

Zillionaire 641

Chapter 641 He's Like Family

Dolores suratted Linsey's hand wway with a slighe butt "1 wasn't crying- something just got is my eyes, alright?"

Then she turned and spotted Zender staring at her with curious eyes. Her mood instantly lifted. "And this must be Zander! Last time I saw him at your place, he was just a toddley"

Linsey laughed softly. "Back then, he and Zenia were just barely over a year old"

As she spoke, she waved Zander over. "Come here, sweetheart. Do you still remember Dolores?"

Zander skipped over with light steps and greeted her sweetly, "Hi, Dolores. I'm really happy to see you today. You're super pretty!"

Dolores blinked, then turned to linsey with an impressed grin. "Wow! Look at him, already such a smooth talker. With charm like that, he's going to have girls lining up when he's older."

She reached into her pocket and pulled out a bank card. "Here, a little gift from me. I'll give Zenia hers when I see her."

Zander accepted it with both hands and said sincerely, "Mommy says not to take money from strangers—but you're Mommy's best friend, so I think it's okay."

His reply made Dolores burst into laughter. "Linsey, I didn't know you were raising such a smart little guy. You've done a great job/"

Linsey smiled with a shake of her head. "These two are honestly easy. They don't give me much trouble at all."

While they chatted and laughed, Caylee quietly started unpacking their luggage.

Linsey and Dolores settled on the sofa, catching up, while Zander played nearby with his little racing car—the same one he insisted on bringing to Grester.

Dolores held Linsey's hand and said softly, "So, how long are you planning to stay this time? You've just gotten back—please don't leave right after the competition ends."

Linsey had planned for a short visit, but seeing Dolores again after all this time made her heart waver. "Okay... I'll try to stay a few more days."

After a short pause, she added, "Zenja had a mild fever before I left. Gorman's with her now, and once she's better, he'll bring her over."

At that, Dolores raised an eyebrow and gave her a knowing smile. "You've been living with Gorman for four years now, right?"

She hesitated for a moment, then lowered her voice and gave Linsey a playful look. "So... Anything going on

there?"

Linsey picked up on what she meant and calmly clarified, "I told you before—Gorman and I don't live together. He bought the unit next to mine. We're neighbors, nothing more. We just help each other out."

Dolores let out a sigh. "Honestly, I thought he'd give up and move on, but look at him—still by your side after all these years. And now, with Zenja sick, you trusted him to take care of her. That says a lot."

Linsey didn't disagree. "I do trust Gorman. He's reliable, but that's all there is to it."

She hesitated for a beat, then said quietly, "To me, he's like family. I've gently tried encouraging him to find someone and settle down, but he always changes the subject with a smile. I really don't know what else to say

to him."

Chapter 642 They're Completely Charmed By...

Dolores didn't sugarcoat her words. "Gorman has perfected the art of staying close enough to be significant,

but not so close that it feels intrusive. You never feel overwhelmed, yet he's always right there, just enough to

keep you thinking about him."

No argument came to Linsey's mind. Dolores had captured her situation with Gorman perfectly.

While watching Zander fiddle with his toy, Dolores tilted her head thoughtfully and asked, "So, how do the kids

feel about Gorman?"

Linsey answered right away. "They're completely charmed by him."

A few seconds passed before she added in a softer voice, "Not long after they started calling me Mommy, I

overheard them calling Gorman Daddy. Gorman was caught off guard, I could tell, but he gently corrected them.

How could I blame him for that? If anything, I felt touched. Kids speak from the heart, and I couldn't possibly

make a big deal out of something so innocent."

Dolores leaned back a little, her tone becoming thoughtful. "Well, I suppose Gorman has only himself to blame

for falling for someone as ambitious as you."

A laugh escaped Linsey, light and sincere. "Ambitious? I wouldn't dare compete with you. You built a business

from the ground up and made it thrive in just a few short years. That's real ambition!"

