

Marrying A Secret Zillionaire Happy Ever After

#Chapter 21 - Read Marrying A Secret Zillionaire Happy Ever After Chapter 21

Chapter 21 What Exactly Happened Last Night

As Collin's lips hovered mere inches from Linsey's, his fingers clenched the bedsheets with an intensity that betrayed his inner turmoil.

He inhaled sharply, a desperate attempt to gather his waning self-control, and abruptly sat up.

Linsey, still lost in the depths of her dreams, shifted slightly in response. Her hands, which had been resting on Collin's arm, fell away as she turned to her other side in a soft rustle of sheets.

Collin seized this moment to gently disengage his hand and perched silently on the bed's edge, his breaths quick and

uneven.

The air was thick with her unique perfume, a seductive blend that tugged at his resolve like a siren's song.

Collin wrestled with his self-discipline, which seemed to crumble in her mere presence.

Was her allure so profound?

He had no idea what was happening, but staying wasn't an option. He had to go before he lost himself.

He had to go, and he had to go now.

With a resolve as brittle as ice, he stood, his movements brisk and silent. He left the room swiftly, leaving Linsey in her serene slumber, oblivious to the emotional tempest he had barely contained.

Back in the sanctuary of his own room, he strode into the bathroom. The shower's cold blast was immediate, the water cascading over him, a chilling torrent meant to quench the fire that her proximity had ignited, its streams pooling and swirling down the drain.

He slid a hand through his drenched hair, his eyelids falling shut instinctively.

In the fleeting seconds that followed, Linsey's radiant smile surfaced in his mind, her rosy lips vividly painted in his memory. The lingering, sweet scent of her seemed to envelop him still.

His eyes flew open, shock and disbelief painting his features.

Bowing his head, he noticed that he was erect, which deepened the chaos swirling within him.

Could he be losing his mind? Was he devolving into some kind of lust-driven fool?

The cold water ran on, timeless, until it ceased, leaving behind the eerie solitude of his ragged breaths piercing the still night air.

The shrill ring of her phone jerked Linsey awake the next morning.

0.0%

20:19

Chapter 21 What Exactly Happened Last Night

As she blinked open her eyes, a fierce headache threatened to lure her back to the comfort of sleep.

With a groan, she reached for her phone, her fingers brushing against the screen to silence the alarm that blared "First day

at work."

She shot upright, her mind snapping into alertness.

She had set this alarm just yesterday after leaving CR Corporation, a stark reminder of the orientation she was due for today. There was no room for tardiness.

She rapped her fingers against her throbbing temple, struggling to piece together her hazy return to her room last night.

There was no time to lose, however. With a sense of urgency, she darted into the bathroom, relishing a quick, warm shower before dashing downstairs to grab some breakfast.

Upon reaching the dining room, she caught sight of Collin seated at the table.

"Collin, when did you come home last night?" she inquired, settling into a chair and tearing off a chunk of bread. She bit into it, unaware of the shadow that crossed Collin's face at her question. His features twisted into a grimace.

"Don't you remember anything from last night?" he asked, his voice laced with a tinge of irritation, as realization dawned

on him.

This caught her off guard. She paused, bread halfway to her mouth, and met his gaze, her eyes swimming with

bewilderment. It was clear she recalled nothing.

"What exactly happened last night?" she asked, her voice tinged with confusion.

Her headache pounded mercilessly, obliterating any fragments of memory from last night.

It seemed as though, from the moment she stepped back into the villa, her recollections had fogged over.

Collin hadn't anticipated such a complete lapse in her memory and his frustration mounted.

It was the first time in years that he had been played by a woman.

Chapter 22 She'll Be Working Alongside Us

Seeing the deepening crease in Collin's brow, Linsey slowed her chewing, hesitating mid-bite.

"What on earth happened last night? Did I sleep too long? I feel like I missed something," she said, a hint of unease

creeping into her voice.

Collin inhaled sharply, forcing himself to rein in his frustration.

The memory of last night-the way he had almost lost control because of her-only made his irritation spike.

Without another glance in her direction, he turned his wheelchair away, rolling toward the study in silence.

"Forget it. I have work to do," he muttered, his tone clipped.

Linsey blinked, watching his abrupt departure with confusion.

What exactly had happened last night? Had she done something to upset him? He certainly didn't look pleased.

Still, there wasn't much time to dwell on it. She checked the time on her phone, quickly finished her breakfast, grabbed

her bag, and left for CR Corporation.

