

Zillionaire 251

Chapter 251 An Apology Isn't Enough

"Really? And how do you plan to clear Linsey's name?" Collin asked, his tone sharp.

Jude spoke quickly, his voice laced with panic. "This was all Kylee Russell and Cynthia Keller! I was forced into it!"

Collin's expression hardened. His brows drew together, and the air between them turned cold. "Kylee Russell? What does

she have to do with this?"

The memory of the mob from earlier flashed in his mind-the way they had chased after them, wild with accusations.

So, it had all been deliberate.

Kylee. The one person he never suspected. And yet, she had been scheming behind his back all along.

Jude swallowed hard and pressed on. "Kylee hates Linsey. Cynthia told me herself-this was all Kylee's idea. She wanted to

crush Linsey completely!"

Collin remained unconvinced. His voice was steady, almost detached. "I heard Kylee got caught up in the plagiarism

scandal too."

Jude shook his head, desperation creeping into his voice. "That was just part of her plan! She needed to make it look real,

so no one would suspect her! I swear, I had no choice. I'm just a designer. I don't have fame or power. But Kylee-she's popular, she's got connections. I couldn't afford to cross her. If I didn't do what she wanted, I would've been done for."

Collin studied him for a moment before asking, "Do you have any proof?"

Jude's face fell. His fingers curled into fists at his sides. "The whole thing was handled by Cynthia," he admitted. "She's the

one who told me."

Collin exhaled a short, humorless laugh. "So, all of this is just Cynthia's word? No solid proof. Just a bunch of accusations?"

Jude's panic spiked. "No! I swear, I'm telling the truth!" His hands trembled as he pleaded, his voice rising. "Please, you have to believe me! What do you want me to do? I know I messed up. I won't do anything to Linsey again. Can't I just apologize? She never plagiarized me."

Collin said nothing for a moment.

His focus had already shifted. Right now, clearing Linsey's name and putting an

end to this slander mattered more than anything else.

As for the mastermind? He had plenty of time to deal with them.

"An apology isn't enough," he said finally.

Jude looked at him anxiously. "Then what do you want me to do? Just tell me, and I'll do it."

Collin's gaze was unreadable. "Don't ask," he said coolly. "Just do as I say."

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After saying goodbye to Jude, Cynthia wasted no time. She arrived at a private, high-end villa, the kind only the wealthiest

could afford.

Inside, Kylee lay stretched out on a plush massage table, eyes closed as a professional masseuse worked on her shoulders. She looked completely at ease, as if the world outside didn't concern her in the slightest.

Cynthia stepped in quietly, her tone deliberately sweet. "Kylee."

Without opening her eyes, Kylee spoke in a soft, lazy voice. "How's everything going? Is the situation under control?"

Cynthia smirked. "It's going perfectly. Linsey's getting torn apart online. Even some of your fans are saying they want to go after her. I'd be surprised if she dares to leave her house."

She let that sink in before adding, "Oh, and I made sure one of your most loyal fans, Allie Smith, is leading the charge. She and her group are already stirring up trouble. From what I heard, Linsey was so scared she was scrambling to hide."

Chapter 252 I Won't Let You Mess This Up!

Kylee's interest was piqued at once. With a smile, she eagerly asked, "Has Linsey been found?"

Cynthia's eyes lit up with excitement. "I was the first to track her down. I sent someone to get her, so by now, Linsey is probably already in the hospital. She'll be all over the news again by tomorrow morning!"

Kylee chuckled and shook her head, feigning sympathy. "Oh, poor Linsey."

A slow, knowing smile spread across her lips, and she continued. "But since my fans caused this mess, I suppose it's only

right that I visit her and offer an apology."

Cynthia scoffed, "I heard Allie brought a pile of sharp stones to throw at Linsey. Even if you show up, she might not be in

any shape to receive visitors. Her face might be covered in blood... That would be a terrifying sight."

Kylee's heart pounded with anticipation, and a wicked smile crept across her face.

Could it be that Linsey was disfigured?

The more Kylee thought about it, the more her excitement grew.

It would be perfect if her face was completely ruined.

