

Zillionaire 431

Chapter 431 How Could

You Say That In Front Of...

Jeffery turned to his sister and said, "Carol, this is the man I mentioned earlier-the founder of CR Corporation,

Mr. Riley."

Carol's eyes lit up instantly, her gaze filled with admiration. "So, you're the founder of CR Corporation!"

She had heard countless stories about the elusive and immensely wealthy man behind CR Corporation-one of the most powerful figures in Grester.

In her mind, she had always pictured Collin as an older gentleman with graying hair and a bit of extra weight.

But reality had completely shattered her expectations. Not only was he young, but he was also breathtakingly

handsome!

Her interest in him deepened. She took a step closer, her voice soft and teasing as she said, "Mr. Riley, it's a pleasure to finally meet you. I'm Carol Lawson, but you can just call me Carol, like Jeffery does."

With a charming smile, she extended her hand toward Collin, hoping for a handshake.

Collin's expression remained unreadable as he accepted the handshake with brief politeness. "Miss Lawson," he acknowledged, his tone cold and detached.

He deliberately ignored her invitation to use her first name.

More than that, the moment their hands touched, he withdrew almost instantly, as if the contact was an unnecessary formality.

Carol's smile faltered for a fraction of a second. Had he really just brushed her off like that?

It was only a handshake-was there a need for such obvious distance?

Refusing to let it dampen her spirits, she quickly masked her disappointment.

If anything, his reserved nature only added to his appeal. A man like this-distant, unreadable, and unshaken by charm-was a rare find. To her, that made him all the more worth pursuing.

A playful gleam flickered in her eyes as she suddenly tilted her head and smiled sweetly. "Mr. Riley, you're more handsome and gentle than Jeffery."

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Collin's brow furrowed slightly before he masked the reaction. His voice remained steady as he replied, "Miss Lawson, this is our first meeting. That kind of compliment seems unnecessary."

Then, glancing at Jeffery, he joked, "Besides, if you keep this up, Mr. Lawson might get jealous."

With CR Corporation and the Lawson Group on the brink of collaboration, Collin had no desire to offend Carol outright. Regardless of her advances, she was still the treasured daughter of the Lawson family.

Jeffery had been observing the exchange closely. Though he was silently exasperated by Carol's behavior, he played along with Collin's remark, pretending

to be upset. "Carol, I'm standing right here. How could you say

that in front of me?"

Carol pouted playfully, though a flicker of dissatisfaction lingered in her expression.

The more Collin kept his distance, the more she wanted to break past his walls.

Men had always fallen for her charms-why should he be any different?

Her confidence only strengthened her resolve.

An idea suddenly popped into her mind, and before she could second-guess it, she acted.

Reaching out, she placed a delicate hand on Collin's shoulder. "Since this is our first meeting, shouldn't we seal it with a friendly kiss on the cheek?"

Before either Collin or Jeffery could react, she stood on tiptoe and leaned in toward his face.

But just as her lips were about to brush his cheek, a firm force yanked her backward.

The next thing she knew, she had been pushed back to where she originally stood. Collin's grip on her arm was firm, unyielding.

The shock in her eyes quickly turned to anger. She lifted her head to protest, only to freeze. Collin's cold, piercing stare locked onto her, his gaze sharp enough to cut through steel.

Her heart lurched. A strange fear crawled up her spine, making her instinctively step away. The dull ache where he had gripped her barely registered-she was too shaken by the intensity of his gaze.

He had a terrifying look in his eyes.

Jeffery, taken aback by the sudden shift in atmosphere, instinctively moved forward, stepping between them as a shield for his sister.

Chapter 432 What Kind Of Woman Captured Your...

It wasn't about anything else—just the sheer intensity of Collin's expression.

For a moment, it felt as if he might mercilessly fling Carol aside without a second thought.

Jeffery's pupils dilated with shock. Forcing himself to remain composed, he managed a faint smile. "Mr. Riley, please forgive Carol's rudeness."

Biting her lip, Carol couldn't help but protest, "Even if you're the founder of CR Corporation, isn't this a bit excessive? A true gentleman wouldn't treat a woman that way! I only wanted to interact with you normally. Let

go of me!"

She struggled to pull free, but it was futile.

Collin's grip remained firm, his expression unreadable. His voice, however, was edged with a subtle warning. "I'm already married, Miss Lawson. I suggest you mind your behavior."

