

Zillionaire 891

Chapter 891:

Linsey paused before answering. "He'll come back, sweetie. Just not right away."

Zenia's breath hitched. Tears formed in her eyes. She grabbed Linsey's collar tightly, her voice shaking. "Mommy... Can we not give Zander to that bad guy? He'll be really sad."

Linsey froze for a moment. "No, Zenia. I'm not giving him away. He's just staying there for a while."

"Really?" Zenia looked up at her, tears spilling down her cheeks. "But Gorman said Zander was sent to the bad guy and won't ever come back. He also said you'll send me too if I'm not good."

Linsey's chest ached. Her heart twisted as she saw Zenia cry like that. "That's not true," she said firmly. She wiped Zenia's tears and added gently, "You're such a good girl. I would never send you away. And Zander will come back. I promise."

Then, as she thought of Gorman's words, something in Linsey snapped. She wouldn't let him hurt Zenia again.

After a quiet moment, Linsey brushed Zenia's cheek with her fingers and whispered, "Zenia, can I tell you a secret? But you must keep it just between us. Don't tell anyone, okay?"

Zenia nodded without hesitation. "Okay. I won't tell."

Linsey smiled, leaned close, and whispered in her ear, "Do you remember Collin? The one Caylee talked about? He's not a bad person. He's your dad. You're not a child without a father. Collin is, and Zander and you have a real dad."

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She watched Zenia's face closely after saying it. Zenia looked stunned. Her eyes widened in shock.

"Zenia? Are you alright?" Linsey's heart skipped a beat. Was Zenia upset?

Zenia blinked quickly, then whispered, as if it were a secret, "The man who took me to the police station... Was that my dad?"

Linsey froze, then smiled without meaning to.

Linsey hadn't expected that the man who took Zenia to the police station was actually Collin.

Now it all made sense. She finally understood why Zander had said it was "the bad guy" who took Zenia away.

A wave of realization hit her, mixed with emotions she couldn't quite name. The two kids had already been in contact with Collin without her knowing.

"Yes, he's your father," she said gently. After a brief pause, she added, "That's why I sent Zander to him first. He'll be safe with his dad."

Zenia, who had been pouting earlier, suddenly forgot all her worries. She held in her excitement and whispered, "Mommy, I'll keep the secret safe."

Linsey smiled and stroked her hair softly. "That's my sweet girl. And listen, Gorman isn't who he used to be. The man you see now is someone you must be careful around. He's keeping us locked up, so don't trust anything he says. Mommy will find a way to get us out, alright?"

Chapter 892:

Zenia's eyes widened in shock, but she nodded. She trusted Linsey with all her heart. To her, only Mommy and Zander were truly good. So if Linsey said it, it had to be true.

Soon, Zenia drifted off to sleep in her arms, her breathing calm and peaceful. Watching her, Linsey felt her own heart settle. No matter what, she had to stay strong. She couldn't let Gorman shake her resolve.

That was when she realized—Gorman had taken Caylee's and her phones, as well as Zenia's watch. But if someone on the outside noticed something was wrong, that might be their chance.

Right now, the most important thing was finding a way to contact the outside world.

In all of Grester, the only person who could challenge Gorman was probably Collin.

Even if Collin was really planning to marry Haven, Linsey believed that if he knew Zenia was still with Gorman, he wouldn't sit back and do nothing.

And as for who would get custody of the children... That could be decided after they were safe.

"That's the situation. I spoke with Linsey this morning and arranged for her and Zenia to move into one of my properties. It's in a gated neighborhood with tight security. Without an access card, no one can get in—not even Gorman," Dolores said, her tone serious.

She paused, then frowned. "But now, it looks like Gorman found out ahead of time and took them before they could leave."

"That bastard! He was a menace four years ago, and now he's crossing the line again! What's he trying to do—lock Linsey up?" Dustin shot to his feet, furious. "I've had enough! I'm heading straight to the Green family's residence to drag him out myself!"

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Collin stopped him coldly. "I already checked. Gorman doesn't live there anymore. If you show up now, it'll be for nothing—and it might tip him off."

Dolores's expression darkened. "Collin, are you even trying? I thought you'd changed, but you're still as useless as you were back then. Aren't you the founder of CR Corporation? What are you so afraid of? If I were you, I'd flip all of Grester upside down to find Gorman!"

As soon as Dolores finished speaking, the air in the room turned still. Dustin's pulse thundered in his ears. He stared at Dolores, stunned, unable to believe what had just come out of her mouth.

Without thinking, he reached out and clutched her wrist, urging her with a firm grip to stop before she went too far—before she provoked Collin into something no one could undo.

In Grester, no one spoke to Collin that way.