If Collin was upset, maybe she could pick up a small gift after work to lift his mood.

Before long, she arrived at CR Corporation's headquarters.

Once her onboarding was complete, she made her way to the Fashion Design Department.

The moment her supervisor, Coen Fuller, spotted her, he stepped forward and gestured for her to follow.

"Come on, I'll show you to your workstation," he said, leading the way.

"You're Linsey, right? I heard about you after the interview yesterday. Your design got unanimous praise from the panel- pretty impressive," Coen said with an easy smile. "That's your desk."

"Mr. Fuller." A familiar voice cut through the office.

Linsey froze, her eyes widening slightly.

Why was she here?

Cynthia, the woman she had just met yesterday, strode forward, her high heels clicking sharply against the floor.

Coen's grin widened the moment he spotted her. "Cynthia! Finally, you're here. Come on over. I was just about to introduce

you to the team."

He turned to the rest of the office, clapping his hands lightly. "Everyone, let's pause for a moment. We have a new colleague joining us today-Cynthia Keller. I'm sure many of you have heard of her before. Starting today, she'll be working

0.0%

Chapter 22 She'll Be Working Alongside Us

alongside us."

Cynthia gave a poised, elegant smile. "Hello, everyone. I'm Cynthia. It's a pleasure to be part of the team. I know you all

work incredibly hard, so I brought a little something for each of you. Nothing much just a small token of appreciation"

At her cue, several assistants entered, carrying neatly stacked boxes. They moved through the office, distributing the gifts.

But as soon as people opened them, they realized Cynthia's definition of "a small token" was anything but. The women received trendy diamond necklaces, while the men found sleek, high-end mechanical watches inside their boxes.

"Wow, this is unbelievably generous. Thank you, Cynthia!"

"Cynthia, if you ever need anything, just ask me."

"As expected from the daughter of the Keller family-so extravagant!"

Cynthia listened to the flood of compliments with a proud yet gracious smile. Then, lifting a large gift box, she walked over to Coen and handed it to him with both hands.

"Mr. Fuller, I remember you're a fan of this coffee brand, so I brought a few boxes for you," she said smoothly.

Coen's eyes lit up as he lifted the lid. Beneath the neatly packed coffee beans, two solid gold bars gleamed.

"Cynthia, you're incredibly thoughtful. Thanks," Coen said, shutting the box with a satisfied smile.

Throughout this, Linsey remained off to the side, watching Cynthia's performance with a trace of amusement.

It was just a job, yet Cynthia was already throwing money around before even earning her first paycheck.

What baffled Linsey the most, however, was why Cynthia was here at all, starting on the same day as her.

During yesterday's interview, the panel had been clear-only one candidate would be selected. Since she was the one who got the job, then how did Cynthia manage to get in?

Recommended for you

My Wife...

Unveiling Hearts: My Wife Is A ...

Melanie married Ashton out of gratitude, but she quickly found herself entangled i...

Chapter 23 You Need To Develop Your Skills

Cynthia caught Linsey's glance from the edge of her vision and responded with a smug smile.

With an air of forced cordiality, she commented, "Linsey, since we both began on the same day, I didn't think to bring a gi

Let's look forward to a productive collaboration."

Coen suddenly recalled Linsey standing nearby. But with the influential Cynthia right there, why would he bother wit

Linsey, a designer with no real connections?

Casually, he said, "Oh yes, this is Linsey Riley. Take a moment to mingle, everyone. We'll gather for a meeting in half a hour."

After his brief introduction, Coen cheerfully strode back to his office, cradling the extravagant gift box in his arms.

Linsey made her way to her desk, with Cynthia shadowing her closely and taking a seat nearby.

In a low voice, Cynthia murmured, "You must be quite surprised to find me here." While Linsey busied

herself with organizing her workspace, she shot Cynthia a fleeting look but said nothing.

Unbothered by Linsey's silence, Cynthia pressed on. "Despite your victory yesterday, it's meaningless. I've still landed a spot here at CR. Remember my warning-wait and see."

Cynthia's voice dripped with mockery as she locked eyes with Linsey, her gaze brimming with scorn.

When her colleagues heard her pronouncement, an uneasy silence enveloped them; they seemed hesitant to voice their thoughts.

Yet, a few whispered among themselves, unable to curb their penchant for rumors.

"Linsey clinched the top spot in yesterday's interview, and we all know Cynthia's notorious for her domineering ways. I fear Linsey's in for a rough ride."

"Indeed. Linsey, the newcomer, has somehow managed to cross Cynthia, My sympathies are with her."

