

Zillionaire 491

Chapter 491 There's No

Necklace

"Get this thief out of here before Linsey steals anything else!"

"Yes, yes, deal with her quickly."

The growing chorus of accusations echoed through the hall, each word a crushing force against Linsey.

The hostility in the room was suffocating

She could feel the tide turning against her-if this continued, no one would believe her.

Her expression darkened. That was enough. Clenching her jaw, she grabbed her handbag.

Without hesitation, she unzipped it and, in front of everyone, turned it over. The sharp clatter of items hitting the marble floor sliced through the tension. Silence fell. All eyes were on the scattered contents of Linsey's bag

Linsey had never wanted to dignify such an accusation with a defense. It was beneath her, humiliating.

But Carol had played dirty-using doctored footage as supposed proof.

If Linsey didn't counter with undeniable evidence, she wouldn't be walking out of here unscathed.

Once her bag was empty, she shook it out for good measure, then tossed it onto the floor with an air of finality

Her cold gaze locked onto Carol. "Is this enough for you?"

Carol and Alexa froze, clearly not expecting Linsey to turn the tables so abruptly. Before they could recover, Linsey pressed on. "In your footage, I supposedly took the necklace from the lounge and stuffed it into my bag."

She gestured at the scattered items. "Well? As you can all see, there's no necklace. This bag is already packed full-it couldn't possibly fit a bulky jewelry piece. So tell me, Carol, where exactly was I supposed to hide it?" "You- Carol faltered, momentarily thrown off balance. Linsey didn't give her the chance to regain control. "Everyone, look carefully." She spread her arms. "I'm not wearing any jewelry tonight. My dress is fitted- there's no place to hide a necklace."

Her voice

grew

sharper

"And more importantly, I haven't left this corner of the hall since I arrived"

She pointed up at the security camera. "Carol, you showed us surveillance

footage from the lounge, claiming I stole the necklace. Fine Then how about the footage from this camera?"

レ

1054

A faint, wry smile played on her lips "I can say with absolute certainty that I've been standing under the camera's watch all night. I never set foot in that lounge.

She turned back to Carol, her gaze unwavering "If you don't believe me, let's call the police. They can verify both surveillance videos. Otherwise, I will not accept this baseless accusation. I'll be the one taking you to court for defamation.

Her tone sharpened, each word cutting through the suffocating tension.

A stunned silence gripped the room. The guests stared at Linsey, disbelief flickering across their faces. No one had expected her to stay so calm to dismantle the accusations so ruthlessly, so logically

Chapter 492 Take Her Away And Question Her Properly

If anyone else had been accused like this-cornered, humiliated, with damning footage against them-they would have crumbled under the pressure,

Yet Linsey stood firm, her unwavering confidence casting a shadow of doubt over the crowd.

"Since there's surveillance footage here, why not check it? If Linsey's lying, we can just call the police and have

her arrested."

"Exactly. If this is just a misunderstanding, we shouldn't falsely accuse an innocent person."

But not everyone was convinced.

"Carol's birthday party is about to start. Are we really going to waste time over some random designer?"

"I agree. Whether Linsey's guilty or not, the Lawson family can handle it privately. We have better things to do." Carol and Alexa, who had been tense just moments ago, subtly exhaled in relief.

Seizing the moment, Alexa stepped forward. "Miss Lawson's birthday celebration is about to begin. As for the necklace don't worry, we'll deal with it."

She reached for Linsey's arm, signaling the nearby bodyguards. "Take her away and question her properly."

A cold glint flashed in Alexa's eyes. Once Linsey was dragged somewhere out of sight, they could handle her however they pleased.

She was just a designer. No one would care what happened to her..

Linsey's pupils contracted. A dangerous premonition shot through her.

"Let go of me!" She struggled, refusing to be dragged away

All of a sudden, a sharp voice rang out. "What's going on?"

The hall fell silent in an instant. All eyes turned to see Jeffery striding forward, his expression dark and imposing

At his arrival, Alexa's arrogance wavered.