Just like that, a wave of humiliation crashed over Carol. Her face burned, her eyes stinging with resentment. She turned to Jeffery, clutching his sleeve like a wounded child. "Jeffery..."-

Seeing his sister this way, Jeffery felt his heart soften. With a sigh, he spoke again, his tone gentler. "Mr. Riley, I truly apologize. Carol had no idea you were married. I'll make sure to talk to her properly about this."

As he spoke, he cast Collin a pleading glance.

Collin's sharp gaze flickered. He suddenly recalled something-Carol was rumored to have a heart condition.

The partnership between CR Corporation and the Lawson Group was far too important to strain over a situation

like this.

With that in mind, he reluctantly loosened his grip and gave a curt nod. "Fine."

The moment he let go, Carol huffed in frustration, stomped her foot, and stormed off without so much as a backward glance.

"Carol!" Jeffery called after her, but she didn't stop.

Watching her disappear down the corridor, he sighed helplessly before turning back to Collin.

By now, the icy chill in Collin's expression had softened.

"Carol has always been willful, but my parents and I have never been too harsh on her. She's been in poor health since childhood," Jeffery said, his eyes laced with a hint of sadness

Carol's condition had been a constant source of worry for the Lawson family.

Over the years, Jeffery had done everything in his power to find a cure, hoping she could one day live without

restrictions.

Collin's gaze steadied on him, his tone losing its earlier edge. "She'll get better."

Jeffery gave a small nod, then hesitated before glancing at Collin with newfound curiosity. "I've heard rumors that you're married, Mr. Riley, but I never knew they were true. Now I can't help but wonder- what kind of woman captured your heart?"

At the mention of Linsey, Collin's entire demeanor shifted. The harshness in his eyes melted into something softer, a trace of warmth flickering across his usually stoic face.

"She's amazing. And I love her deeply," he said simply.

Jeffery blinked, taken aback by Collin's straightforwardness.

Raising an eyebrow, Jeffery smirked. "You must really care about her if you're willing to reveal your identity like this tonight."

Then, a thought struck him, and he frowned slightly. "But why didn't she come with you?"

Collin's expression remained calm. "She got caught in traffic. She'll be here soon." Meanwhile, outside the venue, Linsey finally arrived after rushing the entire way. The driver, stepping out to assist her, glanced toward the grand hotel entrance. "Mrs. Riley, why not call Mr. Riley and have him come out to meet you?" he suggested.

Linsey shook her head with a smile. "It's fine. I'll go in and find him myself." Turning back, she added, "Thanks for tonight."

"Alright, Mrs. Riley. Let me know if you need anything." The driver nodded.

Lifting the hem of her elegant gown, Linsey made her way toward the entrance.

She was just about to retrieve her invitation and hand it to the staff when someone suddenly rushed out from inside the venue and crashed straight into her.

Chapter 433 Get This

Woman Out Of Here!

Caught off guard, Linsey let out a startled cry. She stumbled back, nearly losing her balance.

The person who crashed into her wasn't as lucky.

A woman had rushed out of the venue in a hurry, teetering on dangerously high heels. Unable to steady herself, she landed squarely on the ground in an undignified heap.

The extravagant fabric of her gown had torn slightly in the fall.

For a moment, Carol sat there in stunned disbelief. But when no one immediately came to her aid, frustration bubbled over. "What's wrong with all of you? Can't you see I need help?" she shrieked.

"Miss Lawson!" The crowd around her snapped out of their daze, hurrying forward to assist her. They carefully helped her to her feet, pretending not to notice the embarrassed flush on her face.

"Miss Lawson, are you alright?" a hotel staff member asked with concern.

Carol took a deep breath-then, without warning, raised her hand and slapped the staff member across the

face.

A sharp smack echoed through the entrance.

The employee staggered back, clutching his cheek. He didn't dare protest.

Linsey, watching the scene unfold, was momentarily speechless. She hadn't expected Carol to lash out so violently-especially at someone who had only tried to help.

How could someone be so entitled?

Even after striking the staff member, Carol still wasn't satisfied. She turned her glare toward Linsey.

And the moment her eyes landed on her, jealousy flickered across her face.

