

Zillionaire 201

Chapter 201 Your Mother Was Stunning

Linsey realized that Collin had taken her to a cemetery.

In that moment, a realization hit her like a bolt of lightning. She turned swiftly, her gaze locking onto Collin, who was approaching in his wheelchair, and asked in disbelief, "Collin, are you bringing me to see your mother?"

Collin's biological mother, the late wife of the head of the Riley family, had always been a subject of curiosity for Linsey, though she'd never imagined Collin would bring her to this place.

She knew how much Collin cherished his mother. So, by bringing her here, did it mean that she held an irreplaceable spot

in his heart?

Collin offered a soft smile. "Yes. Didn't you say last night you wanted to

understand me better? I thought I'd take you to meet my mother. But here..."

He paused for a few seconds, his eyes searching hers, before he spoke again. "If you're having second thoughts, it's a little

late to turn back now."

Linsey shook her head quickly, her expression sincere. "I'm not having second thoughts. I've wanted to meet your mother

for a long time."

She grasped his hand with certainty. "Collin, let's go. Lead the way."

Collin nodded, casting a brief glance at the subordinates behind them. "You don't need to follow us."

Linsey gently pushed his wheelchair, and they headed for Collin's mother's grave. Behind them, the subordinates exchanged quiet, amused glances.

While most couples might opt for a romantic setting on a date, these two... well, they were anything but conventional.

Linsey had invited Collin to an orphanage, and now he was guiding her to a cemetery. In their own unique way, they truly

were a perfect match.

After following Collin's instructions, Linsey gently pushed his wheelchair toward a specific gravesite.

The area was pristinely maintained, every detail showing the utmost care and respect.

Linsey lifted her gaze to the photograph on the tombstone and froze, her breath catching in her throat. "She was so

beautiful..."

The woman in the photograph had a soft, serene beauty, the kind that reminded Linsey of a warm spring morning.

"Collin, your mother was stunning," Linsey murmured, her voice filled with admiration. She turned to him, her eyes briefly meeting his strikingly handsome face.

Now, Linsey understood where Collin got his striking good looks from.

Collin stared at the photograph of the woman, his gaze filled with a mix of emotions too complex to name.

He pressed his lips together, his voice quiet but laced with bitterness. "It's a shame she fell for the wrong man and ended

up dying with regret."

The sorrow in his voice tugged at Linsey's heart. Without thinking, she crouched beside him and gently took his hand. "Collin, whatever happened in the past is behind you now."

She couldn't bear to see him in pain.

A faint, bitter smile tugged at Collin's lips. "It's been years... I've long forgotten what sadness feels like. After all, I never even got to meet her. I just feel sorry for her. Grandma always said my mom was talented, well-read, graceful... I wonder, if she hadn't married my father, would she have lived a different life? Would she have survived giving birth?"

As he spoke, a mocking laugh escaped his lips. "It really wasn't worth losing her life for a man like that."

Linsey sighed quietly, her heart heavy. "Love can be blind," she said softly.

Collin turned to look at her, and the gloom on his face slowly faded, replaced by a warmth and tenderness that filled the space between them.

"You're right," he said, his voice filled with sincerity. "But my greatest blessing was meeting you."

Linsey's face flushed instantly, her heart fluttering. Smiling, she teased, "At first, I thought I'd end up stuck with Felix, that scumbag. I never imagined I'd meet you. Looking back, it's the best thing that ever happened to me."

She lifted her gaze to meet his, her tone serious yet full of affection. "Collin, I'm just as grateful to have found you."

Chapter 202 Shouldn't I Be The One Protecting You

Linsey paused, her thoughts swirling for a moment before she spoke softly. "Maybe our meeting was destined-like a wish

your mother left behind for us."

Collin gave a small nod, his expression thoughtful. "I believe that, too."

He gently squeezed Linsey's hand, then turned his gaze back to the photograph

on the tombstone. In a quiet but resolute

voice, he said, "Mom, I'm married now. This is Linsey, my wife. She's a remarkable woman, and we'll be happy together, I

promise."

His words, simple yet profound, made Linsey's heart flutter.

A warm blush spread across her cheeks, but her chest felt lighter, as if something unspoken had been confirmed.

Collin was her husband-her partner in everything now.

With a thoughtful pause, Linsey gently bit her lip before meeting Collin's gaze. Then, turning to the photo of the woman,

she said with quiet sincerity, "I'm Linsey. It's an honor to meet you."

