

Zillionaire 821

Chapter 821:

He paused in surprise, then smiled more freely, his eyes showing quiet determination.

The next day, Linsey showed up on time at Davidson Group for her meeting with Dolores.

After a short talk, Linsey made her decision and signed the contract with Dolores without hesitation.

Dolores joked, “You signed so fast! Aren’t you worried I might trick you?”

Linsey gave her a look and laughed. “I know you’d never lie to me—not even if it meant losing the whole company. I trust you.”

Dolores smiled wide and said, “Glad to see you trust me so much. I’ve looked after you for more than twenty years, after all!”

After a short pause, Dolores sorted the contract and gave it to her assistant, Khloe Craig. Then she turned to Linsey and said, “Okay, it’s lunchtime. Let’s go eat.”

“Celebrate you joining the Davidson Group!” Linsey nodded and stood beside Dolores, ready to go.

Khloe quickly collected the papers and followed behind, pulling out her phone. “Dolores, should I book a table ahead of time?”

Dolores was just about to respond when she opened the door—and almost slammed straight into Dustin, who came rushing in like a storm of excitement.

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An intern from the secretarial team hurried after him. “Mr. Wade, wait! You can’t just walk in there like that!”

By the time the intern caught up, Dustin had already pushed open the door to Dolores’ office without a care.

“Dolores,” the intern said, clearly flustered, “Mr. Wade wouldn’t listen. I don’t even know how he got past everyone... I seriously tried to stop him.”

Dolores shot Dustin a cold, piercing look and stayed silent, her expression unreadable.

Khloe stepped up, her face tight with concern. “What happened?” she asked the intern. “Did the front desk or security downstairs just let him through?”

Dustin locked eyes with Dolores, catching his breath before blurting, “It’s not their fault—I yanked the phone cord out at the front desk.”

Linsey, standing just behind Dolores, had no words. She honestly didn’t know whether to be annoyed or impressed.

It hit her—Dustin was still the same. He always pulled random stunts, always being impossible to predict.

Dolores was seething with fury. She glared at Dustin and shouted, “Why did you disconnect the phone line at the front desk? What happens if a client calls? Will you be responsible for the financial losses?”

“I will take responsibility,” Dustin quickly replied. “I disconnected only the front desk and your office phones. I didn’t want anyone tipping you off about my arrival because you’ve been avoiding me.”

Chapter 822:

Dolores’ eyes flared as she instinctively responded, “I haven’t been avoiding you!”

“Really? You haven’t?” Dustin emphasized each word. “Then why haven’t you taken my calls or responded to my texts recently? I was here yesterday looking for you, and everyone claimed you were out.”

In the background, Linsey observed the confrontation, uncertain if she should intervene.

She noticed Khloe and the intern exchanging uncomfortable glances, so she quickly gave them a discreet nod to leave the scene.

Following Linsey’s subtle hint, Khloe quietly ushered the intern out, leaving Dolores and Dustin by the doorway, with Linsey still standing near the entrance.

“I’m busy with work! Unlike you, I don’t have the luxury to waste time all day,” Dolores retorted sharply.

Dustin paused, searching for words, then continued, “Yet, you still haven’t addressed the real issue between us.”

Dolores’ voice rose sharply as she replied, “Are you expecting some kind of formal proposal as if we’re in a business meeting? If there’s a solution to be had, shouldn’t you be the one presenting it? Why am I the one who has to come up with it?”

Caught off guard by the intensity of the situation over such a trivial issue, Linsey couldn’t hold back a soft giggle at the absurdity of their discussion.

Dustin quickly retorted, “I’m prepared to suggest a solution, but are you willing to consider it?”

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Tired of the back-and-forth, Dolores ended the conversation abruptly. “Enough, I’m too hungry to argue. Move out of the way. I’m going to lunch.”

She motioned for Linsey to follow her, indicating it was time to depart. Just as Dustin was about to add more, he suddenly noticed Linsey and reacted with surprise. "Oh... Linsey? You're back in town?"

Before Linsey could reply, Dolores sharply interjected, "And what concern is that of yours?"

Dustin realized his mistake and hastened to apologize. "Sorry, I just blurted that out because I was surprised."

He continued to stare at Linsey, his surprise causing him to momentarily forget the reason for his visit.

Linsey then calmly said, "I've been back for some time now."

She thought for a moment before softly adding, "Since you and Dolores are friends, let's keep things informal."

At that comment, Dolores quickly retorted, "Who said anything about him and me..."

Dustin picked up on her implication and interjected, his voice filled with disbelief, "What, we're not even friends now? Dolores, that's really cold."