Linsey wasn't draped in an overly luxurious gown tonight. Her outfit was understated, yet effortlessly elegant. But her striking features naturally drew attention.

"Who are you? How dare you bump into me? Are you blind? Look at what you've done to my gown." Carol snapped, narrowing her eyes.

Carol

Before Linsey could respond, Carol turned to the security guards and waved her hand dismissively. "Get this woman out of here! She's banned from my family's events from now on!"

Not once did Carol consider that Linsey might be someone she couldn't afford to offend.

Having spent years in Grester, Carol had met her fair share of wealthy socialites and even a few female entrepreneurs.

But Linsey's face was unfamiliar.

To Carol, that could only mean one thing-she must be a nobody.

As the daughter of the Lawson family, Carol believed she had every right to

blacklist any insignificant guest at her family's event.

At her command, several security guards stepped forward, ready to escort Linsey out.

"Ma'am, you heard Miss Lawson. Please leave," one of them said.

It was only then that Linsey fully registered who Carol was. She was the Lawson family's daughter.

She quickly reminded herself-tonight, she was here as Collin's date. It wouldn't be wise to offend anyone from the Lawson family.

Still, she remained calm, her tone firm yet polite. "Miss Lawson, I didn't bump into you-you ran out and collided with me. And for the record, I'm an invited guest at this event. I have an invitation. You can't just throw me out."

Carol sneered, "We invited a lot of people tonight. Don't think having an invitation gives you the right to act however you please. Let me tell you—"

She stopped mid-sentence. Her gaze had landed on the invitation in Linsey's hand-a black-and-gold invitation.

Carol's breath hitched. For this event, the Lawson family had issued different invitations based on status.

Most ordinary guests received blue-and-white invitations.

Those with slightly higher standing were given red ones.

But only the most distinguished guests-those of the highest rank-were given the exclusive black-and-gold invitation.

Chapter 434 You Must Have Stolen This Invitation

Linsey possessed a black-and-gold invitation that puzzled Carol.

"What's going on with your invitation?" Carol asked, her voice tense and her eyes betraying a flicker of fear.

She pondered whether Linsey might be someone of significant stature.

Then, an idea struck her, and she mocked, "Now I see. You must have stolen this invitation, or it's certainly a

fake!"

Linsey felt bewildered by the allegations.

Seriously? When did invitations start being genuine or fake?

"This invitation is valid," Linsey asserted, her eyebrows knitting together in frustration.

Collin had given it to her. It had to be valid.

Carol remained skeptical. She swiftly approached Linsey and grabbed the invitation from her hand.

"You-" Linsey was taken aback by such rudeness.

It was hard to believe that someone from the esteemed Lawson family could display such poor manners.

Despite her anger, Linsey kept her cool.

She watched quietly as Carol examined the invitation.

Carol's scornful look soon shifted to surprise.

"You are actually-" she stammered, staring at the words "CR Corporation". It dawned on her that Linsey was indeed the wife of the founder of the renowned CR Corporation.

It made perfect sense that Linsey had a black-and-gold invitation.

Linsey, perplexed, raised an eyebrow at Carol. "Is there a problem, Miss Lawson?"

While noticing Carol's fingers pressing on the CR Corporation's name, Linsey did not give it much thought.

Memories of Collin ignoring her earlier filled Carol with jealousy towards Linsey.

How was this woman any better than her? Carol wondered silently.

The founder of CR Corporation wouldn't even glance at her because of this

woman.

Just as Linsey expected more unreasonable behavior, Carol's expression softened and she smiled. "I'm sorry. It was all a misunderstanding. Please, don't be upset."

This abrupt change made Linsey even more wary.

What was Miss Lawson really planning?

Trying not to show her doubt, Linsey calmly inquired, "May I enter now?" "Absolutely," Carol responded, handing back the invitation. She waved over a waiter, saying, "To show my apologies, let this gentleman escort you inside." With a subtle nod, Carol signaled the waiter who caught the cue instantly. Carol's knowing look indicated she was up to something.

The waiter eagerly approached Linsey, saying, "This way, Ma'am."

Having been on guard due to previous experiences, Linsey quickly declined, "There's no need. I'll go in alone."

She then took her invitation and walked inside, bypassing everyone else.

As Linsey entered and her plan unraveled, Carol's displeasure was evident.

She stood there, staring bitterly at Linsey's retreating figure, her heart seething with hatred.