Her voice softened as she added, glancing at Collin and then back at the photo, "Don't worry. I'll take care of him. If anyone

dares to hurt him, they'll regret it."

Collin chuckled softly, shaking his head. "Shouldn't I be the one protecting you?"

Linsey huffed lightly, her tone playful but filled with affection. "Who says wives can't protect their husbands? I just want to

let your mother know she can trust me."

The two of them shared a brief, tender moment, then turned their attention back to the tombstone. They cleaned it together, the silence comfortable.

After a moment, Linsey clapped her hands together, her brow furrowing as she looked around. "It looks a bit plain like this."

She glanced at Collin, her eyes thoughtful. "Did your mom like flowers?"

Collin nodded, his gaze softening. "She loved them. I used to bring flowers often, but it's alright if we skip it today. We'll

get a big bouquet next time."

Linsey waved him off, a playful smile tugging at her lips. "Wait here for a second." With that, she turned and disappeared into the nearby field.

A few moments later, she returned, her arms full of vibrant wildflowers. "Saw these growing nearby, thought they'd be

perfect."

Without wasting a beat, she began weaving them into a delicate wreath. "I hope she'll like this," Linsey murmured, her

voice soft with intent.

Marrying A Secret Zillionaire: Happy Ever After

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voice soft with intent.

Collin watched her in quiet admiration, surprised by her nimbleness. "I didn't know you could do this."

Linsey grinned, her eyes sparkling with pride. "Back in the orphanage, when things got slow, Dolores and I would make these. I got pretty good at it after a while."

Collin, eager to join in, plucked a handful of wildflowers from the ground, his brow furrowed in concentration. "Teach me.

I want to try, too."

Linsey carefully guided Collin's hands, showing him the steps to weave the wreath, one move at a time.

She figured he would find it a bit tricky-after all, it wasn't the usual thing men did. But to her surprise, he caught on

quickly, his fingers moving with surprising dexterity.

Not only did he master the basic technique, but he also started creating variations

of his own, adding personal touches to

the wreaths. His creativity took her by surprise.

"Wow, you're amazing," Linsey commented, her voice full of admiration, a

genuine smile spreading across her face.

He chuckled, his eyes warm. "This? It's nothing." His voice had a quiet confidence, like he was just getting started.

Linsey couldn't help but chuckle, her voice tinged with a playful but wistful tone. "You learn things so quickly. Last night you were giving me design advice, and today you're making wreaths with more styles than I am. You've definitely outdone me, your short-term teacher."

She sighed lightly, a flicker of melancholy in her words. "Life really isn't fair. How come you're so smart?"

Collin's usually serious expression softened as he looked at her, a spark of amusement in his eyes.

With a smile, he picked up one of the wreaths, delicate flowers woven together, and gently placed it on her head. He adjusted it carefully, a thoughtful look on his face, then nodded in satisfaction.

"It's such a beautiful flower wreath, and it looks even more beautiful on you," he

said.

Chapter 203 Collin, What Are You Doing

Linsey met Collin's gaze, and for a moment, time seemed to slow. Her heart skipped a beat, and her cheeks flushed with

sudden shyness.

"Oh, stop it," she muttered, trying to brush off the compliment. "I've been working all day without makeup-I must look a

mess."

But Collin's focus never wavered. His eyes softened as they traced her face, his Adam's apple bobbing slightly as he

whispered, "You have no idea how beautiful you look right now."

The vivid wildflowers, now a crown upon her head, seemed to amplify the radiance in her features. Linsey looked stunning effortlessly so, and Collin felt a magnetic pull toward her. He leaned in, unable to stop himself, wanting to be closer, to

drink in the sight of her.

Startled by his movement, Linsey jumped up, eyes wide, and quickly took a step back, glaring at him in exasperation.

"Collin, what are you doing? This is a cemetery!"

Collin blinked, as if snapping out of a trance. Realizing how close he had gotten, he quickly took a step back, his face flushing with a hint of embarrassment.

"Sorry." Collin exhaled, his face tinged with regret. He didn't dare glance at his mother's photo; guilt lingered in his chest

When did he start acting so act recklessly?

After a few moments of quiet reflection, Linsey and Collin finally said their goodbyes to his mother. They carefully tidied up the gravesite and headed back to the car.

Linsey gently removed the flower wreath from her head, her fingers tracing the delicate petals. She smiled softly at Collin. "This flower wreath you made is really beautiful. I'm planning to keep it when we get back and put it in water. It should

last a few more days, right?"