His reaction was laden with a sense of betrayal, as though Dolores' words had deeply wounded him.

Chapter 823:

Linsey found herself chuckling at the exchange, then hastily added, "Sorry."

Dustin seemed unfazed by her laughter, his attention solely on Dolores.

Feeling cornered by his intense gaze, Dolores gave in with exasperation. "Fine, fine, we're friends. I haven't even finished speaking, and you're already upset?"

Even though Dolores maintained a facade of calmness, Linsey was aware of the underlying turmoil, evidenced by the increasing pressure of Dolores' grip on her hand.

Despite her best efforts to endure the discomfort, Linsey eventually had to pinch Dolores' palm gently to snap her out of her daze.

Upon regaining her composure and realizing her emotional turmoil in Dustin's presence, Dolores quickly said, "Step aside. Linsey and I are famished. We're going to eat."

Dustin's face lit up. "Why don't I take you both out? There's this new restaurant I've been meaning to try."

He then looked expectantly at Linsey, hoping for her agreement. "How about it, Linsey? If you'd prefer somewhere else, just name it, and we'll go there."

Dolores couldn't resist a retort, hinting at her independence. "We don't necessarily need your ride; I've got my own car."

Dustin acknowledged this with a nod, still amiable. "That's totally fine. You can drive if you prefer. I'm just offering options here. It's really whatever you two decide."

Linsey smiled slightly, deferring the decision. "I'm open to anything. Dolores, why don't you pick?"

Dustin then cautiously focused on Dolores, saying, "Dolores, the decision is yours."

Dolores, taken aback by Dustin's demeanor, felt slightly embarrassed but kept her cool.

She responded lightly, "Okay, let's try the place you mentioned. Just remember, if the food's no good, you're on the menu next."

And with that decision made, Linsey and Dolores joined Dustin in his car, heading to the restaurant.

Dustin positioned himself in the driver's seat and took a quick look in the rearview mirror before starting the car.

He was still reeling from Linsey's return, debating internally whether he should inform Collin.

Collin had been tirelessly looking for Linsey for years.

With this thought weighing on him, Dustin pursed his lips and stealthily reached for his phone, intending to send Collin a message. However, Dolores' voice interrupted him from the back seat. "Dustin, what are you up to?"

Caught off guard, Dustin almost let his phone slip from his hands. "Uh—nothing important."

Dolores gave a skeptical snort, her voice sharp. "You better not be thinking of telling Collin about Linsey again."

Chapter 824:

Dustin's pulse quickened at her accusation. "I wouldn't!" he quickly replied. "Dolores, really, I wasn't going to."

From her seat, Linsey looked up and interjected gently, "There's no need to inform Collin. He found out I was back the night of the banquet."

Dustin turned to her, his surprise evident. "You were back that night?" It puzzled him that Collin, despite being aware of Linsey's return, had maintained his composure and hadn't mentioned it to him.

Collin had offered Dustin relationship advice, showing the same calm, professional demeanor, seemingly unaffected by Linsey's unexpected return.

Dustin suddenly recalled how, just yesterday, Collin had taken him to the boxing gym, leaving him so beaten he nearly crawled back home. He now understood that Collin's aggressive sparring was likely an outlet for his frustrations.

Dolores interrupted his thoughts with a sharp command. “What are you waiting for? Drive.”

“Right, sorry.” Dustin snapped out of his reverie and started the engine. Considering Linsey’s return, Dustin felt Collin should now manage the situation himself.

He caught a glimpse of Dolores leaning in to whisper to Linsey in the back seat.

Dustin decided he had enough burdens of his own and couldn’t invest more effort in assisting Collin.

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All he could do was silently wish Collin luck as he focused on the road ahead.

Linsey, Dolores, and Dustin soon reached the restaurant.

The place was packed. Linsey and Dolores scanned the room, barely spotting an empty seat.

“So many people!” Dolores gasped.

Dustin chuckled. “It’s a new spot. Everyone wants to try it.”

He looked at Linsey, then turned to Dolores, asking in a soft voice, “Do you want to sit outside or take a private room?”

Dolores frowned slightly. “With this crowd, let’s just grab whatever we can.”

She looked uneasy. Honestly, if she had known it would be this full, she might not have come. Waiting in line wasn’t her idea of fun.

Dustin noticed her hesitation. A confident smile lit up his face. "Don't worry. I made a reservation."

Just then, a staff member approached with a polite smile. "Mr. Wade, both your outdoor table and private room are ready. Where would you like to sit?"

Dustin cleared his throat and looked at Dolores. "Your call. Where would you like to sit?"

Dolores blinked in surprise. She hadn't expected him to plan ahead like this.