And when Collin saw her disfigured face, he would feel nothing but disgust.

Hopefully, he would leave Linsey, or much better, divorce her.

Kylee and Cynthia fell silent, but they secretly reveled in the idea of Linsey suffering. Right now, their smiles were

impossible to suppress.

Just then, Cynthia's phone rang.

As she pulled it out, she could not help but frown. Jude's name flashed on the screen.

They had just spoken not long ago. Why was he calling again?

Could it be that Jude wasn't satisfied with their deal and was trying to squeeze more out of her?

Although reluctant, Cynthia answered the call. "Hey. What's up?"

To her surprise, Jude's trembling voice came through the line. "Cynthia, we're in serious trouble!"

Cynthia's brow knitted together. "What are you talking about? What happened? Speak clearly."

With shallow, uneven breaths, Jude rushed to explain, "A man approached me after we split up. He knows you and Kylee paid me to frame Linsey for plagiarism. forcing me to apologize publicly."

After pausing for a moment, he continued, "Cynthia, I have no choice! If I don't do what he says, he'll expose everything,

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and I'll be ruined! But if I apologize to Linsey now, I might have a slim chance of salvaging my future. The public will forget about this eventually. I can't let my secrets get out!"

Wide eyes in disbelief, Cynthia bellowed, "Jude, do you even hear yourself?!"

Meanwhile, Kylee overheard Jude's frantic voice through the phone and turned ghostly pale. With her expression twisted with rage, she snatched the phone from Cynthia. "What kind of madness is this? If you apologize now, everything we've done will be for nothing! I won't let you mess this up! Jude, listen to me! You can't go online! If you do, I swear you'll

regret it!"

"I-I don't have a choice. That man is forcing me. If I don't clear things up and apologize soon, my future is over. I can't

follow your orders anymore."

Kylee's face darkened, and she pressed on, "What did you just say? Who's forcing you?"

Chapter 253 Kylee, What

Do We Do Now

Kylee sat still, her thoughts circling in quiet suspicion.

Could it be Collin?

No. That was out of the question.

There was no way he cared that much about Linsey. At best, she was just a fleeting distraction to him. Nothing more.

Besides, Linsey didn't even know who he really was.

"I don't know," said Jude, irritation creeping into his voice. "It seems like it's a friend of Linsey's."

If he had known Linsey had connections like this, he never would have listened to Cynthia, let alone gotten himself tangled

up in this mess.

Kylee exhaled softly, her shoulders easing.

Just as she thought. This had nothing to do with Collin.

If this so-called threat was just one of Linsey's friends, then it wasn't worth worrying about.

What kind of powerful allies could Linsey possibly have? She had no status, no background, no influence.

Kylee let out a quiet laugh, full of disdain. She sneered. "Jude, don't do anything stupid. If you act on your own, you'll

regret it."

On the other end of the line, Jude hesitated.

He couldn't afford to cross the mysterious man, but at the same time, he couldn't risk going against Kylee.

Right now, he needed to look out for himself.

"I haven't said anything," he said quickly. "I ran off the second I got spooked. That's why I called you. If you have a plan, I'll

go along with it."

Kylee hesitated for a moment, then said, "Don't worry. Since we're in this together, I'll do everything I can to protect you.

Come find me now, and we'll figure out a way to handle this."

After she hung up, Kylee's expression darkened, a wave of unease settling over her.

Jude was already considering a public apology. She had to stop him. No matter what.

If he caved, they wouldn't even get the chance to take down Linsey before their own alliance collapsed from the inside.

Beside her, Cynthia's panic was written all over her face. "Kylee, what do we do now?" she blurted out. "If this comes out, I'm done for too! You have to help me. You were the one who came to me first about Linsey."

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Kylee inhaled sharply, irritation flickering in her eyes.

She turned to Cynthia with a cold look, barely able to hide her disdain. This woman was an idiot.

She had made a serious miscalculation teaming up with Cynthia And Jude-he was proving to be just as much of a liability.

if Cynthia hadn't been the one to introduce him, Kylee never would have trusted something this important to a man so spineless

A cunning glint flashed across her eyes.