Collin raised an eyebrow, a playful smile tugging at the corner of his mouth. "It's just a flower wreath. I'll give you more gifts in the future. No need to cling to this one." His voice softened, almost teasing. "Besides, I love seeing you with my gifts."

Linsey, caught off guard by his gaze, quickly thought about the expensive necklace he had gifted her not long ago.

It felt too extravagant, so she had tucked it away.

But since Collin mentioned it, maybe she would start wearing it more often-just hiding it under her clothes for now.

Lost in thought, she suddenly felt the weight of Collin's intense gaze on her.

She instinctively reached up to touch her face, a little flustered. "What's wrong? Did I get some dust on my face?"

He replied with a smirk, "A little." Then, without warning, he raised the partition in the car, his voice softening. "Let me

wipe it for you."

Linsey, still processing his words, tilted her head up slightly, allowing him to gently brush his fingertips over her cheek.

He studied her face intently, his fingertips brushing her cheek with a gentle pressure, the faint calluses on his skin sending

a shiver through her.

A small itch crawled beneath her skin, and she instinctively pulled back, but his grip on her waist held her firmly in place.

Her gaze flickered nervously, and her breath caught when she felt his fingers graze her lips, sending a rush of warmth

through her.

"Is it OK now?" His voice was soft, like a whisper, but it held a quiet insistence.

For a brief moment, she was stunned, her mind struggling to catch up with the surge of emotions.

Then it hit her—he had raised the partition, and in the cemetery, he had wanted to kiss her...

And now, even here, he was still thinking about it.

"Collin!" she burst out, her voice a mix of disbelief and playful accusation. "You're acting like a lecher now!"

Collin's face remained as composed as ever. He met her gaze with a steady calmness, his voice unwavering. "Linsey, I'm a

man, just like any other. It's only natural to feel... certain things for the woman I care about."

He paused, the space between them narrowing as he leaned in a fraction closer. "Don't you feel the same when you're near

me?"

Her pulse quickened as she felt the warmth of his breath, her face flushing a deep shade of red.

Of course, she had reactions-strong ones-but that wasn't something she could admit so easily.

She took a slow, steadying breath, closing her eyes for a brief moment as the flutter of her trembling lashes gave away her

nervousness.

Collin's hand pressed lightly against her waist, and with a soft, teasing smile, he tilted his head, just inches from her lips.

But just as their lips were about to meet, the shrill ring of a phone shattered the silence, cutting through the tension like

a cold wind.

Chapter 204 Make Sure To

Look After Collin For Me

Linsey, already on edge, flinched. Heat rushed to her face, deepening the flush in her cheeks as her eyes darted anxiously

around.

Frustration knotted in her chest. She squeezed her eyes shut and bit down on the back of her hand, caught in a tug-of-war

with her own impulses.

What had she been thinking just now?

Had she really been that eager to kiss Collin?

Where was her self-control?

Collin's face remained unreadable, but the slight furrow in his brow hinted at his displeasure.

His lips parted as he was ready to say he could ignore the call.

But Linsey pointed at his pocket, where the phone buzzed insistently. "Answer it. What if it's important?"

He glanced at her flushed face, his throat tightening all over again.

The urge to kiss her still burned in his chest, but he shoved it down.

Now all that pent-up frustration had a new target-the person who had interrupted them.

Jaw tight, he pulled out his phone with a sullen face.

The caller was Kylee.

His expression darkened, frustration in his chest hardening into something heavier.

With a slow inhale, he answered, his voice edged with impatience. "What is it?" He didn't bother hiding his irritation.

A brief pause. Then Kylee's voice floated through-light, unbothered. "Oh, nothing important."

Linsey tensed. A flicker of something unreadable crossed her face before she turned to the window, gaze fixed on the

passing scenery.

Kylee's soft, almost melodic tone filled the phone, thickening the silence in the backseat.

"It's pretty late, and I noticed you and Linsey haven't returned yet. I got a little worried, so I thought I'd check in. If you're

in any trouble, let me know-I might be able to help."

She sounded considerate, but she knew exactly what she was doing. She was

well aware that Linsey and Collin were out on

a date tonight.

Calling now served two purposes: to interrupt and to gauge how far their relationship had progressed.

Collin exhaled sharply and pinched the bridge of his nose. His voice was flat. "Nothing happened. We're heading back now."