Linsey's compliment brought a warm smile to Dolores's face, but it quickly faded as she regained her

composure. "My company is just starting to find its footing. It's still far from the top players in town, especially when compared to CR Corporation..."

The sentence trailed off as Dolores suddenly froze, her lips tightening. Realizing her mistake, she briefly shut

her eyes, mentally scolding herself for mentioning that name in the conversation.

At the mention of CR Corporation, Linsey's mind drifted back to a courthouse bench, to the day she finalized her divorce from Collin four years ago.

Lowering her gaze, she forced a small, polite smile. "CR Corporation was already dominating the local market

back then. I can only imagine how much stronger they've become since."

Linsey kept her expression steady, trying to project confidence. "We just have to stay hopeful. I came back specifically to join the design competition under your company's name, to give Davidson Group a bit of extra

momentum."

As she finished speaking, she reached over and clasped Dolores' hand with warmth. "I'll do everything I can to win the championship. This way, your fashion line won't just stand out in town, it'll gain recognition

nationwide."

Those words hit Dolores straight in the heart. "Yes!" she exclaimed, her eyes lighting up. "Let's give it

everything we've got!"

Their conversation continued for a while longer, filled with shared determination and laughter.

Off to the side, Zander let out a long, drowsy yawn, rubbing at his eyes.

Seeing him grow sleepy, Dolores stood up and smoothed his hair. "Looks like someone's ready for a nap. I need to head out and run some errands, but after you've both had some rest, come visit my office later this

afternoon."

"Alright. Be careful on your way back," Linsey said with a soft smile.

With a few final words, Dolores made her way back to the company headquarters.

The moment she stepped into the lobby, her secretary approached. "Ms.

Davidson, Mr. Wade from CR Corporation is waiting in your office."

A faint crease appeared between Dolores' eyebrows as she muttered under her

breath, "Why does he keep showing up unannounced like this?"

Before she could give the question any more thought, the office door swung open with confident ease.

Leaning against the frame, Dustin raised an eyebrow and teased, "Were you just talking about me?"

Taken off guard, Dolores looked slightly embarrassed for a moment before quickly regaining her composure and motioning for Dustin to come in.

Once they were alone, Dolores crossed the room and took her seat behind the desk. "So, what brings you

she asked coolly.

here?"

Dustin walked in with his usual ease, shrugging as he spoke, "Honestly? I figured you might have trouble finding a decent designer. I didn't expect you to bring in Aurora Bright. She's been making a name for herself overseas. Quite the impressive catch."

Chapter 643 He Should Let

Go

Dolores cast a smug glance at Dustin. "If you can pull in a top-tier designer, I'm not going to sit back and do nothing."

Dustin narrowed his eyes slightly, then said casually, "You sound confident. Don't tell me you brought Linsey

back?"

The question caught Dolores completely off guard. Her heart skipped a beat, and her expression faltered for a split second.

Dustin seemed unfazed by her reaction. "This year's competition is being held anonymously to keep things fair. No one in the audience will know which company hired which designer."

He paused briefly before adding with meaning, "Aurora has never revealed her true identity-not since her very first design went public."

Dolores steadied her breath and lowered her voice. "What exactly are you implying?"

Dustin's tone was calm. "What I'm saying is, we'll participate in this year's competition—and I'm the one overseeing everything. Collin doesn't know a thing. He used to follow all things related to fashion design. But after failing to find Linsey again and again, he stopped caring about these competitions last year. So you don't

need to worry about him stumbling across her by accident."

Dolores didn't expect him to figure so much out. For a moment, she was speechless. Then she countered, "Who

said Aurora is Linsey? You're really letting your imagination run wild. Even if Aurora was Linsey, we'd still

enter the competition fair and square. No need to tiptoe around just because of Collin."

Dustin smiled faintly. "Then let's just say I'm overthinking it."

After a few seconds of silence, Dolores glanced at him, hesitated, then asked carefully, "Why do you sound like

you don't want Collin to run into Linsey again?"