Maybe it was Ure to cut them both loose.

If she played this right, she could get rid of these two fools before they dragged her down with them.

The thought alone made her feel lighter.

For the past hour, she had been tying herself in knots over nothing. Jude and Cynthia weren't real threats. They were weak, predictable and easy to deal with. There were plenty of ways to handle them.

And this time, Kyler was going to win.

Meanwhile, across town, Jude sat frozen, his phone still warm in his hand. He looked up, swallowing hard. Across from him, Collin watched him in silence.

"I did what you told me," Jude muttered, his voice barely above a whisper. "You heard Kylee, right? She wants me to go see

her now."

Collin's expression remained unreadable.

He had told Jude to call Cynthia as a test. He hadn't expected to hear Kylee on

the other end of the line.

So she was the one pulling all the strings.

Chapter 254 Why Are You Calling Me Right Now

Collin watched as Jude disappeared into the distance, her steps steady but studied Collin's assistant approached, voice

low. "Mr. Riley, should we have someone follow him? I'm worried he might use the chaos to slip away"

"No need," said Collin, his tone even

Jude wouldn't dare cross him, not with what he had on him

The assistant gave a slight nod but didn't leave right away.

After a moment, Collin asked, "How's Linsey?" His voice was firm, but a trace of concern slipped through

After everything she had been through, she must be shaken.

Just thinking about it made his chest tighten.

He wondered how she was coping with it.

"Mrs. Riley returned safely to Vista Villa," the assistant reported. "But she's worried about you. Ste's called several times

already."

Collin's expression darkened in an instant. His brows drew together, urgency sparking in his eyes. "Why wasn't I told

sooner?" His voice was sharp as he turned to face his assistant. Turn the car around. We're going back."

"Yes, sir." The assistant signaled the driver immediately.

The assistant barely registered the movement. His boss's mind was already at Vista Villa. Nothing mattered more than

Linsey.

From now on, anything involving her had to be reported first. No exceptions.

As soon as Linsey stepped into Vista Villa, she grabbed her phone and logged into Twitter to check the latest updates.

Her stomach dropped. CR Corporation hadn't issued a single statement to clarify the situation.

Worse, her old account was gone.

Without an official response, the plagiarism scandal had only grown worse, spreading like wildfire.

Linsey stared at the screen, frozen. She never imagined things would spiral out of control like this.

Taking a steadying breath, she dialed Coen's number.

It rang endlessly before he finally picked up.

Loud background noise spilled through the receiver-music blaring, people

laughing, the unmistakable clamor of a bar.

"Who's this?" Coen's voice was thick with alcohol. "Can't you tell I'm busy? Whatever it is, talk to me tomorrow."

"It's me," she said.

He didn't recognize her right away.

But the people around him did. "Oh? Sounds like a lady," someone teased.

"Coen, you always say you're single, but looks like you've been holding out on us! Why don't you bring her over and

introduce her?"

Coen frowned, waving them off. "Come on, quit messing around. I know too many socialites to keep track of every woman

I meet."

The crowd erupted in laughter.

"Careful, Coen, you don't want to hurt the lady's feelings!" someone chimed in.

Linsey hadn't expected him to be surrounded by people, but she didn't care. Her voice stayed cold and firm. "Coen, it's me.

Linsey."

The crowd fell silent. A murmur broke through the hush. "Linsey? The designer accused of plagiarizing Kylee's dress?"

At the mention of her name, Coen's expression shifted. Reality clicked into place.

His demeanor changed in an instant. He quickly moved to a quieter corner, lowering his voice. "Linsey, why are you calling

me right now? Are you trying to drag me into this online mess too?"

Chapter 255 You're Fired

Coen had always appeared friendly when around Linsey.

Yet now, his tone was sharply disdainful.

Linsey felt a chill as she sensed the change in his demeanor.

Confronting him, she said, "Coen, you promised to manage the online rumors. I gave you all the proof- why haven't you cleared my name? You've just let the slandering continue!"

Coen had braced for this confrontation.