Jeffery had instructed her to escort Linsey out discreetly-not create a scene.

But Linsey had proven too difficult to manipulate, dragging the situation into the spotlight.

Now, if Jeffery discovered she had deliberately framed Linsey, the web of lies she had spun for Carol would

unravel.

10:54

ed

Her

Alexa's mind raced.

Before anyone else could react, she quickly stepped forward, bowing her head slightly. "Mr. Lawson, I sincerely apologize. A thief showed up at Miss Lawson's birthday party, stealing one of her gifts. We're handling the matter urgently." Jeffery's brows furrowed. "A thief?"

His gaze swept over the crowd, his voice calm yet laced with an icy edge. "A thief-at our event?"

Then, his eyes locked onto Linsey

She stood there, restrained by towering bodyguards, her posture rigid but composed.

His breath hitched.

He had told Alexa to have this guest removed. So why was she still here.

Then, as Carol subtly moved closer to him, Jeffery's pulse quickened.

No. Carol couldn't notice it.

She couldn't see just how much he and Linsey looked alike.

Chapter 493 She's Ruining My Birthday Party!

Jeffery knew that given Carol's sensitivity, if she realized this, she would inevitably think Linsey might be their father's illegitimate daughter.

Carol's heart condition couldn't withstand such a revelation.

Fortunately, Carol was too preoccupied to notice the flicker of unease in Jeffery's expression. Instead, she pointed an accusing finger at Linsey, her voice sharp with frustration. "Jeffery! She's the one who stole my necklace. We have clear surveillance footage, yet she refuses to admit it! She's ruining my birthday party!" Carol clutched Jeffery's arm, shaking it insistently. "Please, Jeffery! The party is about to start-I don't want this thief spoiling my mood. Do something!"

To Carol, everything tonight was unfolding just as planned. Alexa had assured her that Jeffery was behind this setup, orchestrating it to help her.

That was why she had no reservations about demanding his intervention.

Jeffery's frown deepened, his gaze shifting to Linsey. A flicker of disgust surfaced in his eyes.

So this woman wasn't just causing trouble-she was an outright criminal.

"Since the evidence is clear, take her away and question her properly. If necessary, call the police. I don't want this disrupting the party any further."

At his command, the bodyguards moved without hesitation, roughly restraining Linsey.

Her eyes widened in disbelief. He hadn't even bothered to verify the so-called evidence.

He was simply taking Carol's word for it?

Unbelievable.

How absurd was this Lawson family?

Fuming, Linsey opened her mouth to protest-only for a bodyguard to clamp a hand over her mouth, silencing her instantly.

"Let She struggled with all her strength, but the bodyguards' grip was too strong.

Taking a steady breath, Linsey forced herself to stop resisting. There was no point in fighting back now.

Instead, she went still, her cold gaze sweeping over the people in the room.

Fine. She would wait. Once the right moment arrived, she would make them regret this.

ě Q

000

10:54

<

The moment Linsey was dragged away, the tension in the banquet hall dissipated Conversations resumed. laughter filled the air, and the party atmosphere quickly recovered

Alexa exhaled a quiet sigh of relief.

The misunderstanding between Carol and Jeffery had led to an unexpectedly seamless outcome

Everything had played out even more smoothly than she expected.

Now, all that remained was to deal with Linsey in private-without any interruptions.

Meanwhile, Jeffery gently led Carol to a quieter spot, scanning her face for any sign of distress.

"Carol

are you okay?" His voice was softer now, laced with concern.

Carol's heart swelled with satisfaction.

She flashed him a playful smile, taking his hand and swinging it lightly. "Jeffery, you're overthinking things. What could possibly happen?"

Still holding onto his hand, she tilted her head slightly, her voice taking on a grateful lilt. "But thank you for handling everything That woman was really starting to get on my nerves."

Deep down, she knew Linsey had never stolen the necklace. The whole thing had been a setup, orchestrated

Jeffery.