"Shh, keep it down. If Cynthia catches wind of our chatter, we'll be in serious trouble. Remember, we did take her gifts."

"What of it? She's swimming in wealth; those gifts mean nothing to her."

As anticipated, during the meeting that followed thirty minutes later, Coen openly delegated Cynthia's responsibilities.

"In light of the upcoming season, we will update the designs for a classic brand. Since the rest of the team is already occupied, Cynthia will spearhead this project."

Cynthia responded with zest, "Thank you, Coen, for entrusting me with this. I'm committed to excelling"

Linsey shot her a look before turning expectantly towards Coen, awaiting her own assignment.

0.0%

Chapter 23 You Need To Develop Your Skills

However, Coen's gaze was devoid of any expectation; he addressed her in a tone of superiority. "Linsey, your experience is rather limited. For now, focus on acquainting yourself with the team dynamics, observe the seasoned designers, and help out with simpler chores, like getting coffee for everyone. Understood?"

Cynthia gave Linsey a smug grin, her eyes brimming with disdain.

She knew it. Linsey wasn't in her league.

Linsey's brow furrowed in frustration.

She believed that once she got in, she could start working and finally chase her dream of becoming a designer.

Yet, the tasks Coen handed her were disappointingly trivial.

Indignant, Linsey rose to her feet and voiced her concerns. "Coen, why does Cynthia, who started the same day as I did,

receive a substantial project while I'm stuck with these basic tasks? This doesn't seem right."

Coen, clearly irked by Linsey's forthrightness, snapped back, "What exactly doesn't seem right? Linsey, you're still learning

the ropes as a rookie designer. You need to develop your skills. Do you really think excelling in the interview makes you

special?"

Chapter 24 I'll Learn From My Colleagues

Coen's expression darkened. He was clearly furious at Linsey's outburst. After making his stance clear, he turned to Cynthia and said coolly, "Cynthia has competed in numerous design contests and has an impressive portfolio. She's far more experienced than you. Instead of wasting time arguing with your superior, you'd be better off learning from your colleagues as you should."

Linsey parted her lips to respond, but before she could get a word out, Coen's voice turned sharp.

"Linsey, if you insist on challenging my decisions, I'll have to seriously reconsider whether you're even fit to pass the three -month probation period."

The warning struck hard, forcing Linsey into silence.

Her probation depended entirely on Coen's evaluation-if he decided she wasn't meeting expectations, she would be out before she even had a chance to prove herself.

She had worked too hard to land this job at CR Corporation. There was no way she would let herself be forced out so easily.

Suppressing her frustration, she forced herself to compromise. "Understood. I'll learn from my colleagues. And I trust you'll assign me appropriate tasks soon."

Coen ignored the latter half of her statement. With a cold scoff, he stormed out of the meeting room.

The remaining employees exchanged uneasy glances, unsure whether they should say something to Linsey.

Standing up for her would mean opposing both Coen and Cynthia—a risk no one was willing to take.

Meanwhile, Cynthia was thoroughly enjoying Linsey's humiliation. Recalling Coen's words, she sighed dramatically and turned to the group. "Now that I think about it, a coffee run sounds perfect. What do you all think?"

Her colleagues hesitated. "Maybe another time, Cynthia. You've already given us gifts."

Without skipping a beat, Cynthia pulled some cash from her wallet and tossed it onto the desk in front of Linsey.

"Linsey, didn't you hear? We'd like coffee. Make sure to get everyone's order right—don't mess it up. If you can't even handle something this simple, how can Coen ever trust your abilities?"

With that, she linked arms with a few coworkers and strolled out, laughing.

Linsey sat still for a moment before calmly taking the money. Then, without a word, she returned to her desk, picked up a pen and notebook, and went to each colleague one by one, taking their orders.

Cynthia smirked at Linsey's passive demeanor, relishing her compliance. "Make sure you tell the barista exactly what I want," she said, her tone dripping with arrogance. "One-third milk, exactly six ice cubes—not one more, not one less—and absolutely no sugar. Understood? If the taste isn't perfect, you'll be going back to get another one."

0.0%

20:20

Chapter 24 I'll Learn From My Colleagues

Linsey jotted it down without emotion and replied flatly, "Got it."

Then, without another glance at Cynthia, she moved on to the next colleague.

Fortunately, the others had no interest in making her life harder. Their orders were simple and reasonable.

Half an hour later, Linsey returned with the drinks and handed them out one by one.