But he wasn't about to confess. Wearing a smile, he feigned confusion. "Linsey, I don't know what you're getting at. Your plagiarism issue-how is that related to me?"

Stunned by his response, Linsey momentarily faltered.

She quickly recovered and responded, "Coen, what are you saying? You assured me you'd help. You even told me to rest at home these past days..."

Coen erupted into scornful laughter. "Linsey, it's astounding how naive you are. Did you actually think I'd help someone like you? That landing Anthea's order would elevate your standing here?"

Linsey was taken aback. "That wasn't my intention at all."

Before she could elaborate, Coen cut her off with a cold interjection. "Let's be clear, Linsey-you're fired. Tarnished by a plagiarism scandal, finding another respectable job will be a challenge. It's best you stay out of trouble."

At that moment, the full extent of Coen's betrayal hit Linsey.

Her fists clenched, she demanded, "Why did you lie to me?"

Coen laughed, a hint of mockery in his tone. "You're asking me this? You've compromised our company's reputation. Not taking further action against you is already more than fair-you should feel grateful."

He paused, then chuckled once more. "Face it, Linsey. You've upset the wrong people. It's best you walk away now while you still can, unless you want things to escalate."

With that, he hung up abruptly.

Reflecting on Linsey's predicament, Coen felt no sympathy for her.

To him, betraying Linsey was merely a step towards his own success.

Promotions and raises were now vividly within his reach.

Humming to himself, Coen headed back to the private room, eager to celebrate the night away. Unbeknownst to him, the moment he decided to betray Linsey, his own fate had been sealed.

On the other side, Linsey gritted her teeth in frustration as Coen disconnected the call.

She should have known better. Coen was never trustworthy.

The evidence she had handed over to him was probably destroyed by now. Yet, she refused to give in to despair.

No matter the obstacles, she was certain of one thing-Collin was on her side.

Taking a deep breath to calm her nerves, Linsey attempted to call Collin, but received no response.

Recalling his words before they parted, she realized he must still be occupied. Instead, Linsey sent him a message.

After confirming the message had been sent, Linsey paused to organize her thoughts. She knew precisely what her next

steps should be.

The individuals who had tarnished her reputation were likely reveling in her misfortune, expecting her to fall apart.

Given that, she could not afford to let them win. She needed to regroup and mount a comeback.

Linsey slowly clenched her fist, her determination solidifying.

Chapter 256 I Trusted The Wrong Person

Linsey had already formulated a plan.

She needed to verify something crucial before proceeding.

Reopening her phone, she navigated to Jude's account and scrutinized the designs he had shared earlier.

It didn't take Linsey long to spot numerous elements in Jude's work that mirrored her own designs.

She had no idea how Jude had managed to publish them first was beyond her, but the striking similarity actually played

into her hands.

After careful consideration, Linsey set up a new Twitter account.

She swiftly composed a statement and shared it, tagging it with relevant hashtags.

"Hi everyone, this is Linsey. I want to make a formal statement today. The dress I designed for Kylee was entirely my

creation, with absolutely no plagiarism involved. From start to finish, this dress was crafted through my own efforts."

The post quickly captured the public's attention.

Many were taken aback to see Linsey, who had remained silent on her previous account, suddenly activate a new one.

Soon, a flurry of mocking comments ensued.

"Isn't it a bit late to defend yourself now?"

"Why create a new account again? Afraid your popularity might wane?"

"Stop with the excuses. If you didn't plagiarize, show us proof. Why should we believe you otherwise?"

"Exactly. Jude posted his designs half a month before you did."

"The designs are practically identical. How can you claim you didn't copy?"

Despite the flood of criticism, Linsey kept her composure.

She pinned a response under her post. "I had collected all necessary evidence a few days ago, but unfortunately, I trusted

the wrong person. Someone deliberately destroyed the original design drafts that could have proven my innocence."

The backlash continued unabated.

"Oh please, not this excuse again. Surely you can think of something more original?"

"You've become quite adept at fabricating stories."

"Just one sentence to deflect all the blame? What about those you've wronged?"

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"Enough already. Apologize to Kylee and Jude-now!"