As long as he helped her get rid of Linsey, she would pretend to be in the dark about his plans.

Chapter 494 Did You Invite

Her

Jeffery smiled as he ruffled Carol's hair with indulgence.

"I didn't do anything," he said lightly, though the mere thought of that woman stealing from Carol filled him

"Did you invite her? Next time, don't let people like that attend our gatherings. It's not safe."

Carol chuckled. "Jeffery, Linsey only stole something. The way you're talking, you'd think she committed an

unforgivable crime,"

Despite her casual tone, a sense of satisfaction bloomed within her.

Linsey's reputation needed to be destroyed.

After a brief pause, Carol added, "Don't worry, Jeffery. I won't have anything to do with her anymore."

Jeffery nodded, then glanced at his watch. "The birthday party starts in ten minutes. Get some rest while I have someone double-check the schedule."

"Alright. Thanks, Jeffery," Carol said sweetly, her voice dripping with sugar. She watched as he walked away, a pleased smile stretching across her lips. Just then, Alexa approached and whispered, "Miss Lawson, about that surveillance video-"

"Enough! Carol's face darkened as she cut her off..

She quickly scanned the area to ensure no one was listening before lowering her voice. "You idiot. If you were framing Linsey, how could you not prepare properly? If I hadn't anticipated this and had a fake surveillance video made, how would you have covered it up?"

Alexa gave an awkward smile. "It's a good thing you stepped in. I never expected Linsey to be so sharp. She didn't fall for it at all."

Carol scoffed coldly. "Jeffery must've seen that you were useless, so he handled it himself. And look at that—he got rid of Linsey in no time. Saved us a lot of trouble."

Alexa's expression flickered with unease..

She still couldn't wrap her head around why Jeffery had acted so swiftly to get Linsey out of the picture.

The only explanation was that he adored Carol.

But deep inside, Alexa knew something Jeffery didn't—the woman he had so easily ordered to be caught was his biological sister.

How would he react if he ever found out the truth?

That thought sent a chill down Alexa's spine.

No. This secret could never come to light. She had to do whatever it took to secure Carol's place in the Lawson

family

Growing impatient with Alexa's silence, Carol was about to snap at her when a cold voice sliced through the air

"Carol, that surveillance video was faked by you, wasn't it?"

Carol's heart clenched, a jolt of fear shooting through her. She looked up to see

Millie approaching her face unreadable, flanked by her friends.

The sight of them made Carol's expression stiffen.

Not these pests again!

And Millie had openly defended Linsey in front of everyone earlier.

What was she doing here now?

Carol clenched her jaw and met Millie's gaze head-on. "I don't know what you're talking about," she said

defiantly.

Chapter 495 Why Are You So Hostile Toward Me

After a short hesitation, Carol forced a polite grin. "Millie, why are you so hostile toward me? Our families have worked together for years. By all logic, we should be on good terms..."

Before she could finish, Millie interrupted sharply, "Oh, save it! Do you really think you can keep up this charade? Have you forgotten who spread those vile rumors about me back in school? Don't pretend to be kind

I'm not falling for it."

Carol's expression tensed as she struggled to maintain the elegant demeanor expected of her.

Her lips twitched ever so slightly in frustration,

Damn Millie!

"Millie, you're misunderstanding me. I had nothing to do with those accusations back then. Didn't I later present proof that cleared my name?" Carol forced another smile

Millie let out a mocking laugh. "Proof? You mean the lies you fabricated? Just like the fake surveillance footage you pulled today?"

Carol's eyes flickered with a trace of unease. "That footage wasn't altered. This is your first time meeting Linsey, isn't it? You have no idea what she's really like. This isn't the first time she's pulled something like this."

Millie seethed at Carol's innocent act-nothing would be more satisfying than slapping that smug face.

At first, she had actually believed Linsey had stolen Carol's necklace.

But when Linsey was forcibly dragged away, Millie caught a glimpse of the defiance burning in her eyes.