Just wait. Her time would come.

Chapter 435 It's You Again!

Linsey entered the hotel, immediately captivated by the lavish decorations around her.

"Such over-the-top decor," she mused silently.

Unaware, she had ventured deep into the building

Despite her searching, the Lawson family's banquet on the first floor remained elusive.

"Why can't I find it?" she wondered, the invitation had been clear about the location.

Feeling a bit lost, Linsey was slightly embarrassed.

Perhaps she should have accepted Carol's offer for guidance.

Now, regret was pointless.

Her worry grew just as her phone began to ring.

She saw Collin's name and answered swiftly.

"Linsey, have you arrived?" Collin asked in his deep voice.

Trying to mask her confusion, she replied with feigned assurance, "I've just left the car. I'll be there shortly."

Collin's laughter

me through. "Are you sure you're not lost?"

"I am not lost! I'm nearly there, so don't rush me," Linsey retorted, feeling teased.

"Okay," Collin responded. "But if you're not here soon, I might ask the hotel to page you."

Page her? Linsey panicked at the thought.

She imagined the announcement. "Attention, Mrs. Riley! Your husband, Collin Riley, is waiting in the first-floor banquet hall. Please come immediately!"

The idea alone made her shudder with embarrassment.

"Collin, don't you dare! If you embarrass me like that, I will not speak to you again!" Linsey said, her tone mixing frustration with a threat.

As Collin heard her voice, he could visualize her slightly annoyed yet endearing expression. "Okay, I'll behave. Just make sure you're quick."

His smile lingered, drawing the attention of Jeffery, who was close by.

After Collin hung up, Jeffery, with a teasing grin, remarked, "Wow, seeing you like

this... I'd almost suspect there's another Mr. Riley in town."

Unperturbed, Collin laughed. "There's no mystery here-you'll meet my wife soon enough."

Jeffery, intrigued, raised an eyebrow. "That, I have to see."

Meanwhile, Linsey was still making her way around the first floor of the hotel, searching for the correct banquet hall.

At last, she noticed a cleaning lady in a corner.

Feeling a wave of relief, Linsey gathered her gown and approached quickly.

"Excuse me, can you tell me where the Lawson family banquet is?"

Alexa straightened and turned to respond but stopped short upon seeing Linsey's face, her expression turning to one of shock.

"It's you again!" she exclaimed, staring at Linsey in utter disbelief.

"Huh?" Linsey responded, taken aback.

Alexa looked at her, overwhelmed. She had not expected to encounter Linsey again, especially not here.

Linsey bore an uncanny resemblance to Myla Lawson.

And strikingly, she was about the same age as Alexa's daughter, Carol.

Chapter 436 Why Are We Taking The Stairs

In an instant, Alexa realized that Linsey was the real daughter of the Lawson family, the very child she had

secretly switched all those years ago.

Alexa's pulse quickened. She took a shaky breath and demanded, "Who are you?"

Linsey caught the flicker of emotions crossing Alexa's face-shock, fear, then something almost menacing, it was unsettling.

Frowning, she instinctively stepped back. "I'm just a guest at the Lawson family banquet. Is there a problem? Her gaze settled on the middle-aged woman before her, and she continued, "Just now... you said, "It's me again." What did you mean by that? Have we met before?"

Linsey studied Alexa carefully. But no matter how hard she tried, she couldn't place her.

So why did this woman look at her as if she had just seen a ghost?

Alexa, however, remembered Linsey perfectly, even if Linsey had no idea who she

was.

Not long ago, Alexa had been diagnosed with cancer. The day she picked up her test results, she had unexpectedly run into Linsey.

And now, here she was again, at the Lawson family's banquet, where every single member of the family was gathered.

Alexa's expression darkened. She couldn't let Linsey meet them.

If they saw her face, everything would unravel.

With time slipping through her fingers, Alexa was determined to take this secret to the grave. No one, especially not Linsey, could ruin her daughter's life as a Lawson.

"Oh, I must've mistaken you for someone else. I thought you were my friend's daughter," Alexa reasoned. She forced a smile and added, "I'm sorry. I didn't mean to offend you."

Linsey watched her closely. As she noticed the strained smile on Alexa's face, a chill crept up her spine.

Something about this woman was unsettling.