Dustin shrugged with a hint of honesty. "Linsey and Gorman left together four years ago. I figure they're probably a thing by now. Rather than letting Collin see them happy and tearing himself apart over it, it's better

they don't meet again. As his friend, I'd rather not watch him spiral into heartbreak all over again. It's been four years. He should let go."

Dolores's irritation bubbled to the surface.

To her, Dustin's words made it sound like Linsey had left Grester because she was in love with Gorman.

But that wasn't the truth at all. Linsey had walked away from Grester because the pain here was too much. She left while expecting, all on her own.

Dolores couldn't even imagine what that must have been like-pregnant and alone in a foreign place. If not for Gorman's support, things might have gone very differently for Linsey.

"Oh, so now you're trying to tell me how deeply Collin loved her?" Dolores's voice was sharp with sarcasm. "If he really loved her so much, then how could he lie to her like that? He's great at playing the devoted husband role, I'll give him that-he even fooled someone like you, Mr. Romantic Expert."

Dustin looked genuinely confused, then a bit flustered. "What do you mean by playing the devoted husband role? And what's this about me being a romance expert? I've only had a few relationships. You make it sound like I'm some kind of heartbreaker."

Dolores waved him off, clearly annoyed. "Whatever. I'm not in the mood to argue with you over this. Is this seriously the reason you came here today?"

Chapter 644 You Could've Seriously Hurt Someone

Dustin's imposing air melted away in an instant. He scratched his head, a little sheepishly. "It's lunchtime, isn't it? I just came to see if you wanted to grab a bite."

Dolores narrowed her eyes, unconvinced. "You sure it's lunch you're after? Or are you trying to snoop around for our designer's creative ideas? Well, forget it. This time, we're aiming straight for the top three!"

Dustin went quiet for a beat, then said earnestly, "You've got it all wrong. I genuinely just wanted to have lunch. Nothing else."

But Dolores brushed him off without hesitation. "No thanks. I'm busy. Go bug someone else."

And just like that, Dustin was unceremoniously kicked out of her office.

He stood in the hallway, staring at the tightly shut door. After a long pause, he let out a quiet laugh-half amused, half resigned. Yet there was a softness in his eyes, a quiet affection he hadn't even noticed himself.

He muttered with a sigh, "She's getting colder by the day. I go out of my way to ask her to lunch, and she thinks I've got some hidden agenda. Honestly, it stings."

Despite his words, there was no trace of anger on his face.

He simply shook his head, helpless and a little amused, then turned to leave.

There was a lot to handle back at CR Corporation. The design competition was the day after tomorrow, and he

needed to focus.

After a short nap, Linsey set off for the Davidson Group along with Zander and Caylee.

It had been four years since she left, and Grester had changed in many small ways. Dolores' company had even

moved to a new location.

Linsey stared out the window, watching the unfamiliar streets pass by as her mind drifted.

All of a sudden, the car gave a sharp jolt as it collided with the vehicle in front. Everyone inside was thrown

forward.

Caylee, riding in the front passenger seat, let out a surprised yelp. In the back, Linsey instinctively pulled Zander close to protect him.

The driver's face went pale. He stammered nervously, "W-we hit the car in front..."

He glanced anxiously at Caylee, then turned to check on Linsey and Zander. "Ms. Brooks, are you alright? And your son?"

Linsey quickly sat up straighter, her eyes scanning Zander for injuries.

"Mommy, I'm fine," Zander said in a small, shaken voice, clearly scared-but thankfully unhurt.

Linsey breathed a quiet sigh of relief and gave him a comforting squeeze. "We're okay. Go check on the other car."

"Yes, Ms. Brooks." The driver got out and hurried over.

A moment later, Linsey noticed someone step out of the car they had hit.

There was something about the figure that struck her-tall, confident, familiar. She couldn't quite place him, but something about him tugged at her memory.