That look-it struck a deep chord.

It was the same expression she once had when she was drowning under the weight of relentless, humiliating

gossip.

Perhaps it was an unspoken bond between those who had suffered the same injustice, but in that moment, Millie's pulse quickened.

A fierce urge to step forward and pull Linsey out of this mess nearly overwhelmed her.

She was certain now-Linsey wasn't guilty.

She had been set up!

But without concrete proof, the Lawsons wouldn't release her.

So, Millie confided in her friends, laying out her suspicions and a plan to expose the truth.

Thankfully, they stood by her side, ready to help clear Linsey's name.

Before they could make their move, though, Millie spotted Carol and Alexa lurking suspiciously.

Without hesitation, she confronted Carol.

As expected, this woman was just as unbearable as ever!

Millie eyed Carol's arrogant stance and scoffed, "I may not know Linsey well, but I know exactly what kind of person you are. You'd better pray nothing ruins your grand birthday celebration tonight."

With that, Millie spun around and strode off, dragging her friends with her.

Carol clenched her jaw, seething as she muttered under her breath, "That insufferable girl, who does she think she is to challenge me?"

Soon, she would marry the founder of CR Corporation. When that happened, she would be the most powerful

woman in Grester.

Meanwhile, Linsey was shoved into a dimly lit storage room on the hotel's first floor.

"Get in there!" The bodyguard pushed her inside and yelled, "Don't cause trouble."

Linsey stumbled forward, grabbing onto a shelf to steady herself.

A second later, the door slammed shut, and darkness swallowed the room whole.

Chapter 496 What A Bastard!

A sharp ache pierced Linsey's heart, but she quickly steadied herself and reached out into the darkness.

"Even a storage room should have a light switch," she muttered,

After she fumbled along the wall, her fingers finally brushed against the switch.

She exhaled in relief and flicked it on.

Bright light flooded the once pitch-black room.

Linsey squinted against the sudden glare, her eyes needing a moment to adjust before she could fully take in her surroundings.

Scanning the space, she let out a quiet sigh.

For a storage room, it was surprisingly clean and well-organized-nothing like the grimy, suffocating cell she had half-expected.

Considering the Lawsons' merciless nature, she wouldn't have been shocked if they had thrown her into some damp, underground dungeon instead.

The absurd thought made her chuckle.

She still had the mind to joke. Maybe a bit of optimism wasn't so bad after all.

Besides, she had more than just herself to consider now-she was carrying a child. She needed to stay calm for the baby's sake.

Steadying herself, she pulled a chair over and sat down, her mind already racing through possible ways to escape this mess.

Carol's so-called evidence was a lie. Linsey had never stepped into any lounge that evening, nor had she even seen the necklace she was accused of stealing.

The only thing that could clear her name was the banquet hall's surveillance footage.

But frustration bubbled up as she realized her mistake. "I mentioned checking the hall's security cameras earlier but never got the chance to confirm it. Now I'm stuck here, and the Lawsons might destroy the real footage before I can prove anything...."

She sighed, feeling a pang of regret. If only she had thought more rationally earlier, she wouldn't be in such a vulnerable position now.

Her thoughts shifted to Jeffery-the man who had her dragged here without a shred of hesitation.

"What a bastard! He ran into me, blamed me for it, then threw accusations without even checking the facts. The Lawson siblings are really something else."

If they were dead set on making her the scapegoat, she couldn't rely solely on herself to get out of this.

Pressing her lips together, she reached for her phone.

Fortunately, she hadn't left it in her bag-otherwise, she might not have it now.

Her gaze landed on her chat with Collin.

Should she call him? But he was away on business. He might not be able to do anything in time.

She hesitated, then tapped on Dolores' contact.

Dolores had her own company, but she wasn't powerful enough to take on the Lawsons.

Dragging her into this wasn't a good idea.

Linsey racked her brain, searching for a solution-until suddenly, a name surfaced

in her mind. It seemed she had only one choice left.