Kylee hummed softly, feigning relief. A beat of silence. Then, with a smile, she added, "By the way, Linsey's with you, isn't

she?"

Collin flicked a glance at Linsey. "Yeah."

Kylee's voice stayed light, almost teasing. "Linsey, the night air is cold. Make sure to look after Collin for me, okay?"

Then, as if catching herself, she let out a soft, self-deprecating laugh. "Sorry, Linsey. You must think I'm ridiculous. I just

can't help worrying when I don't see him. Guess I'm a little too anxious."

"What do you think is going to happen to me?" Collin interjected, his voice devoid of emotion.

Linsey stayed silent, listening.

There was nothing overtly wrong with Kylee's words, yet something about them unsettled her.

As Collin's wife, it was her place to take care of him. She didn't need Kylee, an outsider, reminding her of that.

Though unsettled, Linsey kept her tone polite. "Of course, I will."

The moment Collin ended the call, the warmth from earlier vanished.

The air in the car felt heavier now, the shift in Linsey's mood unmistakable.

Collin noticed, but understanding women had never been his strong suit. He mulled it over, searching for the right words,

but nothing came.

Kylee's cryptic words lingered in Linsey's mind, draining any desire to continue the conversation.

Silence stretched between them for the rest of the drive. After what felt like an eternity, they finally reached the Vista Villa.

Linsey stepped out, ready to help Collin, but someone else got there first. Kylee had hurried over, wasting no time inserting

herself between them.

Chapter 205 He's A

Wonderful Husband

Kylee wasted no time, guiding Collin inside with almost exaggerated enthusiasm. "Collin, you're finally back! I was thinking of making some of your favorite dishes tonight. Eat as much as you want, okay? My cooking has improved a lot

over the years."

Then she turned to Linsey with a practiced smile. "Linsey, you should help me in the kitchen later. It'll be a great chance for you to pick up a thing or two. Now that you're married to Collin, you should at least know how to cook the meals he

loves."

Collin's jaw tightened. He started to speak, ready to refuse on Linsey's behalf.

"Alright." To his surprise, Linsey agreed without hesitation.

She had her reasons. If helping Kylee meant understanding Collin better, it was an opportunity worth taking.

Collin hesitated but stayed silent.

He rarely interfered with what Linsey chose to do.

Without another word, she followed Kylee into the kitchen.

Kylee, slipping effortlessly into command, gestured toward a heap of fresh vegetables. "Linsey, could you rinse these for me?"

Linsey glanced at the pile, then gave a small nod. "Sure."

Linsey stepped forward and carefully rinsed the vegetables, ensuring each leaf was spotless.

Just as she finished, Kylee's voice cut in. "Linsey, go ahead and prep the meat." Without hesitation, Linsey nodded, taking the meat and blanching it to remove any impurities. Her movements were steady, her focus unwavering

Kylee stood off to the side, arms crossed, eyes narrowing.

She had expected Linsey to falter-to hesitate, to show even the slightest sign of reluctance. If Linsey looked frustrated, Kylee could easily spin it into a complaint to Collin.

But instead, Linsey carried out each task without question-duties beneath her, ones usually handled by the household staff. Worse, she did them with genuine

care.

Kylee's lips curled in a silent, bitter laugh.

Kylee scoffed internally. "Linsey is so calculated. She's obviously just trying to win Collin over. Does she really think I can't see through her little act?"

The more Kylee dwelled on it, the more irritated she became. Linsey was a good actress, no doubt-playing her role so convincingly, all wide-eyed obedience and quiet diligence.

Sure, Collin was handsome-anyone could see that. But at the end of the day, he was a man confined to a wheelchair,

unable to even stand.

And yet, Linsey had married him willingly. There had to be a reason.

Kylee's gaze flicked toward Collin in the other room. To him, Linsey must have seemed like a woman untouched by greed

someone who didn't care for wealth, luxury, or material things. But Kylee wasn't fooled. No one was that selfless.

It was almost impressive-Linsey had kept up the act for so long without a single misstep.

Kylee lowered her gaze, lost in thought. Collin had mentioned he still hadn't revealed his true identity to Linsey.

So, was she simply biding her time, waiting to secure wealth and power through his status as a member of the Riley family?

Turning the idea over, Kylee decided to dig a little deeper. She stepped closer, her tone laced with concern. "Linsey, has it

been difficult for you, taking care of Collin all this time? I mean, he can be so distant and reserved. Most people wouldn't

even know how to handle someone like him."