"Thanks."

"Appreciate it, Linsey."

"No problem," Linsey replied politely.

When she reached Cynthia, Cynthia suddenly tilted the cup just enough for the liquid to spill over, sending coffee cascading down Linsey's front.

The lid popped off, and the dark coffee, swirled with frothy white foam, splattered across her clothes. The empty cup hit the floor with a sharp clatter.

The office went dead silent. Everyone stood frozen, eyes wide in disbelief.

Cynthia gasped theatrically, pressing a hand to her chest. "Oops! My hand slipped-total accident. Are you okay, Linsey? Should I buy you a new outfit? Honestly, that shirt of yours is practically falling apart. Why are you even still wearing it?"

Linsey met Cynthia's gaze with an unreadable expression and said in an eerily calm voice, "It's fine."

Everyone assumed she would let it go-after all, Cynthia's connections made her untouchable.

But without hesitation, Linsey grabbed every coffee cup in front of her and, in one fluid motion, overturned them onto Cynthia's head.

A collective gasp echoed through the room.

The ice-cold coffee streamed down Cynthia's hair, soaking her from head to toe.

hapter 25 Cynthia, Are You Alright

Cynthia stood frozen, utterly shocked. When she finally snapped back to reality, she found herself soaked in coff appearance thoroughly disheveled. "Linsey!" she exclaimed, her voice trembling with rage.

She had never imagined Linsey would lash out so brazenly.

Her cheeks burned with humiliation and fury as she stared at Linsey, teetering on the edge of an emotional collapse.

Today, of all days, she had chosen to wear her most elegant, professionally tailored outfit to make a strong impression at CR Corporation. Her hair was styled to perfection, and her makeup was meticulously applied—all of which was now ruined by Linsey.

"What the hell are you doing?!" Cynthia's voice cracked as she roared, her eyes welling up with tears not just of frustration but sheer indignation.

The office fell into a stunned silence, their colleagues' eyes wide with disbelief. A few rushed over with tissues, dabbing gently at Cynthia's face, trying to soothe the sting of coffee in her eyes.

"Cynthia, please, wipe it away."

"Linsey, what was that supposed to mean?" another colleague demanded, frowning deeply. Linsey stood there, with an eerie calmness to her demeanor that bordered on unsettling.

"Cynthia claimed it was an accident. This reaction seems quite extreme," one of them added.

Linsey hesitated no more and finally made her move. Her eyelids fluttered with a feigned innocence as she murmured, "Me too. I was just as shocked when my own clothes were splashed, and before I knew it, I'd clumsily spilled my coffee just like

she did."

Her voice dripped with contrived sweetness, each word deliberately spaced as she bestowed a mock apologetic smile upon Cynthia. Her gaze locked onto Cynthia as she asked with fake concern, "Cynthia, are you alright?"

Cynthia's breaths came in sharp, erratic bursts, her bosom rising and falling with barely controlled fury. Her eyes sparked with an intense, scorching wrath, the kind that fantasized about wringing Linsey's neck right then and there.

Cynthia had spent her entire life cocooned in comfort, adored at home and admired by everyone she met. The thought of being humiliated like this was beyond belief.

Internally, she hurled vile curses at Linsey, but the overt rage left her lips quivering, struggling to form coherent words.

Linsey, perceptive of Cynthia's simmering rage, felt a perverse thrill at the sight.

Her smile widened, her eyes glinting with mock sympathy as she leisurely surveyed Cynthia's ensemble. "Oh dear," she drawled, feigning pity. "That outfit must have been quite the investment. Such a shame. A mere cup of coffee-worth but

a few dollars-and yet it's managed to devastate your beautiful attire. Perhaps, Cynthia, it might be wise to steer clear of

0.0%

20:21

coffee in the future, or you might end up rumb

After she delivered her line, Linsey's expression chilled instantly as she discarded her pretense of a smile and spun on her

heel to leave.

Her dismissive air only fueled Cynthia's fury.

"Linsey, don't you dare walk away from me!" Cynthia's voice cracked, raw with emotion. She watched Linsey's retreating figure, a spark igniting her resolve. Without a second thought, Cynthia surged forward, intent on dragging Linsey back to confront her.

Today was the day Cynthia would put Linsey in her place.

But as Cynthia reached out, her sharp nails almost grazing Linsey's shoulder, Linsey whirled around with unexpected agility. In one smooth, backhanded motion, she seized Cynthia's wrist, jerking it upwards with such finesse that Cynthia gasped in both shock and pain.