"Is that so?" she asked, masking the suspicion in her eyes. "If you don't know, I'll just ask someone else."

There was something in Alexa's gaze that made her uneasy.

Just as Linsey turned to leave, a rough, dry hand clamped around her wrist.

"Wait!" Alexa called through gritted her teeth.

Linsey's heart skipped a beat. Instinctively, she tried to pull free. "Excuse me, could you let go of me?"

However, Alexa's grip only tightened. Fear seemed to fuel her hold. She couldn't let Linsey walk away.

With narrowed eyes, Alexa asked, enunciating each word slowly. "Didn't you say you were going to the Lawson family banquet? I'll take you there."

Linsey ignored the discomfort in her wrist and forced herself to stay calm. "Just tell me which way to go.

That'll be enough."

Alexa's hollow cheeks made her forced smile even more unsettling

"Please, allow me to take you there." Alexa paused briefly, then finally let go of Linsey's wrist, not wanting to raise too much suspicion.

Setting her cleaning tools aside, she turned and started walking ahead. "Follow me. The Lawson family banquet is about to begin. You wouldn't want to be late."

For a moment, Linsey only watched as the woman walked forward. After a few seconds of hesitation, she

followed.

No matter how she looked at it, something about this woman felt off.

Since this woman was so insistent on leading the way, Linsey decided to play along and see what she was really

up to.

Before long, Alexa led her into the stairwell.

Linsey arched an eyebrow but kept her expression neutral. "Why are we taking the stairs?"

Without looking back, Alexa replied, "The hotel elevators aren't working. We have no choice but to take the

stairs."

Linsey gave a faint smile. "But isn't the Lawson family banquet on the first floor? Why are you taking me upstairs? And in a hotel this big, could all the elevators really be broken?"

Chapter 437 What Is Your

Motive

As they conversed, Linsey trailed Alexa to the second floor.

Alexa led silently, her head tilting slightly, her eyes briefly flickering with malice.

Suddenly, Alexa turned and moved to forcefully push Linsey.

In a swift move, Linsey caught Alexa's arm, her stance steady.

With a frown, Linsey stared intently at Alexa. "Were you attempting to push me?"

After a pause, Linsey pressed on, "I don't know you. We have no prior disputes. What reason do you have to

harm me?"

Linsey was cautious since her arrival, but she hadn't anticipated an attack from a cleaner she had never met, who now seemed intent on pushing her down the stairs!

A realization dawned on her.

Perhaps this wasn't their first encounter. Maybe this woman had always known her.

"What are you implying? I'm confused." Alexa, caught in her failed scheme, panicked and tried to pull away. "Release me! I warn you, if you don't, I'll call the police!"

Linsey chuckled coldly. "Call them. We'll discuss everything-the reasons you brought me here, your attempt to push me down the stairs. Tell me, what is your motive?"

Panic flickered in Alexa's eyes.

"You're misunderstanding! I was ensuring you were behind me, that's all. Don't twist my actions." Alexa, frustrated, vehemently countered, "This is unfair! I was merely assisting you in finding your way, and now you accuse me of wrongdoing? I'm merely a cleaner!"

Linsey, unfazed and tightening her hold, replied nonchalantly, "Whether it's a false claim or the truth, that's not for you to decide. We'll go to security. The cameras in this hallway will reveal the truth. Let's see how you defend your actions."

Determined to uncover the truth, Linsey knew this was more than mere suspicion. The cleaner's actions were deliberately harmful-there must be a deeper reason. Linsey, without a word, forcefully grabbed Alexa and began pulling her downstairs. Alexa's eyes widened in sheer panic as she struggled vehemently to break free. However, her efforts were futile. Her prolonged illness had left her weakened, and she could not escape Linsey's firm hold.

Linsey mustered unexpected strength and dragged Alexs down to the first floor

"Release me!" Alexs screamed in desperation

As they neared the hotel's security office, Alex's fear intensified

In a sudden move, she stomped on Linsey's gown, causing Linsey to be jerked backward and lose her footing

"Ah Linsey cried out in surprise.

Seizing the moment, Alexa pushed Linsey aside and ran

"Stop right there!" Linsey called out, chasing after her.