Linsey's hands paused briefly before she answered, her voice soft but steady. "At first, I did think he was a little hard to

approach. But over time, I realized he's actually incredibly kind and thoughtful. He's a wonderful husband, so no, it hasn't

been difficult at all."

As Linsey spoke, an unguarded softness crossed her face-a quiet sweetness surfacing without her even realizing it.

Kylee's lips curled in silent disdain.

Linsey might be fooled by Collin, but Kylee wasn't. She knew exactly what kind of man he was.

This was the same Collin who had built CR Corporation from nothing, carving his way through merciless power struggles without flinching.

Rivals had tried to crush him. One by one, they had been erased, outmaneuvered, left with nothing.

Even Gorman-his most persistent adversary-had yet to gain the upper hand.

A man like that? Capable of tenderness? Kylee nearly scoffed. Linsey had no idea who she had married.

Chapter 206 Are You Saying Collin Is In Debt

"Really?" Kylee responded, feigning indifference.

Then, she was struck by a thought, and a slow smile crept onto her lips.

She continued, "But if Collin truly cherishes you, why would he let you work? It's exhausting, and for what? A few measly pennies? If he really loved you, wouldn't he want you to just relax and enjoy life at home?"

Linsey's expression tightened, her displeasure clear. Keeping her tone even, she replied, "I'm more than capable of earning

my own money. Why should Collin bear all the burdens alone? I'm his wife-we're meant to share both the joys and the

struggles. That's what marriage is."

Kylee chuckled, clearly amused. "Share both the joys and the struggles, huh? You should be counting your blessings for

marrying Collin. What hardship could you possibly mean?"

"Helping him pay off his debt and getting through tough times together," Linsey said while meeting her gaze without

hesitation.

Kylee blinked. "Wait-pay off his debt?"

A beat of silence passed before she leaned in, her confusion deepening. "What debt? Are you saying Collin is in debt?"

Linsey gave a small nod. "Yeah. He used to owe a hundred million dollars. He's paid off most of it, but he probably still needs money for other things. As his wife, I can't just stand by and let him struggle alone."

Kylee froze, completely blindsided.

Collin? In debt? That didn't make any sense.

He was the last person she would expect to have financial trouble.

As someone who owned all the assets and shares of CR Corporation, a hundred million dollars should have been nothing to

him.

Wait... was CR Corporation struggling?

If Collin was actually in trouble, she needed to keep her distance-before she got dragged into it.

That unsettling thought took root as Kylee cautiously asked, "Who does Collin owe a hundred million dollars to?"

Linsey responded instantly. "CR Corporation, obviously."

Kylee's tension melted instantly. So that was it.

Linsey actually believed Collin owed money to his own company?

Kylee nearly laughed out loud. It was almost too ridiculous. Linsey clearly had no idea about Collin's true relationship with

So all that talk about debt-it was just another one of Collin's lies. He must have fed Linsey a story, and she had swallowed

it whole.

As she realized this, Kylee's disdain for Linsey only deepened.

Collin had spun so many absurd lies that Kylee could only reach one conclusion- he didn't take Linsey seriously at all.

Maybe he played the role of protector now, but it was probably just for his own amusement.

Smug delight bubbled up inside Kylee, and before she could stop it, a quiet laugh slipped out.

Linsey turned, puzzled. "Why are you laughing?"

Kylee quickly wiped the expression from her face and shrugged. "Oh, nothing. Just thought of a joke."

She had been overthinking things earlier.

Linsey was no threat-Kylee saw that clearly now.

She could handle Linsey however she wanted, and even if Collin found out, he wouldn't lift a finger to stop her. That much

was certain.

Meanwhile, Linsey remained oblivious to Kylee's shifting demeanor.

Focused on the ingredients before her, she took a quick glance and pieced together Collin's food preferences.

Even if Kylee wasn't serious about teaching her, she was confident she could learn to make these dishes on her own.

Kylee leaned against the counter, watching Linsey move about. A slow, knowing smirk tugged at her lips. The girl was wasting her time. And Kylee found the whole thing downright pathetic.

Chapter 207 Where's Linsey

Kylee smirked to herself. No matter how much effort Linsey put into pleasing Collin, it was a lost cause. He didn't feel a

thing for her. Wife or not, it was laughable that she didn't even know who he really

was.

Kylee almost pitied her.