"It hurts! Let go, Linsey!" Cynthia cried out, her voice tinged with desperation.

Linsey, however, maintained her grip effortlessly, her expression unreadable as she locked eyes with Cynthia.

Words were unnecessary-the silence between them was laden with tension.

Cynthia's eyes widened as she met Linsey's gaze, finding herself inexplicably drawn into the depth of those enigmatic eyes.

A shiver raced down Cynthia's spine as the chill in the air seemed to intensify, making her feel as though the coffee stains on her clothes had turned ice cold.

Chapter 26 Linsey Is

Fearless

Linsey's gaze locked with Cynthia's, her expression steady and calm. Then, without warning, Linsey leaned in closer, her voice dropping to a dangerous whisper. "Yes. I spilled the coffee on purpose."

Cynthia's face flushed with fury, her eyes narrowing at Linsey. But before she could retort, Linsey's next words froze her in

place.

"I'm here to work and make a living. If you keep interfering, next time, it won't just be coffee."

Linsey's eyes never wavered as she scrutinized Cynthia's face, as though searching for her next target.

"You're pretty, you know. Pity if something... happened to that face."

Cynthia's body stiffened in terror, her breath catching. Just as she braced herself, Linsey released her, and Cynthia, panic

overtaking her, instinctively shielded her face with her hands, terrified Linsey might strike.

If Linsey had any intention of making Cynthia regret her actions, Cynthia certainly had her own ways of dealing with it.

But one thing was clear-she couldn't afford to ruin her face.

Anger simmered beneath the surface, but Cynthia kept it in check, unwilling to escalate things further. After a tense

moment, she stamped her foot in frustration and stormed off, her exit as dramatic as it was quick.

Linsey didn't bat an eye as she watched Cynthia disappear, her expression unreadable. There was no hint of remorse in her

-just a calm indifference.

She absentmindedly glanced down at the stain on her clothes and, with a soft sigh, made her way toward the restroom.

Once they had both left, the office atmosphere shifted. A collective breath was released as the tension ebbed away.

One colleague couldn't resist commenting. "Linsey is fearless. She actually dared to go up against Cynthia like that."

One colleague murmured, "It seems like Linsey already stepped on Cynthia's toes during the interview yesterday, so one more confrontation today probably isn't a big deal."

Another chimed in. "But don't you think Linsey's the one who's really not to be messed with?"

A heavy silence followed, the weight of their words hanging in the air. The atmosphere in the office had shifted, and it was

clear to everyone that Linsey wasn't someone to provoke lightly.

Breaking the uneasy stillness, one colleague, who clearly wasn't picking up on the tension, took a casual sip of his coffee

and grinned "Honestly, the coffee from this new café is amazing."

The others exchanged looks, rolling their eyes at his attempt to lighten the mood.

"Well," another colleague began, his voice lower now, "even though Coen said we could have Linsey run errands for us in the future, we should probably be careful not to push her too far."

0.0%

20:21

Chapter 26 Linsey Is Fearless

"Agreed," came the unanimous response, their earlier unease now laced with a newfound caution.

"Alright, back to work, everyone."

"Call the cleaner to mop the floor," someone muttered, as if trying to move past the incident.

From that moment on, the Fashion Design Department had a new reputation for Linsey—one that was well known: her

temper was not to be trifled with.

Later, Cynthia returned after changing clothes. As soon as she saw Linsey, her eyes widened in shock.

But this time, something was different. There were no harsh words or glaring looks. Cynthia didn't even acknowledge Linsey, as if she hadn't even seen her. She simply walked past, deliberately avoiding any interaction.

In fact, Cynthia immediately took it upon herself to move her desk from next to Linsey's to a different spot in the office, clearly signaling she wanted no further contact.

The shift didn't go unnoticed. Despite Coen's earlier arrangements, no one dared ask Linsey to do any menial tasks.

The unease among the colleagues was palpable, and they made sure to tread carefully around her.

After a quick lunch break, Coen called Linsey into his office.

"Linsey, we have an important client arriving soon, and I need to personally

handle them. Take these documents to the

main conference room on the seventeenth floor."

He quickly tossed a stack of papers into her arms before grabbing his coat, visibly rushed.

Linsey nodded and made her way to the elevator, the documents in hand.

CR Corporation's high-rise building was a labyrinth of offices and departments, each floor serving a different function. It

also boasted numerous recreational areas for breaks, along with meeting rooms, reception spaces, and more.