In her rush, Linsey's heel twisted, causing her to stumble forward dramatically

A faint sound echoed, followed immediately by a sharp pain shooting through her arthritic

Chapter 438 She Wouldn't Just Vanish Into Thin Air

Linsey caught herself just in time. She threw out a hand to brace against the wall before she could hit the floor. She drew in a sharp breath, ignoring the sting in her foot, and lifted her head.

The cleaning lady was gone.

Linsey's frown deepened.

The woman had spoken in riddles and acted strangely. And now, she had vanished without a trace.

What was she hiding?

Linsey had a feeling that this woman's secret was tangled up with her in a way she couldn't yet understand.

Otherwise, why had the cleaning lady tried to hurt her the moment they met?

Meanwhile, the Lawson family's banquet was in full swing.

As the event officially began, Jeffery stepped onto the stage.

"Everyone, welcome to our banquet."

As he spoke, he gave a practiced smile, the kind that held just the right amount of charm to capture a room. Eyes followed him, especially those of the young women scattered throughout the crowd.

"As you all know, it's been years since we hosted a public gathering. Tonight, we come together under the name of Lawson Group to share an important announcement," Jeffery continued.

A flicker of intrigue passed through the audience. Jeffery let the moment linger, the corners of his mouth pulling into a knowing smile.

"What could be so important that the Lawson family would go through all this trouble and make such a grand announcement?" someone whispered.

"You think it has anything to do with that man Jeffery personally welcomed earlier?"

"Could be. No one knows who he is yet."

As anticipation swelled, Jeffery's smile widened. Raising his voice just enough to command the room, he declared in a steady tone, "From today onward, we're officially partnering with CR Corporation."

Excitement rippled through the crowd.

"CR Corporation? No way!"

"Lawson Group just secured a deal with the most powerful company in town!"

"So this whole banquet was just to announce the partnership?"

"If that's the case, then they must really see this as a big deal."

"Big? It's CR Corporation we're talking about. Companies would do anything for a partnership like this!"

"Do you think the founder of CR Corporation is here tonight?"

"I'd love to finally see what he looks like! No media outlet has ever managed to get a picture of him all these

years."

Jeffery let the excitement settle before continuing, "In half an hour, we will hold an official signing ceremony. We invite everyone to witness this historic moment with us."

"Official signing ceremony? So the founder really is here?"

"Shh! I heard a rumor-he is. And not just that, he's planning to introduce his wife publicly for the first time."

"If that's true, that's-wow. That's something else."

"Exactly! We're talking about the founder of CR Corporation-a billionaire and one

of the most powerful figures in town. Whoever his wife is, she must be extraordinary."

"I can't wait to find out!"

With the announcement made, Jeffery stepped off the stage with practiced ease and headed toward a private room at the back of the banquet hall.

Inside, Collin paced restlessly, phone in hand, his expression tense.

Nearby, Dustin, who was also attending the Lawson family's banquet, offered a

calm reassurance. "Come on, Collin, don't stress. Linsey is an adult. She wouldn't just vanish into thin air. She'll turn up soon enough."

Chapter 439 I'll Go Find Her Myself

Collin's expression didn't ease. If anything, it grew even more tense.

"I haven't been able to reach Linsey on her phone." He turned to Dustin, his jaw tight. "She said she'd be here in ten minutes, but she's still not here."

Dustin let out a weary sigh. Just as he was about to respond, Jeffery walked in. "Ah, Mr. Lawson, you're here."

Jeffery strode toward them and shifted his gaze to Collin. "What's going on?"

Collin, still dialing tirelessly, didn't even glance up.

Seeing this, Dustin stepped in. "His wife still hasn't shown up, and he's really worried about her."

Jeffery's frown deepened. "That's odd. Why hasn't she arrived by now? Should I send someone to look for her?"

Before the words had fully left his mouth, Collin abruptly turned around. "No, I'll go find her myself."

Dustin's eyes widened. "What? But you're supposed to be part of the ceremony soon, right? And you need to reveal your identity tonight!"

Jeffery didn't look pleased either. "Mr. Riley, it's fine. I can send someone to look for your wife. You shouldn't

miss the ceremony."

Collin shook his head firmly and turned to Dustin. "I need to go myself. I won't feel right leaving her out there

alone."

Dustin hesitated, remembering everything Linsey had been through. If it were anyone else, this might not have been a big deal. But when it came to her, even he couldn't guarantee her safety.