Chapter 825:

She bit her lip, then turned to Linsey. "Where do you want to sit?"

Linsey answered quickly. "You decide."

Dolores sighed. "Why do you always leave it to me? Alright. We're not here to talk business. Let's sit outside."

They chose a window-side table. The spotless glass gave them a clear view of the street. The atmosphere felt light and easy.

Soon, a server walked over with menus. "Mr. Wade, please take your time. If you're unsure, I recommend our house specials."

Dolores flipped through the menu. Everything looked good. "Let's start with a few of those."

"Of course. I'll bring them out shortly," the server responded with a bow before leaving.

Once he was gone, Dolores glanced across the table at Dustin. "You really went all out. How did you even get a reservation here? And both spots too? This place must be expensive."

Dustin rubbed the back of his neck and glanced at Linsey. “Do I really have to say it?”

Linsey’s eyes widened. She quickly covered her ears. “I’m not listening!”

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Dolores rolled her eyes and pulled Linsey’s hands away. “Oh, come on. What’s the big secret?”

With nowhere to hide, Dustin let out a breath. “After that night, I kept hoping to see you again. So, I booked a table here for every meal—breakfast, lunch, dinner, even afternoon tea and drinks at night. I just wanted to be ready if you had time.”

Linsey’s jaw dropped. She couldn’t help but admire the effort. It had only been a few days, but Dustin had planned everything down to the last detail. His care was crystal clear.

Dolores sat quietly, caught off guard. For a moment, she didn’t know what to say.

She looked away from his gaze, fiddled with her lips, then finally smiled. “You really know how to sweep a girl off her feet.”

Dustin swiftly retorted, fixing his eyes on Dolores, “No, that’s not right! Women usually approach me first! It was Collin’s suggestion this time. I can’t afford to squander any chance to meet you.”

Upon hearing Collin’s name, Linsey paused, then quietly lowered her head and took a sip of her water.

Dolores perceived Linsey’s subtle change of mood and shot a stern look at Dustin.

Realizing he had perhaps said too much, Dustin mimicked locking his lips.

The awkward silence that followed prompted Linsey to engage further. "How exactly did he advise you?"

Chapter 826:

Dustin, cautious of Dolores' reaction, hesitated, then said, "Collin urged me to be forthright and pursue Dolores with determination."

Dolores blushed, quickly reached for her water to hide her embarrassment, and grumbled, "Do you really have to bother us while we eat? Cut out the nonsense."

"I was just answering Linsey's question," Dustin murmured, sounding somewhat hurt.

Linsey, amused by their banter, chuckled warmly. After a brief pause, she considerately suggested, "I'll step out as soon as I'm done eating to give you both some privacy."

Dustin's expression immediately brightened, gratitude evident. "Thanks a lot, Linsey!"

Dolores reflexively held onto Linsey's arm, her voice tinged with resistance. "Wait a minute, who gave you permission to leave?"

With a resigned expression, Linsey moved closer to Dolores and murmured, "It's important for you two to discuss things openly. That's the only way you'll truly understand your feelings toward him."

Caught off-guard, Dolores momentarily lost her words.

Their meal was served just then.

As they were about to begin eating, a voice that sounded somewhat familiar interjected, "Mr. Wade, what are the odds! Collin and I just decided to dine here, and here you are."

Turning towards the voice, Linsey found herself meeting Collin's intense look.

Beside him stood Haven, who was elegantly dressed in a chic long gown, her smile gracious yet calculated.

Linsey paused, her utensils in mid-air.

The instant Haven noticed Linsey, her expression shifted with surprise. Haven was overwhelmed by Linsey's natural elegance, but her initial shock quickly turned into a subtle shade of envy.

Linsey's simplicity belied her poised and compelling charm.

Her fine features resembled those of a finely sculpted masterpiece.

She exuded the youthful vibrancy of a university student, blending innocence with a captivating allure.

Something about Linsey struck a chord of recognition in Haven, unsettling her with a vague sense of familiarity.

Haven was eager to uncover Linsey's identity and the reason behind her lunch with Dustin.

Dolores, turning to see Collin, registered surprise with a sharp intake of breath.

The unexpected sight of Collin, particularly with another woman, caught her completely off guard.

Since Dolores had departed last night's banquet early with Dustin, she was unaware of who Haven might be.

Chapter 827:

Recovering from her initial surprise, Dolores subtly turned to observe Linsey at her side.

Linsey, for her part, maintained a calm facade, looking down and showing no outward reaction to Collin and Haven's presence.

Dolores, having been Linsey's close friend for a long time, was the first to sense the unease brewing within her. This got Dolores so upset that she could barely eat.