Caylee rolled down the window, letting the voices from outside drift in.

"I'm really sorry, sir. I couldn't stop in time. I'll cover the cost-just tell me how much the damage is," the driver said.

The man frowned as he inspected the back of his car. "What kind of driver can't brake in time? You could've seriously hurt someone."

"I know, and I'm truly sorry. Please let me know how much I owe," the driver repeated sincerely.

Linsey listened from the backseat, her brows drawing together. She was about to ask Caylee to step out and handle it but before she could, the other car's door opened again, and another tall figure emerged.

Chapter 645 You Look Just Like Zander

Linsey's eyes widened in a flash, and her heart began to race wildly.

In the brief moment she stood frozen, Collin had already walked between the two cars.

She never imagined that on her very first day back in Grester, she would run into Collin.

Still stunned, she glanced down at Zander, who was lying quietly in her arms, still a little dazed.

Then it hit her-she couldn't let Collin see Zander. If he did, he would definitely sense something wasn't right.

"Is the damage serious?" Collin asked.

Outside the car, Collin looked blankly at the rear of the vehicle.

There were a few scuff marks, but nothing major.

"Mr. Riley," his subordinate called respectfully as Collin stepped out.

The driver stared at Collin, eyes wide. He mumbled in disbelief, "You look just like Zander..."

Hearing that, Collin's subordinate frowned. "Who's Zander?"

Collin didn't respond. His gaze swept across the other car without much thought- until something caught his

eye.

His breath hitched. He stared hard, trying to make out the face half-hidden in the shadows of the back seat. Was that Linsey? His feet moved on their own. He stepped closer to the car, his heart beginning to pound. The nearer he got, the stronger the feeling grew-someone important was in that car.

Meanwhile, the driver couldn't stop staring.

The resemblance between Collin and Zander was too striking to ignore. Collin looked like the grown version of

Zander.

He knew nothing of Linsey's past with Collin. Gorman had simply connected him with the job through a friend

in Grester.

The driver figured they must be related. And if that was the case, maybe he wouldn't have to pay for the damage after all.

"Sir, I..." He started to speak, ready to mention Linsey.

But just then, Caylee stepped out of the passenger seat and pulled him aside. "Is there a problem that's hard to solve?"

She stepped in front of Collin, blocking his view completely.

With a calm smile, she said, "I'm so sorry. Our driver wasn't careful and caused you trouble. Please forgive us."

She pulled out her phone. "I'll pay you directly."

Collin's subordinate stayed quiet, waiting for his boss to speak.

After a pause, Collin said, "You got out from the passenger seat. Is someone else inside? May I speak with your

boss?"

Caylee felt a chill run through her. She hadn't expected him to be this persistent.

Recalling Linsey's instructions, she forced a polite smile and replied, "You must be mistaken, sir. There's just two of us in the car."

The driver quickly caught on. Linsey must have told her to say that.

He jumped in, nodding. "Yes, just the two of us."

After a beat, he added, "How much do you want for compensation? Just name it.

I'll take full responsibility. The accident was my fault."

Chapter 646 I'd Like To Speak With Your Boss

Collin stared closely at Caylee and the driver.

He couldn't say for sure if the person in the back seat was Linsey, but he was certain-someone was back there.

What puzzled him was why they were lying.

He knew he had no right to pry or question who was inside. But their odd behavior made it hard to let it go.

Something wasn't adding up.

A thought crept in-maybe the person in the back seat knew him.

If so, why were they hiding?

Collin said nothing for a moment, then calmly pulled out his phone. "Let's call the police. They're the ones who can properly decide who's at fault here."

Caylee's eyes widened in surprise. She hadn't expected things to go this far.

She took a breath, trying to stay composed. "Sir, we're more than willing to pay for the damage. There's really no need to involve the police. We have other things to handle and not much time."