Though the building was well-organized with clear signage, Linsey found herself briefly disoriented when she stepped off

the elevator on the seventeenth floor. The unfamiliar layout had her second-guessing her path for a moment.

"Damn it! If I mess this up and delay the meeting, it'll be a disaster," Linsey murmured with a frown. But just as she was

about to give up, she noticed a conference room door swing open nearby, and a group of people filed out.

Instinctively, she headed toward them, planning to ask for directions to the main conference room.

But then, something made her pause. As she glanced into the room, her gaze locked onto a familiar face.

Was that... Collin?

Chapter 27 I'm Here To

Deliver Some Documents

Linsey stood frozen in place, her eyes widening in disbelief.

Why wasn't Collin in a wheelchair?

The man who looked exactly like him stood with a relaxed posture, leaning slightly as he gave instructions to the people

around him.

The group listened attentively, their expressions serious, their demeanor respectful.

From her vantage point, Linsey could only make out a partial view of his face-not enough to see clearly.

Without thinking, she took a few hesitant steps forward.

How was this possible? Why was Collin here? And more importantly, why was he able to stand? Wasn't he supposed to be

paralyzed?

"Who are you?" A voice, calm yet laced with curiosity, suddenly spoke up behind her.

Startled, Linsey spun around to find a bespectacled man dressed in a suit.

"Uh, I...." She instinctively glanced back at the meeting room, but the man she had seen just moments ago was gone. The door was now firmly shut. "I'm here to deliver some documents. Is that the main conference room?"

The man's brow furrowed slightly before he offered a polite, understanding smile. "You must be new. The main conference room on the seventeenth floor is in the other direction. You've been looking in the wrong place."

The other direction? Linsey pressed her lips together, irritation bubbling beneath the surface. No wonder she hadn't found

1. it.

"Then what about that meeting room? I saw a lot of people in there just now," she said.

The man adjusted his glasses, his tone carrying a hint of warning. "That's the CEO's conference room. If you're not a senior executive or a key employee, you really shouldn't go in without permission."

The CEO's conference room? Linsey's mind raced. So, was that Dustin's meeting room?

"Aren't you here to deliver documents? Quit standing around. If someone else catches you loitering here, you're definitely getting an earful," the man urged, gesturing for her to leave.

"Oh, right. Thanks." Linsey cast one last glance over her shoulder. But with the weight of the documents in her hands, shoved her curiosity aside and hurried toward the main conference room.

she

Luckily, most of the attendees hadn't arrived yet, and the meeting hadn't started. She managed to deliver the documents just in time.

After finishing her task, she took the elevator back to the Fashion Design Department.

0.0%

20:22

100.0%

Chapter 27 I'm Here To Deliver Some Documents

Yet her mind was a tangled mess. The image of that man-the one who looked so much like Collin-refused to leave her

thoughts.

Was it really him?

But it didn't add up. Collin had no reason to be at CR Corporation, let alone standing there like he hadn't spent the last few years in a wheelchair. Maybe she was mistaken?

Back at her desk, Linsey hesitated before pulling out her phone. She scrolled to Collin's number and typed out a message.

"Collin, where are you right now?"

It was a casual question, almost offhand. After hitting send, she leaned back in her chair, absentmindedly tapping her fingers against her phone as she waited.

But minutes passed with no reply.

A faint sense of disappointment settled in her chest. He probably wasn't going to text her back-he had been sulking all morning and had holed himself up in his study.

Sighing, she placed her phone on the desk and tried to focus on browsing the company's design website.

Just as she was getting into it, her phone suddenly buzzed.

It was a call from Collin.

Linsey blinked in surprise. She quickly glanced around-some colleagues were deep in work, while others were clearly slacking off. Not wanting to take the call at her desk, she got up and slipped into a quieter spot nearby.

"Hello?" The moment she spoke, her voice softened without her even realizing it.

There was a brief pause on the other end before Collin's deep, steady voice came through. "What's up?"

Chapter 28 What Are You Laughing At

Collin's voice was low and smooth, laced with a faint crackle of static that softened as it reached Linsey's ear.

A strange warmth crept up her skin where the phone pressed against her cheek. She lowered her voice unconsciously. "Yeah, well... nothing. I was just asking."

Collin's tone shifted slightly, a quiet amusement threading through his words. She could almost picture the subtle lift of

his brow.

"Just asking? Are you sure you're only casually asking where I am?"

The sound of his voice-calm, rich, and effortlessly teasing-unraveled her thoughts, and before she could stop herself, the truth slipped past her lips. "I just... didn't want you disappearing for days again like before. I wouldn't even know where you were."