"Fine," Dustin conceded with a sigh.

Jeffery, however, looked far from satisfied: "Mr. Riley, we've already finalized tonight's schedule. Are you really going to leave like this?"

Before Collin could respond, Dustin quickly cut in, "Mr. Lawson, you might not realize this, but his wife isn't just anyone. Her reputation has earned her more than a few enemies in town. She's faced real danger before, and Collin has every reason to be worried."

Collin met Jeffery's gaze and sincerely said, "Mr. Lawson, I'm sorry, but I really have to go. If I make it back in time, we'll stick to the plan. If not, Dustin will handle the ceremony for me."

Jeffery still wasn't thrilled, but he could see there was no stopping Collin. The most important thing tonight was securing the partnership with CR Corporation. Everything else could wait.

"Alright, Mr. Riley. Go ahead. I hope your wife is okay," Jeffery conceded.

A moment later, embarrassment washed over her, and a flush crept up Linsey's cheeks as she watched Collin

kneel in front of her.

"I twisted my ankle while running earlier," she admitted softly,

Collin gently lifted her foot and eased off her high heel. The moment he saw her ankle, his expression tightened. The sprain looked pretty bad.

His fingers brushed lightly over the injury as he examined it. "When I called you earlier, I wasn't trying to rush you. Walking in high heels is hard enough. Running in them just makes it worse."

Realizing the misunderstanding, Linsey let out a small laugh. "No, Collin, you've got it all wrong. I wasn't running to get to the banquet."

Collin paused, his confusion evident. "Then why were you running?"

Chapter 440 I'm Sure

There's No Fracture

Linsey pursed her lips, contemplating for a brief moment before she decided to share her recent ordeal with

Collin.

When she recounted how the cleaning lady had attempted to push her down the stairs, Collin's face immediately darkened.

"Did she actually try to push you?" Collin asked sharply, his tone conveying concern. "Something must be wrong with her."

"I was thinking the same. Unfortunately, I was dressed in this gown and high heels, so I couldn't react swiftly enough to catch her," Linsey replied, her frustration evident.

She had noticed that the cleaning lady wasn't particularly strong.

Had she been in more casual attire, Linsey felt confident she could have managed the situation better and uncovered what the cleaning lady was concealing.

Collin looked tense.

He was surprised that someone at the hotel had attempted to harm Linsey.

Following the evening's events, he became even more hesitant about letting Linsey venture out alone.

"Don't worry, I'll have someone investigate this matter," Collin reassured her.

He was determined to ensure that no one who tried to harm or deceive Linsey would escape

accountability.

Collin then stood, wrapped his arm securely around her waist, and effortlessly lifted her into his arms. Linsey naturally wrapped her arms around his neck, finding comfort in his secure hold.

As Collin started to move, Linsey felt puzzled and asked, "Where are we going?"

"I'm taking you to a nearby clinic to have your ankle checked. If the injury is severe, we'll head to the hospital for a comprehensive examination," Collin explained, glancing down at her.

As she noticed the concern etched on his face, Linsey's expression softened.

She tenderly brushed her fingers across his forehead, smoothing the worried lines.

"Try not to look so concerned, Collin." Linsey spoke gently, drawing closer to him. "It's probably just a sprain I'm sure there's no fracture."

Collin's expression became even more grave after Linsey's attempt to reassure him.

"Do you actually want a fracture?" he asked, his tone tinged with exasperation.

Startled by his response, Linsey replied, "Why would I want a fracture? You really do have quite the imagination."

She reached up to ruffle his hair, offering a comforting smile. "I was just trying to ease your worry."

Collin sighed softly, his voice gentle. "As long as you're safe, that's all that matters to me."

Knowing how concerned he was, Linsey chose not to bring up her health again. Suddenly, Linsey recalled something urgent.

"By the way, is it alright for us to just leave the hotel like this? The Lawson family banquet has probably started by now. Maybe you should return, and someone else could accompany me to the clinic," she suggested quickly. To her surprise, Collin seemed not to hear her as he continued walking briskly out of the hotel. "Collin, did you hear what I said?" Linsey asked again, a hint of concern in her voice.

Finally, Collin stopped and turned to her, his expression serene and composed. "Linsey, do you honestly think a mere banquet is more important to me than you are?"

Linsey felt her heart flutter with his words.