Collin had kept his true identity from Linsey, never once revealing that he was the founder of CR Corporation. But Kylee?

She knew every detail.

That was all the proof she needed-she mattered to Collin in a way Linsey never would.

His interest in Linsey? Just a passing phase. And Kylee had no doubt that, in time, he would lose interest completely.

Meanwhile, Linsey remained focused on her task. After an hour of effort, she finally finished preparing the dishes.

Kylee had claimed she had cook dinner for Collin herself, but in reality, she only lazily chopped a few vegetables while

Linsey did most of the work.

Not that Linsey minded. As she surveyed the spread of dishes before her, a quiet sense of accomplishment settled in. She

couldn't wait to see Collin's reaction when he tried them.

The thought brought a smile to her lips.

Carefully, she lifted a steaming bowl of soup, ready to bring it out to Collin.

Just as she turned, Kylee suddenly pivoted, knocking into her arm.

Linsey stumbled, and before she could regain her footing, the bowl slipped from her grasp, crashing to the floor.

At the same time, some of the hot soup splashed out, hitting the back of Linsey's hand.

She cried out in pain, instinctively pulling her hand away.

But when she looked down at the shattered bowl and the soup pooling on the floor, a sharp pang of disappointment

stabbed at her.

The soup had been simmering for over half an hour.

Kylee feigned panic, her voice rising with exaggerated concern. "Oh no, Linsey, are you okay? I'm so sorry-I didn't see you

there!"

Linsey, her hand trembling from the burn, quickly turned to rinse it under the tap. "I'm fine."

Kylee couldn't suppress the smug curl of her lips as she glanced at Linsey's reddened hand, satisfaction gleaming in her

eyes.

Kylee turned her attention to the remaining dishes. "Let me help you bring these out so Collin doesn't have to wait. He

might be hungry."

"Alright," Linsey replied, gritting her teeth against the sting in her hand as she continued rinsing it under cold water.

She would need to put ointment on the burn later.

Soon enough, Kylee and a few servants made their way to the dining table, carefully carrying the dishes.

As they reached the table, Kylee flashed Collin a bright, almost rehearsed smile. "Collin, it's all ready. Come try it and see if

you like it."

Collin set his financial magazine aside and looked up, his gaze briefly flicking toward the kitchen. "Where's Linsey?"

Kylee responded smoothly, "Linsey said I had been doing most of the work, and she was just helping with the finishing

touches. She's still cleaning up, though, and told us to eat first. She doesn't want us to wait for her."

She then changed the topic. "Collin, try this-I worked really hard on it. If you don't, I'll be so disappointed."

Collin glanced away from the kitchen, picked up his utensils, and took a casual bite of one of the dishes. "Not bad," he said,

his tone indifferent.

Kylee let out a dramatic sigh of relief. "I'm so glad you like it."

She sat down beside him, letting the silence stretch for a moment before adding, "Collin, the truth is, my return wasn't

just about the movie. The real reason is that I accidentally offended someone. As a result, a lot of my contracts and

collaborations abroad were canceled. If I don't fix this soon, it'll seriously affect my future opportunities."

Collin set his utensils down, his expression turning curious. "Who is it?"

Kylee let out a soft sigh, her voice laced with frustration as she answered, "It's Gorman Green."

Chapter 208 Gorman Is Targeting You Because O...

Collin's expression immediately shifted, his brow furrowing. "Gorman? How did you end up getting tangled with him?"

In response, Kylee let the tears flow, her face twisting in distress. The emotion in her eyes was so raw and convincing that anyone who saw her would feel a tug of sympathy.

She dabbed at her eyes, voice cracking as she sobbed, "Collin, I honestly don't know what I did to upset him. Maybe I said

something without thinking, and it set him off."

Her voice trembled, thick with emotion. "Everyone knows how unpredictable he can be. No one dares to stand up to him. I really don't know what to do. You're the only person I can turn to... or I'll just lose it."

After a shaky breath, she tried to steady herself, but desperation still clung to her words. "But Collin, please, don't worry about me. I'll figure it out. If my career falls apart because of him... I just... I just hope you won't abandon me."

Collin remained silent, his face darkening. He had a pretty good idea of what was really going on.

Gorman had always been at odds with him, and it seemed likely that he had discovered Kylee's connection to Collin. This

was no accident-Gorman was likely targeting Kylee to get to him.

In short, Collin was the reason Kylee had become a pawn in Gorman's game.