That jerk, Collin, had brought another woman on a date. As if that wasn't bad enough, he had to do that in her and Linsey's presence. Dolores grew even more upset as she thought about it. In the end, she couldn't help but vent her anger on Dustin.

She glared daggers at him as though it was all his fault.

Dustin saw the accusatory gaze Dolores threw his way and immediately grew very nervous. He wanted to explain himself but knew that it wasn't the right time to do so.

Why did things have to turn out this way?

It was bad enough that Collin showed up, but why did he have to bring Haven along?

Dolores snorted, then looked away from Collin and Haven. In a whisper, she said to Dustin, "Since someone's here for you, we'll head out. We wouldn't want to disrupt your reunion with your friends."

Dustin immediately blurted out, "No, that won't be necessary. I'm having dinner with you two. Collin and Miss Walton being here is just a coincidence."

Dustin then turned to Collin, wordlessly pleading with him to play along.

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"Isn't that right, Collin?" he asked with a nervous laugh.

He had worked really hard to get a chance to have a meal with Dolores, so he couldn't bear to see it all fall apart now.

Collin finally tore his gaze from Linsey.

His eyes had been on her ever since he walked in.

Their paths had crossed again. It seemed she was really back in Grester. For the last four years, he had looked everywhere in search of her. But now that he saw her sitting right in front of him, he felt anything but at peace.

The memory of that night at the banquet resurfaced in his mind. He recalled how Linsey had seemed so cold and distant as she spoke those sharp words to him. The dull ache he had felt in his chest then returned. However, Collin knew that he couldn't let how he felt show at the moment.

So with practiced indifference, he said to Dustin, "It's fine. We reserved another table."

Haven waited expectantly for Collin to introduce her to Dustin. She knew Dustin was one of Collin's closest friends, and that if she could build a good relationship with him, it would help her chances of marrying Collin.

However, Collin didn't seem inclined to introduce Dustin to her.

Chapter 828:

In fact, the only reason Haven was with him in the first place was because she had gone to great lengths to win over Ivy.

Haven was well aware that Collin presently had no feelings for her. However, she didn't intend to give up because of that. In fact, this made her more determined to win him over.

"Collin, since we've run into each other, why don't we all eat together? You already reserved a large private room. It should be more than enough for all of us," Haven said softly. She was trying to play the role of a girlfriend who was striving to know her boyfriend and his friends better.

Linsey appeared unaffected by Haven's suggestion. Dolores, on the other hand, wasn't. She let out a short, derisive laugh.

"It seems Mr. Riley knows how to treat his girl. I heard that it was quite difficult to get a reservation in this restaurant, yet he managed to secure a large room. That's mighty thoughtful of him."

There was a short pause, then Dolores continued, "Oh, wait. That's right. I nearly forgot that Mr. Riley is the founder of CR Corporation. No restaurant is out of his reach."

Dustin was completely taken aback. He never imagined Dolores would dare talk to Collin like that.

Worried that Collin might take it the wrong way and lash out, Dustin quickly forced a smile. "Collin, Dolores was just saying how impressive you are," he said, trying to lighten the mood.

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Collin didn't react much. His face stayed calm. But Haven didn't look too pleased.

Dolores had called Haven Collin's girlfriend, but her tone was sharp, not kind. Her words dripped with sarcasm.

Dustin also behaved oddly. Though he was close friends with Collin, the president of CR Corporation, he played dumb when Dolores criticized Collin and even quickly tried to smooth things over.

Haven glanced at Dolores. Noticing that Dolores' face held a flicker of contempt, she gave a faint smile and opened her mouth as if to say something.

But before she could say anything, Linsey gently took Dolores' hand. "I've lost my appetite. I think I'll head back. You and Dustin can stay and eat."

"You're leaving?" Dolores' eyes widened in disbelief. She looked ready to shake Linsey out of it.

Her ex-husband had the nerve to show up with his new girlfriend. And Linsey wanted to leave?

No way. Dolores wasn't about to let that happen.

They got there first. They had already placed their order.

If anyone needed to leave, it should be Collin and his new girl.

Chapter 829:

Suddenly, Collin walked over and sat down right beside Dustin.

He waved over a waiter and asked for an extra chair at the table.

Everyone froze for a second, especially Haven.

She realized she would now be pushed to the edge of the table. It felt awkward.

"Collin," Haven said.

Collin looked at her. His voice was neutral—neither cold nor warm. "Not hungry? I can have someone take you home."

"No, that's not it." Haven gave a shaky smile and quickly gathered herself. Then she turned to Linsey. Her tone was gentle, but her words carried a quiet force that was hard to ignore. "Didn't this young lady just say she had to leave? That works perfectly. Four seats, no need for another chair."