"I've had enough of your charades. You're completely disingenuous."

"If you truly had proof, you'd have shared it immediately. Why the delay?"

"And now you claim someone deleted your evidence? Who do you think would go to such lengths just to sabotage you?"

The comments section was bursting with scorn and mockery.

Yet, Linsey did not waver.

"I might not have the original drafts anymore, but that doesn't mean I'm out of evidence. Despite everything, I maintain my stance this design is uniquely mine."

Her steadfast position left some wondering about her mental state.

"Has Linsey completely lost touch with reality after all this backlash? What is she trying to say?"

"No original drafts, no proof. Is there anything more to discuss?"

"I was beginning to side with you, but now? You've just let everyone down."

"A plagiarist with a fanbase-how has it come to this?"

Amidst the ongoing fiery discussions, Linsey readied herself to disclose a startling revelation....

Chapter 257 Who Is The

Real Thief Here

"I may not have the original drafts right now, but I certainly have convincing proof. From the start of my design career, I've always included a personal touch in my drafts-a unique signature. If Jude didn't plagiarize my work, how do you explain my initials on the drafts he uploaded?"

Without a moment's delay, Linsey shared all her past design drafts online.

In these drafts, she pointed out her unique security feature-an artistic rendition of her initials.

"I've taken screenshots of the drafts Jude posted online. Guess what? His drafts carry my signature too. Does he have a good explanation for this? Furthermore, I reviewed Jude's past work. His previous designs are nothing like this one-they're completely different in style. None of his earlier works featured my signature mark. So, who is the real thief here? And who is trying to shift the blame?"

Within ten minutes, Linsey had put together a highly professional comparison chart that clearly showcased all the evidence.

Experienced Internet users were not easily deceived.

Initially, they believed Jude's claims. However, with Linsey presenting even more compelling evidence, they soon recognized that something was amiss.

"Is this turning into a plot twist?"

"This is unbelievable! Jude's drafts actually have Linsey's signature mark! I've checked multiple times. Oh my God! Linsey was telling the truth all along!"

"So, who's the real plagiarist here?"

"Jude himself posted those drafts. They can't be fakes."

"It feels like we're uncovering a full-scale conspiracy here..."

Before long, several designers came forward to support Linsey, using the trending topic to increase their own exposure.

"I originally thought Linsey was guilty of plagiarism, but having known Jude's style for years, he just isn't capable of creating something like this."

"Linsey might be new to the scene, but her talent is undeniable. She designed a spectacular gown for a prominent socialite in Grester, which earned high praise from industry experts. I saw it myself-it was truly impressive. Given Linsey's capabilities, it's entirely plausible that she crafted such a daring, elegant design."

The unexpected twist in the saga left many of Linsey's detractors in a state of confusion. Yet, some persisted, inundating the comment sections with forceful denials.

"I don't see the point of all this drama. Jude uploaded his drafts first!"

"Exactly! It was already clear Linsey had plagiarized, and now suddenly, there's a chorus of defenders? They must be paid

skills."

"Linsey, just stop with the lies. It's revolting."

Initially, the majority of online observers were convinced of Linsey's guilt.

However, public sentiment soon divided sharply.

One half continued to believe Linsey was deceitful, while the other half began to suspect there was more to this story than

met the eye.

Driven by this division, numerous netizens started their own investigations, eager to uncover additional facts.

Among them was a renowned hacker.

With no time wasted, this hacker penetrated the backend of Jude's account and unearthed a revelation that would turn the

entire case on its head...

Chapter 258 Did You Miss

Me That Much

The Internet exploded when the hacker released the evidence. No one could believe what they were seeing.

"Holy shit! Jude actually messed with the submission time!"

"Hold on—Jude changed the submission time? And with Linsey's signature on the design, doesn't that mean she's the real designer and Jude stole it from her?"

"This is insane! How can anyone be so freaking shameless?"

"Did you guys see that Jude actually submitted his design after Linsey's dress was shown? This was totally planned!"

"Jude's the one who plagiarized! We all blamed Linsey for nothing..."

The hacker's screen recording left everyone speechless.