Collin smiled, but it didn't quite reach his eyes. "Since you admit fault, then just do me a small favor. I'd like to speak with your boss. That's not asking much, is it? If they don't want to come out, I can talk to them through

the window."

With that, he brushed past both Caylee and the driver, heading straight for the back seat.

Caylee's heart jumped. She quickly stepped forward, her voice tight with panic. "Sir, please, you-"

Inside the car, Linsey's heart pounded like a drum.

The door was locked-she knew that. Collin couldn't open it.

Still, being this close to him again, after so long, sent a wave of nerves through her. She couldn't calm the storm

inside her.

In her arms, Zander sat quietly, staring at Collin through the glass.

He recognized him. This was the man who always made his mother sad.

Suddenly, a ringtone pierced the silence.

Linsey flinched. It was Collin's phone.

She watched as he paused and answered the call

"Collin, where are you? Our clients are already here and waiting," Dustin said from the other end.

Collin's expression changed slightly. He had completely forgotten about the afternoon meeting.

He turned and began walking back to his car. "Alright," he told Dustin.

As he passed his subordinate, he gave a brief order. "Forget the compensation. Take me to the office- and bring

a different car."

"Yes, sir." The man nodded quickly, then turned to Caylee and the driver. "You

heard my boss. No need to compensate. We'll be going now."

Moments later, the car pulled away, disappearing down the street.

Back inside their own car, Caylee let out a breath of relief. "Linsey, he left. He got

a call and didn't push further. No talk of compensation."

Linsey lowered her eyes. Her voice was distant. "Okay."

After that, Caylee turned sharply to the driver with a frown. "Why would you bring

up Zander like that? It doesn't matter how much that man looks like Zander-it has nothing to do with us. Next time, keep your mouth shut around strangers."

Chapter 647 I Saw Collin On The Way Here

The driver scratched his head awkwardly. "Sorry... I was just too shocked. That man really looks like~"

Caylee cut in sharply. "That's enough! Stop with the nonsense and focus on driving."

"Yes, ma'am." He clamped his mouth shut and quietly started the engine.

After scolding him, Caylee glanced back at Linsey in the rear seat.

Linsey stared blankly out the window, her expression distant and heavy.

With a quiet sigh, Caylee bit her lip, then took out her phone and quickly sent a message to Gorman. "Boss, Ms. Brooks just ran into Collin Riley. He didn't see her."

Within seconds, her phone buzzed with a reply.

She wasn't surprised-Gorman always responded fast when it came to Linsey.

"How is Linsey doing?" he asked.

Caylee hesitated, then typed honestly, "She seems really upset."

This time, the reply took a little longer. "I see. Stay close to her. Tell me right away if anything happens."

"Yes, boss," Caylee responded immediately.

Gorman was currently abroad taking care of Zenia, which meant he couldn't be there for Linsey himself.

She must protect Linsey and keep her far from Collin until he returned.

Just then, Linsey's phone rang. It was Dolores. "Linsey, are you and Zander almost at my office?" her voice came cheerfully through the speaker.

Linsey offered a faint smile. "Almost there. There was a small incident on the way, so we're running a little late." "A small incident? Are you okay? Was anyone hurt?" Dolores asked, her tone shifting with concern. "We're fine. I'll tell you everything when we see each other," Linsey said softly, her gaze falling as her mind flashed back to the moment she saw Collin outside the car. She wasn't ready to talk about it-not yet.

"Alright. I just finished a client meeting at a nearby restaurant. You can come here directly. It has a kid's play area upstairs, so Caylee can watch Zander while we talk," Dolores replied.

"Okay. Send me the location-we're on our way," Linsey said.

They soon arrived at the restaurant.

A waiter led them to Dolores' private dining room.

Since they had already eaten, Dolores didn't order much-just a few glasses of juice

After a few quiet minutes, Dolores turned to Caylee. "The second floor has a play area. Why don't you take

Zander up for a bit? I need to go over the competition details with Linsey."