A low chuckle rumbled from the other end. It was unhurried, deep, and laced with a husky quality that left her momentarily speechless.

"What are you laughing at?" The question slipped out before she could think better of it.

Still amused, Collin replied, "Linsey, are you saying you can't bear to be apart from me? I had no idea I was this irresistible to you that you'd be so worried about me."

His tone dipped into something almost intimate, a teasing edge curling at the end.

Or maybe it was just her imagination running away with her.

His playful remark sent a rush of heat to her face. Why had she blurted that out?

It wasn't like she meant anything more by it.

Flustered, she pressed the cool back of her hand to her burning cheeks.

"That's not what I meant," she huffed, scrambling to defend herself.

Before she could get another word out, Collin cut her off, his voice warm and steady. "Don't worry. For the next few days, I'll be home, waiting for you to come back from work."

The unexpected promise caught her off guard. A gentle pull tightened around her heart, the fleeting emotion quickly giving way to unrestrained joy.

A quiet warmth spread through her chest. She couldn't hold back the happiness swelling inside her.

For the first time in years, someone had said those words to her.

So, she really did have a home-somewhere she was expected, somewhere someone was waiting for her.

Chapter 28 What Are You Laughing At

"Alright. You said it yourself," she murmured, biting her lip lightly.

Collin's voice held an easy, almost lazy charm. "I wouldn't go out of my way to lie about something like that just to mess

with you."

After the call ended, Linsey sat still for a moment, clutching her phone. The warmth of his words lingered, wrapping

around her like a gentle embrace.

If Collin said he would be home waiting for her, then he would be.

Her thoughts drifted to him-he spent most of his time in the study, relying on his wheelchair to get around.

By now, the image of the man she had seen in the CEO's conference room had faded to the back of her mind. She must

have been mistaken.

Smiling, she slipped her phone into her bag, already thinking about what she could get Collin as a small gift after work.

Even though he had sounded relaxed during their call, she still wanted to bring him something-maybe something to brighten his mood after his earlier irritation that morning.

Once work ended, she headed straight to a nearby mall.

She hadn't settled on what to buy yet and was aimlessly wandering through the stores when a cheerful voice called out.

"Ma'am, care to take a look inside? We just got a fresh batch of new arrivals!"

"Sure," Linsey said, stepping toward the store. She didn't have anything particular in mind, so it wouldn't hurt to browse.

Recommended for you

COMPLETED

WOKE UP Married

Woke Up Married

The dream of everyone with regards to marriage is to be able to find that special...

Chapter 29 Could You Wrap It Up For Me

Linsey stepped inside and immediately began browsing through the men's clothing on display, her eyes scanning each piece

with quiet deliberation.

The sales assistant, ever perceptive, addressed her with a friendly smile. "Ma'am, are you shopping for a gift today?"

Linsey gave a small nod. "Yes, I'm looking for something for my husband."

"Let me show you a few styles. That way, you can decide what would suit him best." The sales assistant gestured for Linsey

to follow her deeper into the store.

Though Linsey's outfit wasn't particularly extravagant or branded, the sales assistant maintained the highest level of

professionalism.

There was something about Linsey's presence—an effortless elegance that set her apart. And then there was her face,

strikingly beautiful, impossible to overlook.

She attentively presented several options from the store's collection, carefully explaining each one.

Linsey examined them thoughtfully, her mind drifting to Collin's wardrobe—filled with the same monotonous, somber

tones he always wore. If she was going to get him something, she might as well choose something that would bring a little

change.

Even so, she was practical. She wouldn't pick anything too bold.

After some careful deliberation, she finally settled on a deep burgundy outfit. "This one should work. The size looks about

right. Could you wrap it up for me?"

The sales assistant's face brightened. "Of course, ma'am."

As she prepared the purchase, she couldn't help but admire Linsey's refined taste. Her sharp eye for fashion was

undeniable.

A small pang of envy surfaced. Linsey's husband was certainly a lucky man.

If she were a man, she wouldn't hesitate to want someone like Linsey by her side.

Unaware of the sales assistant's amusing thoughts, Linsey followed her to the counter to pay.

Just then, a surprised voice rang out from the store entrance. "Linsey? Is that really you? What a surprise! I never expected

to run into you here. This is amazing!"

Linsey turned toward the voice, and the light in her eyes dimmed in an instant.