What a crazy twist!

"Jude stole Linsey's design and then accused her of plagiarism? I can't even..."

"What a scumbag!"

Even with this evidence staring them in the face, some people still refused to believe Linsey.

"Jude didn't even know Linsey before. Why would he frame her? What's in it for him?"

"Are you kidding me? Still defending Jude? Hello, the guy's gotten tons of publicity from this whole thing!"

"Jude was fading into obscurity, and now he's the talk of the town, raking in new clients. How is that not a benefit?"

This unexpected turn of events left everyone reeling.

The Internet was a dumpster fire again.

Even after posting her statement, Linsey couldn't relax.

She knew she was innocent, but how could she prove it?

If people still refused to believe her, she was screwed.

Coen had destroyed her original sketches, and her signature was the only evidence she had left.

Linsey was stunned when she saw the hacker's screen recording, then overwhelmed with relief.

She hadn't expected anyone to find proof so fast.

It was real! Jude had set her up!

Relief flooded her, and tears pricked her eyes. She was finally free from those false accusations.

But even with the relief, confusion lingered.

Linsey was baffled. She had never even met Jude before; there was no reason for

her to be targeted. Why would Jude try to

frame her?

Before she could unravel the mystery, the sound of a car engine broke the silence.

Collin was home!

Linsey jumped to her feet and rushed outside. The moment she saw Collin, she couldn't help herself-she ran straight into

his arms.

"Collin!" she cried.

Collin let out a muffled groan as a sharp pain shot through his injured arm.

Collin's assistant's face contorted in concern, and he instinctively moved to intervene.

However, Collin silenced him with a chilling glare.

The assistant, defeated, bit back his words.

Linsey, startled by Collin's pained reaction, quickly pulled away. "What's wrong?" she asked, her voice filled with concern. "Did I hurt you?"

Before she could fully process the situation, Collin pulled her back into his embrace, his arm tightening around her waist. "I'm fine," he reassured her, his voice deep and gentle. "I was just surprised. I didn't expect such an enthusiastic welcome after being gone for such a short time. Did you miss me that much?"

Chapter 259 I Can Keep Designing!

Collin's gaze locked with Linsey's, his eyes mirroring the depth of his emotions.

He had been pouring his heart and soul into charming her, his gaze burning with an intensity that could melt glaciers. He

held his breath, anticipating her response.

But Linsey, blissfully unaware of the his intentions, was consumed by her own excitement. She couldn't wait to share her

good news.

*Collin!" she exclaimed, her voice bubbling with excitement. "I finally cleared my name! I never plagiarized Jude! He

released his design after I did and messed with the timestamp to make it look like I copied him!"

Her eyes sparkled with triumph as she threw her arms around Collin's neck, her words tumbling out in a rush. "I'm so

happy, Collin! Everyone online believes me now! I can keep designing!"

Collin, who had already been informed of the good news on their drive back, nevertheless feigned surprise. "Really?" he

asked, a broad smile spreading across his face.

He gently caressed her cheek, his touch tender and affectionate. "That's wonderful, Linsey," he said warmly. "You've been

through so much lately. But how did you manage to prove your innocence so quickly?"

Linsey beamed, her chest swelling with pride. "Luckily, I'm always very careful with my work," she explained. "Every time

I design something, I leave my signature on my drafts."

She laughed, shaking her head in amusement. "I never expected Jude to be so stupid! Not only did he copy my design, but

he didn't even bother to remove my signature! That's what gave me the evidence I needed to clear my name."

Collin chuckled. "He probably just copied and pasted the whole thing and changed a few minor details.

"Exactly!" Linsey exclaimed, then her expression turned serious. "But I couldn't have done it without that hacker who

helped me find the most important evidence."

She pulled out her phone, a hint of disappointment clouding her features. "I wanted to thank them properly. But after I posted the screen recording, they deleted their account. I didn't even get a chance to contact them."

Collin's assistant, who had been standing nearby, shifted uncomfortably and mumbled, "Actually, about that person..."

Collin abruptly cleared his throat.

The assistant, realizing his blunder, instantly clamped his mouth shut.