Collin exhaled slowly, his jaw tightening. "Don't worry. I'll take care of it."

For a fleeting moment, Kylee's eyes flickered with relief, but she quickly masked it, her concern returning. "But Collin...

you've kept your identity hidden for so long, lived a quiet life. If you get involved with me now, the public will find out.

It'll only stir up trouble for you, and I don't want to be the cause of that."

"It's fine. No matter what happens, I won't just stand by," Collin said with conviction. He turned to look at Kylee, his gaze

steady. "Gorman is targeting you because of me. This is my fault, and I'll fix it."

Kylee's eyes filled with gratitude, and without thinking, she rushed over and threw herself into his arms. "Collin, thank you for standing up for me! I'm so touched." At that moment, Linsey appeared from the kitchen, having finished cleaning up.

When she saw them, she froze, her mind going blank for a split second.

"What's going on here?" she asked, her voice betraying no emotion.

Collin hadn't expected Kylee to throw herself into his arms like that. The sound of Linsey's voice made his expression shift instantly. Without thinking, he shoved Kylee away.

Caught off guard, Kylee lost her balance and fell to the floor with a sharp cry of pain.

Collin's eyes quickly shifted to Linsey, whose face was a mixture of confusion and something else he couldn't quite place.

For a moment, he was at a loss for words, panic creeping in. "Linsey... don't misunderstand. I can explain."

Linsey's mind went completely blank.

She had only wanted to cheer Collin up, especially after he took her to visit his mother's grave. She hadn't wanted him to

be consumed by past pain.

Because she cared about his feelings, she had buried her own discomfort about Kylee.

Her gut told her that Kylee had feelings for Collin, but she kept convincing herself she was overthinking it.

After all, Collin had reassured her just last night, telling her not to doubt him.

But now, in this moment, she was faced with the undeniable sight of Collin and Kylee in a close, intimate embrace.

Suddenly, memories from the past rushed back-Felix and Joanna betraying her together.

She tried to take a deep breath, but it felt as if an invisible hand was squeezing her throat, choking her.

As she struggled to steady herself, it felt as though her heart had been twisted into an unbreakable knot.

She couldn't stay here any longer. Without another word, she spun on her heel and fled, vanishing from the dining room in

mere seconds.

Chapter 209 I Think I Twisted My Ankle

Collin was momentarily frozen, but then he quickly spun his wheelchair around, intent on chasing after Linsey. Kylee, however, stepped directly into his path.

"Collin... Kylee called out.

His expression darkened immediately, his voice cold and commanding. "Move."

Kylee's eyes widened, her shock quickly giving way to fresh tears that streamed down her face.

Her features twisted in a mix of confusion and hurt. "Collin, what's happening to you?"

She sniffled, her voice small and fragile. This was the first time that he had ever shown anger toward her since their

childhood.

And all of it seemed to be because of Linsey.

Suppressing the reluctance gnawing at her, Kylee bit her lip and quickly transformed her expression into one of pitiful distress. "Collin, I can't stand... I think I twisted my ankle. It hurts so much."

At the sound of her voice, Collin paused, his eyes flickering with realization. In the heat of the moment, he had pushed Kylee down.

He took a deep breath, steadying himself, then turned to his subordinate. In a calm but firm tone, he instructed, "Help Kylee up and take her to the hospital. Be discreet-don't let the media catch wind of this."

"Yes, Mr. Riley," the subordinate replied, moving quickly to assist Kylee.

Reluctantly, Kylee watched, helpless, as Collin wheeled away, leaving her behind.

She fumed inwardly. "Damn you, Linsey! How dare you play the victim in front of Collin? What a shameless bitch!"

"Miss Russell, are you okay?" Collin's subordinate asked, his voice full of concern as he noticed the sour expression on her face.

She shot him a brief glance, then carefully masked her irritation with a calm smile. "Yes, thank you."

After all, he was Collin's subordinate, and she had to maintain a certain image. The last thing she needed was for Collin's people to start badmouthing her. That would ruin everything.

Meanwhile, Linsey hadn't gotten far. She had only distanced herself enough to escape the painful sight of Collin with

another woman.

At that moment, Linsey was hidden away in the back garden of the villa, crouched a secluded corner, tears falling freely. After being betrayed by Felix and Joanna, she had closed herself off from love, from trusting men.

Then Collin had come into her life, offering warmth and care. Gradually, she had let herself trust him again.

