind soul," Dustin remarked, unable to contain his admiration.

Then, a sly grin spread across his face. "But how can you be sure I'm not just putting on an act? With my influence, I could

easily make one of my subordinates take the blame," he challenged.

Linsey's expression hardened. Her brow furrowed as she said in a cold, firm

voice, "Then don't say I didn't warn you if I

decide to retaliate."

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Chapter 170 You And

Dustin Seem Close

Linsey's clear eyes hardened, taking Dustin aback. He was a seasoned businessman, but this woman... she was something

else.

He had initially pegged Linsey as just another pretty face, but now he saw how wrong he had been. No wonder Collin had

fallen for her so fast.

Dustin chuckled. "Linsey, you're unlike any woman I've ever met. If you weren't already married, I might just try my luck..."

He didn't get to finish his sentence. Collin was practically radiating hostility.

"Dustin," Collin growled, his eyes narrowed to slits. "Are you asking for a beatdown?"

Dustin's playful facade vanished. "Whoa, chill out, man! It was just a joke," he said hastily.

He backpedaled towards the orphanage gates. "Oh! Something urgent just came up. Gotta run! Catch you later!"

"Good riddance," Collin said flatly, shoos him away.

Dustin pulled a face. "Wow, Collin, you really do ditch your friends the moment you get hitched, huh?"

With that, Dustin took off like a shot.

Linsey burst out laughing. Dustin had bolted as if Collin might actually chase him down.

"You and Dustin seem close," Linsey remarked. "And he's really scared of you! He doesn't act like a CEO at all."

She added playfully, "Anyone watching would think you were the one in charge."

Linsey had spoken casually, unaware of how close to the truth she was.

Collin paused, then asked calmly, "What if I were?"

Linsey frowned. "Then I might never speak to you again," she said.

Panic jolted through Collin. "Why?" he asked urgently.

If he were Dustin's boss, it would mean he was even more powerful than Dustin.

Most people would be thrilled to learn that, wouldn't they?

Linsey shrugged, continuing with his hypothetical question.

"Because I hate lies and secrets. I've had enough of that in my life..." She sighed. "I'd rather you be penniless than build our relationship on deceit."

Linsey smiled softly. "You're not worried I'd think less of you for not being rich, are you? Don't worry. We'll build a life together, brick by brick."

## Chapter 170 You And Dustin Seem Close

Linsey noticed Collin's expression had changed. She frowned and leaned closer, her voice filled with concern. "Collin? Are you alright? You look pale."

Collin blinked, as if shaking off a sudden thought. A flicker of complex emotions—a mix of sadness, perhaps even a hint of guilt—crossed his features before he quickly masked it.

"It's nothing," Collin dismissed, forcing a faint smile. "Okay, we'll work hard together."

He understood the underlying message in Linsey's words.

She had been deeply hurt by her ex-boyfriend's betrayal and couldn't bear to go through that kind of pain again.

Linsey scrutinized Collin's face, searching for any hint of discomfort he might be concealing.

"Collin," she said, her voice laced with a playful warning. "You're not keeping any secrets from me, are you? I'm serious-if

you ever lie to me, I'll seriously consider getting a divorce."

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