He was still wet behind the ears. He was terrible at keeping secrets.

He almost blew his boss's cover.

Noticing Collin's cough, Linsey gently patted his back. "Would you like some water?"

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Collin covered his mouth with his hand, replying, "I'm alright, thank you."

His cough was a deliberate attempt to silence his assistant.

Linsey turned back to the assistant, her curiosity piqued. "So, what were you saying before? What about that person?"

Maintaining a neutral expression, the assistant responded smoothly, "It was just speculation on my part. Since they're a hacker, they probably value their anonymity-revealing their identity could put them at risk. So, it's best not to pry too much. We wouldn't want to cause any unnecessary trouble."

Linsey pondered this for a moment, then nodded in agreement. "That's a valid point."

After a brief lull in the conversation, Collin interjected playfully, "We can discuss everything else later, but perhaps you

should get off my lap now? Maybe we should head inside?"

Linsey froze, momentarily confused before understanding his implication.

She had been so engrossed in the excitement of the moment that she hadn't even

realized Collin had pulled her onto his

lap, and she was still perched there.

Numerous people were observing them!

Chapter 260

Bit Embarrassed

Suddenly, Linsey's heart pounded in her chest.

She abruptly sprang up from Collin's lap, creating a noticeable gap between them.

A wave of heat flooded her cheeks.

Even without a mirror, Linsey knew she was blushing furiously.

What had she been thinking?

Linsey drew a deep breath and glanced around, only to find herself met with the amused smiles of several servants, including Josh, the ever-observant butler. She bit her lip, mortified, wishing the ground would swallow her whole.

This was all Collin's fault! Why hadn't he given her a heads-up?

Overwhelmed by embarrassment, Linsey spun around and fled back into the villa.

Collin watched her hasty retreat, a smile playing on his lips, his eyes filled with warmth.

After a brief pause, Collin composed himself and addressed the staff, his tone serious. "What you just witnessed, is not to

be discussed within this villa again. I wouldn't want my wife to be distressed."

"Yes, Mr. Riley," the servants responded in unison.

Josh nodded, a knowing smile gracing his lips. "Understood, sir."

The staff chimed in with their assurances, one even playfully adding that they had a terrible memory.

The moment Collin disappeared inside, the group erupted in a flurry of excited whispers.

"Oh my goodness, the way he dotes on her is simply incredible!"

"I know, right? I haven't seen him smile like that in ages!"

"They must have a wonderful relationship."

Josh chuckled softly. "At this rate," he remarked, "it won't be long before we have a little one running around the house."

A nearby servant playfully added, "Perhaps even a whole brood of adorable little ones!"

"Indeed! With their good looks, their children are sure to be absolutely beautiful."

"I can't wait!"

Josh listened to their chatter with a contented smile, more convinced than ever that Linsey and Collin were destined to be

together.

After all, he had known Collin for many years and had witnessed firsthand his previously cold and aloof demeanor.

But ever since Linsey had entered his life, Collin had undergone a remarkable transformation.

He had no doubt that their future held even greater happiness and fulfillment.

Linsey retreated to her room and splashed cold water on her face, hoping to calm her burning cheeks.

Moments later, Collin entered the room and instantly noticed her flustered state. He paused at the bathroom door, observing as she dried her face. "Linsey, if having so many people around is bothering you,

I can easily have them all leave."

Linsey froze, then quickly shook her head. "No, no! It's not that I dislike them."

She lowered her gaze, biting her lip shyly. "I just feel a bit embarrassed, that's all."

Collin raised an eyebrow. "Really? It's alright. If you ever feel uncomfortable, just let me know, and I'll handle it."

Seeing his serious expression, Linsey panicked, worried he might actually dismiss the staff.

she insisted, "No, no! I'm not uncomfortable at all! I like having them around. I'm just not used to being affectionate with

you in front of other people."

She continued, as if stating the obvious, "Besides, if you send them all away, who's going to take care of us? You don't

expect me to do it, do you? I'm far too busy!"

Collin feigned offense. "Are you saying you've grown tired of me already?" he teased.