She couldn't fight this battle alone anymore. She was carrying a child, and that child's safety came first.

The moment she made up her mind, the weight on her shoulders eased. She quickly typed out a message and

hit send.

Just then, the door burst open with a violent slam.

Linsey's body tensed as she flinched in shock.

A smug, taunting voice followed. "Linsey, how does it feel to be locked up in here?"

She looked up-only to meet Carol's mocking gaze, dripping with amusement.

Chapter 497 You're Not Entirely Wrong

Carol strode in confidently, followed closely by Alexa, who wore a sly grin.

Two burly bodyguards flanked the entrance, their imposing presence making it clear that escape was not an

option.

Not that Linsey intended to run.

Even if the guards weren't there, she wouldn't get far in an evening gown and heels,

Rather than wasting her energy on a futile attempt, she decided to stay calm and buy herself time.

That realization steadied her nerves,

Her gaze flickered to Alexa before settling on Carol. In a composed tone, she said, "This was orchestrated from the beginning, wasn't it? You set me up at the party."

Carol chuckled lightly, dragging out her response. "You're not entirely wrong"

She didn't elaborate.

The original plan had been simple-teach Linsey a lesson. Theft hadn't been part of the equation.

But since Alexa had already set the stage, Carol figured there was no harm in playing along-as long as the

outcome suited her.

Linsey thought for a moment before speaking again. "Your maid had nothing concrete against me at first. She was just trying to drag me away under the chaos. If I had panicked, she might have succeeded. But I didn't. Even when some guests wavered, I stood my ground."

Alexa's smirk faltered for a split second.

She hadn't expected Linsey to piece things together so quickly.

Carol's expression flickered with irritation before she masked it with a smirk. "Too bad you figured it out too

late."

Linsey remained unfazed. A faint smile touched her lips.

"When the accusation wasn't enough, you acted fast. You arranged a fake surveillance video and seized the perfect moment to unveil it." Linsey's tone was almost detached, as if she were analyzing someone else's predicament. "Once that footage played, everything I'd said before lost its weight. The contrast made it easier for people to believe you, and no one cared about my side anymore. To them, I was just a liar wasting their

time."

Carol let out an exasperated scoff. "And? What's your point? You expect me to clap for you?"

10.56

With exaggerated slowness, she raised her hands and gave a mocking round of applause.

"Wow! Linsey, you're a genius. You got it all right. I'm truly impressed." Leaning in slightly, her voice dripped with amusement. "Maybe you should ditch fashion design and become a detective instead."

Before Linsey could respond, Carol straightened, crossing her arms as she strolled back and forth. "But honestly? I didn't plan things that far ahead. I do what I want, and no one stops me. You were just unlucky. If you hadn't crossed my path, none of this would have happened."

Linsey studied her intently before asking, "Carol, I really want to know-what exactly did I do to offend you? Why are you so determined to make my life miserable?"

Chapter 498 Why Is Your Hand Shaking

Linsey took a deep breath, her brows knitting together. "From where I stand, there's no real conflict between us. We live in completely different worlds-so why go to such extremes just to target me?"

Carol didn't answer right away.

But Linsey caught the brief flicker of jealousy on her perfectly made-up face.

Why? Carol had everything-the prestige, the wealth, the unquestioned status as a Lawson. Why would she go out of her way to make life miserable for an ordinary designer?

"Shut up!" Carol's voice lashed out like a whip as she spun around, shoving Linsey hard.

Caught off guard, Linsey let out a sharp gasp as her body lurched sideways.

A jolt of panic shot through her, drowning out all thought but one-protect the baby.

Instinct took over. She twisted mid-fall, her arm moving to shield her abdomen while her foot struggled for balance against the corner of the wall.

A sharp, searing pain shot through her wrist and ankle, and her face drained of color.

At the same time, her shoulder slammed into a metal shelf, the harsh crash echoing through the storage room.