Standing in the doorway were none other than Joanna and Felix-two people Linsey hadn't seen in days.

If anything, this was her luck taking a nosedive.

0.0%

20:23

Chapter 29 Could You Wrap It Up For Me

Joanna had the audacity to act like nothing had happened, flashing Linsey a shameless grin.

But Linsey wasn't about to let her get away with it. She let out a cold, scornful laugh, her sharp gaze cutting straight through the pair. "A surprise? Hardly. I was having a perfectly good day until you two showed up. Guess that's over now.

Next time, I'll think twice before shopping-wouldn't want to risk another unfortunate run-in."

Without sparing them another glance, she grabbed her shopping bag, ready to walk away. Wasting even a second more on

them wasn't worth it.

But Joanna wasn't about to let her leave so easily.

She had pictured this moment differently. She had expected Linsey to be miserable, barely keeping herself together.

That way, she could flaunt her happiness, standing beside Felix as if she had won.

Yet now, as Joanna subtly sized Linsey up, she found no trace of heartbreak or resentment. All she saw was sheer disgust.

"Linsey, come on. Are you really still mad at us?" Joanna curved her lips into a sweet smile, stepping closer as she spoke in

a soft, coaxing voice. "No matter what, we've been friends for so many years. Since fate brought us together today, why not

sit down for a meal and catch up? Wouldn't that be nice? It's been ages since the three of us had a real heart-to-heart."

Feigning warmth, she reached out, trying to take Linsey's arm.

"Wait" Linsey swiftly sidestepped, throwing up a hand to stop Joanna in her

tracks. "Don't give me that. Whatever game

you're playing, I'm not interested. Honestly, just hearing you makes my skin crawl."

Chapter 30 Linsey, What

Did You Buy

Linsey's words were brutally direct. Though Joanna was skilled at putting on an act, her smile faltered for a brief moment.

She quickly recovered, then turned to Felix with a pitiful expression, her eyes brimming with grievance.

Felix met her gaze, and an instinctive urge to defend her kicked in.

He stepped forward, wrapping his arms protectively around the supposedly fragile Joanna, then shot Linsey a look of

disapproval. "Linsey, Joanna didn't mean anything by it. Was that really necessary?"

Linsey didn't even spare Felix a glance. Her face remained impassive as she gave a slow nod. "Oh, I know. She means no

harm. But I do. Happy now? Now do me a favor and keep your distance. My patience has already worn thin from work-I

don't need this on top of it."

"Linsey, you—" Felix's words died in his throat as he was completely thrown off by her indifference.

He remembered a time when Linsey had been so gentle, always speaking to him with warmth. When had she become like

this?

The answer came to him almost instantly-she was probably still upset about him leaving the wedding that day.

Just then, Joanna's gaze flickered to the shopping bag in Linsey's hand.

She hesitated briefly before speaking, carefully watching Felix's reaction.

"Linsey, what did you buy? A gift for Felix? You're always so thoughtful, still thinking about him after everything. If only I

were half as considerate as you."

At her words, Felix's eyes shifted to the bag in Linsey's grasp. His previously tense expression softened.

Deep down, he had been waiting for Linsey to come back to him. She had always been like this-easily upset, but after a few days, she would inevitably return.

So when she moved out the other day, he had been certain it was only temporary.

But days had passed, and Linsey was still nowhere to be seen.

As the days dragged on, doubt crept in. Felix had been so sure Linsey would return, but now he wasn't so certain. Was she really gone for good?

But then, Joanna's remark struck him like a revelation-Linsey hadn't let go. She had even gone out of her way to buy him a gift.

Instantly, his confidence returned.

His face lit up with a satisfied smile. "Linsey, I knew you wouldn't forget my birthday. Alright, I'll forgive you this time. Just come home, and we'll start planning my party. Same as always-make sure all my friends are invited."

0.0%

20:23

Chapter 30 Linsey, What Did You Buy

As he spoke, his attention drifted to the shopping bag in Linsey's hand. "What did you get me? Let me see."

He reached for the bag, but before he could lay a finger on it, Linsey yanked it back without hesitation, her expression full

of disdain.

Her voice was clipped with irritation. "Felix, are you an idiot, or did you just not hear a single word I said?"

Felix froze, momentarily stunned by the sheer exasperation in her tone. Then, as the realization set in, his expression darkened. Anger flared in his chest. "Linsey, how long are you going to keep this up?"

He had given her an easy way out, yet she met him with nothing but cold indifference. The nerve. She clearly didn't know how to appreciate his generosity.