Caylee nodded. "Ms. Brooks, call me if you need anything"

Linsey leaned in and whispered, "Don't let Zander out of your sight."

"I won't," Caylee replied.

She left with Zander, leaving the room quiet.

Dolores studied Linsey carefully. "You seem off today. What happened earlier?"

Linsey let out a gentle sigh, her eyes clouded. "I saw Collin on the way here."

Chapter 648 Did Your Cars Collide

Dolores's eyes widened in shock. "How on earth did you bump into Collin on your very first day back?"

She paused for a beat, then asked, "Did he see Zander? What was his reaction?"

Zander and Collin looked so alike.

Collin wasn't clueless. If he saw Zander, he would know right away that Zander was his child.

Linsey shook her head, her face serious. "No. We were still in the car when he stepped out of his. He didn't see

us."

Dolores quickly caught on. "Did your cars collide?"

Linsey nodded. "Yeah. My driver said some things he shouldn't have. It made Collin suspicious. He even tried to look inside my car. But he got a call and left. He didn't even ask for compensation."

Just hearing it made Dolores feel the tension Linsey must have felt.

She let out a long breath. "Thank goodness he didn't see you. But you came back for the competition, and Grester isn't exactly a big place. In our circle, news travels fast. It's only a matter of time before Collin finds out."

Linsey nodded. "You're right. But for now, I don't want him to know I'm back. And I definitely don't want him to see Zander or Zenia. If he ever finds out about the kids..."

She trailed off, her eyes flashing with resolve. "I won't let him take them away from me."

Upstairs, in the children's area, Caylee was playing with Zander.

In the middle of the fun, Zander suddenly said, "I need to go to the restroom." "Alright. Let's go," Caylee replied.

She pulled out a clean handkerchief from her bag and gently wiped the sweat off his face. Then she led him to the restroom on the same floor.

At the entrance of the men's room, Zander stopped and turned to her, his tone serious "Caylee, you're a girl. You shouldn't go into the men's room. I'll go in by myself."

Caylee chuckled. "Alright, little man. But take your time. And if anything happens, just call my name, okay

She paused, then added with a playful grin, "And you better be out in five minutes. Or I'm breaking the door down."

Zander nodded like a soldier and turned toward the restroom

Caylee stopped him with a smile and pointed at his face. "Hey, little gentleman, do you really need singlasses in the restroom? Want me to hold them? And your backpack too? You've been carrying it all day"

Zander shook his head, firm and proud. "A real gentleman carries his own backpack. And I can wear my sunglasses in the restroom. Don't worry, Caylee"

With that, he trotted off inside, leaving her smiling to herself.

Once in a stall, Zander stood on tiptoe and locked the door. He pulled out his little phone from his backpack and sent a message to Zenia. "I saw the bad guy who always makes Mommy upset. Are you still sick? When can you come over? Let's think of a way to get back at him—for Mommy

Chapter 649 Thank You, Sir!

Zander waited patiently for about thirty minutes before a message came in.

Zenia replied, "I'm feeling much better today, Zander. I'll ask Gorman to take me to meet you and Mommy tonight. Can you wait on the revenge plan? I want us to do it together—we're both Mommy's kids."

Zander quickly typed back a simple "OK" and tucked the phone into his backpack.

After finishing up, he walked to the sink. The counter was a bit high, and he stood there, trying to figure out

how to wash his hands.

Just then, a lazy voice came from beside him. "What's the matter, little guy? Need a hand?"

Zander looked up at the tall man beside him and answered without hesitation, "That would be great, sir."

Dustin raised a brow, amused. He dried his own hands, bent down, and lifted Zander with ease, holding him up

to the faucet.

"The hot water's on the left," he said kindly.

Zander gave a quiet response. "I'm not that silly."

He washed his hands carefully, then added naturally, "I need to dry my hands." The boy's calm and confident tone caught Dustin's interest. He set Zander down and handed him some tissues, then joked, "You sound like a little commander." Zander carefully wiped his hands. "Don't worry, sir. I'll remember to thank you." He looked up and said, word by word, "Thank you, sir!"