Even Alexa stiffened in shock. She hadn't expected Carol to turn violent so suddenly.

For a moment, her hand twitched as if to help Linsey-but then she stopped herself.

She couldn't afford to feel sympathy, not for Linsey.

Pain wracked Linsey's body, cold sweat breaking out on her forehead as she slid weakly to the floor. She lifted a trembling hand to touch her throbbing shoulder.

It hurt. Every inch of her ached, except for one place. Her abdomen felt unharmed.

Carol loomed over her, eyes glittering with something far from remorse. If anything, she looked pleased.

Had she known how satisfying it would be to put Linsey in her place, she would have done it sooner.

After all, the founder of CR Corporation didn't care about his so-called wife.

And as the daughter of the powerful Lawson family, she had every right to teach a lowly commoner a lesson. The thought sent a surge of delight through her, an involuntary smirk curling her lips.

She let out a dramatic sigh, shaking her head. "Oh dear, look at you. How pitiful."

The sharp click of her heels echoed ominously in the cramped storage room, each step like a weight pressing down on Linsey's chest.

Carol's gaze flickered to Linsey's trembling hand.

"Why is your hand shaking? Did you sprain it? Or maybe you hit something?" Carol's words sounded concerned, but her voice held not an ounce of sympathy. Then, without hesitation, she lifted her foot and pressed the ridged sole of her designer shoe onto Linsey's injured hand. Then she ground it down.

"Ah!" Linsey let out a hoarse cry, pain tearing through her like white-hot lightning. Desperately, she shoved at Carol's elegant heel. "Let go!"

The searing agony coursed through her body, her breath coming in sharp, ragged gasps.

Cold sweat drenched her face in seconds.

Her veins stood out against her pale skin as she fought against the crushing

weight, but Carol didn't budge.

Chapter 499 You Wanted

Me Dead

Alexa couldn't tell if it was her own illness making her feel this way, but she simply couldn't bear to watch any

longer.

"Miss Lawson..." She hesitated before speaking. "The birthday party is about to start. You should go ahead and

prepare."

Carol withdrew her foot instantly, as if she had lost interest, standing with a casual, almost indifferent posture.

Alexa's gaze dropped to Linsey's injured hand, and for a brief moment, she froze.

Linsey instinctively pulled her hand back, but the wound on her arm made every movement slow and excruciating.

Her fingers trembled uncontrollably from the lingering pain.

For a moment, her gaze turned hollow. She cradled her injured hand against her chest, her breathing uneven. A single tear escaped her eye, landing silently on her bloodied skin.

Carol let out a pleased hum. "You're right. I should get going."

She turned away, humming a lighthearted tune as if nothing had happened. "Stay here and watch her. I'll be back after the party."

"Yes, Miss Lawson," Alexa murmured, lowering her head.

With that, Carol swept out of the storage room, her entourage trailing behind, leaving only Linsey and Alexa in the thick, suffocating silence.

Alexa stood stiffly to the side, forcing herself to remember her purpose. Protect her daughter. That thought was the only thing keeping her from giving in to the pang of guilt twisting in her chest.

Years ago, she had made a choice-one that changed Linsey's fate forever.

She had personally swapped the Lawson family's real daughter-Linsey-with her own child. And after the switch, she hadn't even cared to raise Linsey.

She had abandoned her without a second thought. But fate had played a cruel trick.

Alexa's mind drifted. She was lost in old memories, until Linsey's hoarse voice suddenly cut through the silence. "At the last Lawson family banquet, you tried to kill me, didn't you?"

Alexa's breath hitched. Her heart pounded violently in her chest.

So Linsey remembered...

Linsey studied Alexa's expression carefully before shifting her gaze away, her voice steady despite its quiet rasp. "When I saw you tonight, I remembered that night. You're just a servant in the Lawson family. We shouldn't have any deep entanglements. And yet, you wanted me dead."

Alexa forced herself to breathe evenly. She needed to stay calm. "You misunderstood. You're here because you angered Miss Lawson."