Dolores stared at her, stunned. She couldn't believe how Haven made such a selfish request sound so polite.

Linsey's face fell. She pressed her lips together and held back Dolores, who looked ready to blow up.

"Fine," Linsey murmured.

She didn't want to be there anyway.

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But just as she was about to get up, Collin spoke, cutting her off. "You can't leave. I have something for you."

His eyes stayed locked on hers, steady and firm.

Linsey's heart skipped. She hadn't seen this coming.

She stared at him, frozen with shock, her face blank, her eyes full of confusion.

Her thoughts spun in circles. Hadn't she already said everything at the banquet?

What more was left to say?

And wasn't he dating Haven? Why stop her from leaving—right in front of her?

Her grip on Dolores' hand tightened without her realizing it. Dolores, just as stunned, turned to Dustin. Her eyes asked the question her lips didn't—What was going on here?

Dustin couldn't give Dolores an answer—he was just as confused. But out of everyone, the one who struggled the most to accept the situation was Haven. She stood off to the side, frozen in place. Her smile faltered. She looked at Collin, puzzled. "Collin, what did you just say? Do you know this young lady?"

A strange unease crept into her chest. She couldn't shake it off. "What could you possibly have to discuss with her?" she pressed, her voice sharp with tension.

Linsey felt a chill run down her spine.

She had no desire to interfere in Collin's life. It didn't matter to her who he was dating now—she wanted no part of it. But this twist had completely caught her off guard. She wished Haven hadn't noticed her at all.

After what felt like an eternity, Collin finally spoke, calm and deliberate. Instead of answering her questions, he addressed Linsey. "I'm interested in partnering with Davidson Group. Since you're connected to Ms. Davidson, the CEO, I assume you're involved with the company. This is a good chance to talk business. You can also consult with Ms. Davidson as needed."

Chapter 830:

He turned to Dolores with a warm smile and a courteous tone. "What do you think, Ms. Davidson?"

Dolores blinked, surprised. "Are you serious?"

She hadn't expected Collin to propose a business deal. Though she disliked him for what he had done to Linsey, she couldn't ignore the name CR Corporation. The firm wasn't just a giant in Grester—it had power across the entire country. Joining hands with CR Corporation would definitely benefit Davidson Group.

For a second, she was tempted.

"Do you think I'll agree just because you brought it up?" Dolores snapped.

In her eyes, Collin was the enemy. She wouldn't betray Linsey by working with him. Not a chance.

“Dolores!” Dustin jumped in, trying to stop her. This was a golden opportunity—one she couldn’t afford to throw away.

Linsey understood too. Quietly, she gave Dolores’ hand a gentle squeeze, urging her to stay calm.

Meanwhile, Haven watched Collin closely, suspicion written all over her face. Something still didn’t sit right.

“So you’re Ms. Davidson of Davidson Group. It’s a pleasure,” Haven said with a polite smile to Dolores. Then she turned her sharp gaze to Linsey. “And this young lady— is she really part of Davidson Group? I thought she was just a friend of yours.”

Linsey met her eyes steadily. Her brows pinched slightly, but she kept her composure. That look from Haven was like a needle—subtle but sharp.

Dolores picked up on it instantly. “Of course she is,” she replied firmly. Collin hadn’t mentioned Linsey’s name once. He hadn’t said she was the designer known as Aurora. Whether or not he had told Haven privately, Dolores had no intention of revealing it now.

She smiled calmly and turned to Collin, her tone polite but distant. “Since you’re this interested, let’s talk about the collaboration.”

She faced him without a trace of fear. While others in Grester trembled at the mention of Collin’s name, Dolores stood tall—confident and unshaken.

“I know CR Corporation has been expanding fast. But don’t underestimate us. Aurora is with our firm and just won a top design award. That alone speaks volumes about our talent,” Dolores said with quiet pride.

Collin gave a small nod. “I’m well aware. Aurora’s talent is unmatched. That’s exactly why I’m eager to work with Davidson Group. I believe we’ll achieve great things together.”

As they began to discuss business, Haven had no choice but to settle into the extra chair Collin had requested. She didn't want to sit there, but staying on her feet would only draw more attention. She wasn't about to let that happen—not with so many eyes watching.

Dustin finally let out a silent sigh of relief. The tension in the air had eased a little. He glanced over at Collin and Linsey, who now sat across from each other, both calm and composed.

He couldn't help but feel surprised. Four years ago, things between them had ended so badly that even as a bystander, he thought they would never be in the same room again—let alone sharing a table. But here they were.