Dustin chuckled. "You're quite something. Wearing sunglasses in the restroom, huh?"

Zander snorted softly. "No need to be jealous. If you like them, you can buy your own."

Dustin laughed, warmth flickering in his eyes. "You're really interesting, I must say. Where are your parents? Are they outside? Should I take you out?"

Zander tilted his head, then said seriously, "Sir, are you just trying to ask about my sunglasses brand? You don't need to beat around the bush. Mommy always says to speak clearly. If we don't, people might not

understand."

Dustin blinked, caught off guard by the boy's quick wit.

Before he could respond, Zander took off his sunglasses and turned them to check the brand.

But Dustin's gaze wasn't on the glasses anymore.

Dustin froze the second Zander lifted his face.

His eyes widened in disbelief. Zander looked just like Collin.

For a split second, Dustin wondered if he was dreaming. His heartbeat jumped, and a faint ringing filled his ears. He couldn't even hear what Zander was saying anymore.

Zander finished reading the brand out loud, then noticed Dustin standing there in a daze, his lips pursed.

He remembered what Caylee had said he had only five minutes. If he didn't leave soon, she would come in

after him. And that would be truly embarrassing for her.

So, without another word, Zander turned and walked out.

It wasn't until then that Dustin finally snapped back to reality.

He stood there, stunned, his thoughts racing. That face-there was no mistake. Zander had to be related to

Collin.

Chapter 650 Is Your Phone Good

Dustin couldn't stop wondering when Collin had a child-and why he had kept it a secret.

The moment Zander started to disappear from view, Dustin's heart skipped a beat. Without thinking, he dashed after him. "Hey, kid! Hold on a second!"

Outside, Dustin saw Zander walking toward a woman. She spoke to him briefly, then gently took his hand and

led him away.

The woman looked plain, but her bright eyes and warm smile stood out.

Dustin guessed she was Zander's mother.

He followed quickly, pulling out his phone, ready to snap a photo of Zander. The boy looked just like Collin.

Something in his gut told him Zander was related to Collin.

No he was almost sure of it. Zander had to be Collin's lost son.

The more he thought about it, the more excited he became. He opened his camera and aimed.

All of a sudden, a blow hit him square in the back.

Dustin flinched in shock. His phone slipped from his hand and hit the floor with a loud crack.

"Who the-" The curse on his lips froze when he turned and saw Dolores.

He held back his anger, but the effort made him cough hard. His face turned red.

Dolores looked a little embarrassed.

She had rushed over and hit him to stop him from taking the picture.

Now she realized she might have overdone it.

"Y-you okay?" she asked, her voice laced with guilt. She forced a smile. "I saw you from afar and thought I'd surprise you. Didn't think you'd scare so easily."

After a pause, she added, "You sure you're alright?"

While she was speaking, her eyes flicked past Dustin. She spotted Caylee walking away with Zander. F washed over her like a wave.

Dustin stared at her, dazed, then quickly turned around.

Zander-the boy who looked so much like Collin-was gone.

He hurried over and bent down to pick up his phone.

Dolores stepped closer, eyes fixed on the device, silently hoping it was broken. "Is

your phone good? I can pay for it if it's damaged."

Dustin checked the screen, then gave a small smile. "No need. It's tough. Still works fine."

"Ah, that's good," Dolores said, forcing a grin.

Her gaze lingered on the phone, uneasy.

She had seen him trying to take a picture of Zander. That was why she had knocked the phone away

If he had gotten that shot, things would have gotten messy. She would have had to find a way to erase it.

Just then, Dustin frowned and muttered, "Ugh. The picture's all blurry."

Dolores couldn't help the smile that tugged at her lips.

But she quickly masked it with a look of concern. "Oh? What picture? Was it

something important for work?"