Linsey turned her head back toward Alexa, her piercing gaze unwavering. "Then tell me how did I anger Carol?"

She didn't wait for an answer. Instead, she went on, her voice slow and deliberate, as if piecing together a puzzle aloud. "The first time I met Carol was at the Lawson family banquet. At first, we only bumped into each other-an accident. She's spoiled and temperamental, so she lashed out at me. That, I could understand. But everything changed when she saw the invitation in my hand. That's when she started to hate me."

Her voice softened as she asked the real question lingering in her mind. "Is there something about the Lawson family's invitation that I don't know?"

She thought back to that night. Because of an accident, she had sprained her

ankle and never got the chance to ask Collin about it.

But now, she was certain-there was something on that invitation, something that explained why Carol's hostility had turned into outright malice.

Chapter 500 Have We Met Before

Alexa hesitated, struggling to follow Linsey's train of thought

At the last Lawson family's event, she hadn't even met Carol.

Because of that, she had no idea what Carol had been thinking back then.

Eventually, she did meet her biological daughter, Carol

To keep the truth about her and Linsey's origins hidden, Alexa had to weave a lie- that Linsey had repeatedly sought out the founder of CR Corporation with ulterior motives.

It was the only way to sway Carol to her side, turning her against Linsey, the rightful daughter of the Lawson family.

After all, Carol's interest in the founder wasn't a secret within the Lawson household.

But now, after she watched Carol lash out at Linsey, doubt crept into Alexa's mind. Did Carol know something? Something deeper? Was that why her hatred toward Linsey ran so deep?

Still, Alexa was sure Carol remained unaware of the real truth. If she knew Linsey was the Lawson family's true daughter, given her fiery temper, she would have already made Linsey's life unbearable.

"Linsey, don't expect to get anything out of me. I'm just a servant of the Lawson family," Alexa said coolly, drawing a deep breath.

Linsey met her gaze calmly. After a brief pause, she spoke with conviction. "So, you don't know the real reason either."

Alexa's heart skipped a beat.

Linsey was sharp-too sharp. If she kept piecing things together at this pace, it was only a matter of time before she uncovered the truth about her own origins.

A sudden wave of fear gripped Alexa. She had made a mistake. She shouldn't have lingered here with Linsey. She should have left with Carol.

As Alexa pulled herself together, her eyes landed on the deep, blood-red wound on Linsey's hand. Pressing her lips together, she said dryly, "I'll get you a first aid kit. Stay put."

Without waiting for a response, Alexa turned and walked swiftly toward the supply closet, almost as if she were fleeing

Linsey's gaze followed her. As Alexa reached the door, Linsey's eyes flickered- she had noticed something.

The hallway was empty. Carol's bodyguards must have left with her.

A thought crossed Linsey's mind, and she spoke casually. "I'm a little thirsty. Could you bring me some water?"

Alexa, still preoccupied, answered briskly, "Fine."

Linsey wasn't in any condition to escape, so there was no harm in indulging her request.

Just as Alexa was about to shut the door, Linsey suddenly asked, "Have we met before? Perhaps... At a hospital?"

Alexa froze. Through the narrow gap in the door, Linsey's calm, unwavering gaze met hers, sending a jolt of panic through her chest.

How terrifying this woman was! How could she remember something from so long ago?

Without thinking, Alexa slammed the door shut, cutting off any further conversation.

Leaning against it, she inhaled deeply, trying to steady her racing heart.

For a moment, she closed her eyes, but when she opened them again, her expression was cold, filled with quiet resentment.

She shouldn't have wavered. She shouldn't have felt even a shred of sympathy for Linsey.

With Carol still holding the title of the Lawson family's cherished daughter, now was the perfect time to get rid of Linsey once and for all.

Once she was out of the picture, no one could challenge Carol's place in the family.

Steeling herself, Alexa pulled a key from her pocket and, without hesitation, locked the storage room's door from the outside.