But never, in her worst imaginings, had she thought she would witness Collin holding Kylee in his arms right before her

eyes.

What had happened when she wasn't there?

Collin and Kylee had shared a long history, tied by childhood memories. She, on the other hand, had only known Collin for

a short time. How could she ever hope to compete for a real place in his heart?

For a moment, an overwhelming wave of dejection washed over her, and her confidence crumbled.

Then, a familiar voice broke through the silence.

"Linsey, are you there?"

Her body tensed at the sound, and without thinking, she jumped to her feet, ready to flee.

She couldn't face Collin right now.

Seeing Linsey about to walk away, Collin instinctively moved to follow her.

But he stopped short, his eyes falling on his wheelchair. A deep sigh escaped him, helplessness washing over him.

If only he didn't have to fake his disability in front of Linsey. Things would be so much simpler.

But to keep her safe, he had no other option.

The fear of losing her drove him to act. As Linsey was about to walk away, he noticed a step in front of him and, without

thinking, propelled himself forward. He landed heavily on the grass with a thud.

Sure enough, the noise reached Linsey's ears. She spun around, her eyes widening in shock as she saw Collin lying on the

ground. "Collin!"

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Chapter 210 Collin, Let Me

Go!

Linsey's heart skipped a beat as she rushed toward Collin, panic rising. She quickly reached out, helping him up with

urgency.

"Collin, are you okay? Did you hurt yourself?"

Before she could say another word, Collin's hand shot out, gripping her wrist firmly.

A faint, knowing smile tugged at his lips as his eyes held hers, unyielding. "Linsey, I've finally got you."

Linsey froze for a moment, realization crashing over her-Collin had staged the fall just to make her come back.

She exhaled sharply, frustration bubbling to the surface. "Collin, you jerk! Why would you pull a stunt like this? Let me go!"

She fought with everything she had, but no matter how much she struggled, his grip remained unyielding.

With a gentle but firm pull, he yanked her against his solid chest, and she gasped in surprise.

He held her tightly, not giving her a chance to break free.

They were so close she could feel the warmth radiating from his body, and the scent that clung to him was unmistakable. His usual clean, fresh scent was now mixed with a heavy, distinctly feminine perfume.

Her face flushed with anger, and a wave of nausea swept over her. With all her strength, she shoved against his chest.

"Collin, let me go!"

For now, her mind was consumed by the image of Collin and Kylee wrapped in each other's arms, and no matter how hard she tried, she couldn't shake it.

As Collin held her tightly, desperately trying to keep her from pulling away, he rushed to explain, "Linsey, listen to me. It was all a misunderstanding. There's nothing between Kylee and me. We were just talking, and out of nowhere, she got excited and hugged me. I didn't see it coming..."

Linsey's face remained expressionless, her eyes flat as she processed his words, finding them utterly ridiculous.

She had heard excuses like these before—from Felix.

Back then, Felix had pleaded just as desperately, insisting there was nothing between him and Joanna.

Yet, on their wedding day, Felix had turned his back on her without a second thought, choosing Joanna instead.

"Collin, I can't bring myself to trust you right now," Linsey said, her voice shaky. "You know what I've been through with my ex, and the excuses you're giving me are exactly like the ones he made. I can't do this again."

Her eyes brimmed with tears.

Collin stood there, speechless for a moment, his mind racing.

He knew he had made a mistake sitting too close to Kylee earlier.

He should have been more careful with Kylee from the beginning.

Last night, Linsey had already been unsettled by her arrival, and now he had made everything worse with his carelessness.

The guilt gnawed at him, his frustration building. He pulled Linsey closer, unwilling to let her slip away.

"Linsey, believe me," he said, his voice soft but insistent. "I swear, this won't happen again. From now on, I'll keep my

distance from other women. Only you."

Linsey felt the pressure of his embrace tighten, his scent enveloping her, and it

became harder to breathe, her head swirling with confusion.

"Collin, do I have to repeat myself? Let go of me!" she snapped, her voice trembling with fury.

"No chance. If I let you go now, you'll just run off again," he countered, his tone firm and unyielding.

Her frustration boiled over. With a surge of anger, she gritted her teeth, then, without hesitation, leaned in and sank her

teeth into his arm.

He flinched, a muffled groan slipping from his lips, his breath catching as the pain

hit.

At first, her bite was a warning. But when he still didn't release her, she bit down harder, determined to make him feel the

sting.