But Dolores? She seemed born without the instinct for fear, at least where Linsey was concerned.

Dustin's mind raced. Trying to salvage the moment, he forced a smile and spoke with a cheer that sounded too light for the room's tension. "All right, all right, let's not argue. What matters is that we know Gorman has Linsey and Zenia. Now we just need a plan to get them back."

Chapter 893:

But before Collin could say a word, Dolores yanked her arm from Dustin's grasp and snapped, her voice laced with ice, "A plan? Look at him! Do you see any urgency in his face? He's not even trying to save them." She tossed a pointed, frosty glance toward Collin, her eyes gleaming with accusation. "In my opinion," she said, her voice sharp, "his head is filled with Haven right now. They're about to get married, after all."

Her eyes locked onto Collin, and her voice grew more cutting with every syllable. "Yes, you're the father of Linsey's children. But that does not mean Linsey wants you back. I never said she did. And you—already engaged in an arranged marriage—need to stop feeding her fantasies. Even if she survives Gorman, nothing changes. So do not even think about using this to seduce her into becoming your mistress."

The words hung in the air like smoke—caustic, unrelenting. Dustin flinched. He tried to interject, desperate to cool the rising heat. “Dolores, that’s a misunderstanding. There’s absolutely nothing going on between Collin and Haven—”

But Collin stood abruptly, his chair scraping back with quiet finality. Though his face remained unreadable, something cold shifted behind his eyes. “This is not the time for personal explanations,” he said, his voice controlled and calm, almost too calm.

Instead of rising to Dolores’ challenge, he addressed her with polite distance. “Zander trusts you, and so do I. Keep him safe. Dustin and I will take care of the rescue.”

And just like that, the subject was dismissed.

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Dolores blinked, taken aback. For a moment, she almost thought he was deliberately dodging her accusations. But even she couldn’t argue with his reasoning. Linsey and Zenia were in danger, and time was not on their side. Emotions could wait. Action could not.

Still, as Collin and Dustin headed out, Dolores clenched her fists behind her back. The determination in her gut tightened into resolve.

Once Linsey was safe, she would make sure she saw through Collin. He would not get into her head again.

The black sedan pulled away from the estate and melted into the city’s labyrinth of streets. Inside, Collin and Dustin sat in a silence heavy with thought.

Not long after, a subordinate, behind the wheel, spoke up. “Mr. Riley, we’ve checked every lead. Gorman’s trail went cold after he left the hotel with Ms. Brooks this morning. He switched vehicles several times. We scoured the last location, but found nothing.”

Dustin exhaled slowly, jaw tight. "That bastard planned this too well. Even our best men cannot track him down."

Next to him, Collin's eyes darkened. He turned the ring on his left finger with deliberate care, his thoughts hidden beneath a cold exterior. A beat of silence passed. Then, he said in a low voice, "We will find him. It is only a matter of time."

Dustin glanced sideways at him, sensing something deeper beneath Collin's calm. "What's our next move?"

Chapter 894:

Collin paused briefly, then gave a firm directive. "Get someone to keep an eye on Haven. I want to know what she's been up to lately."

The unexpected command left Dustin completely thrown off. He had no clue why Collin would suddenly bring Haven into the conversation.

"Yes, sir," the subordinate replied without hesitation.

The subordinate never challenged Collin's decisions, but Dustin couldn't help the uncertainty building in his chest.

Trying to make sense of it, he asked, "You think this has something to do with Haven?"

Collin didn't look at him. His eyes stayed fixed ahead, calm and focused. "If I'm right, Gorman will need Haven soon. And if we're watching her closely, it might just lead us to him."

The morning sun had barely risen when Linsey opened her eyes. Still curled up in her arms, Zenia slept soundly, her tiny breaths slow and steady.

Moving carefully, Linsey slipped out from under the covers, doing her best not to stir the sleeping little girl as she tiptoed out of the room. Caylee was already up, so Linsey quietly used the bathroom in her room to wash up.

“Linsey, I swear I didn’t say a word to Mr. Green about us leaving. I don’t even know how he found out or managed to get to you first,” Caylee said as soon as she saw Linsey, her voice laced with guilt.

Even after Linsey stood up for her in front of Gorman and made it clear she trusted her, Caylee still couldn’t let go of the guilt weighing on her. She kept wondering if all of this could have been avoided if only she had turned down Gorman from the start.

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Caylee couldn’t shake the guilt that clung to her. Deep down, she knew her choices had played a role in trapping Linsey and Zenia in Gorman’s grasp.

Picking up on Caylee’s distress, Linsey offered a calm voice of comfort. “Hey, don’t carry this burden. I know this wasn’t your fault.”

A taunting smile curled at the corners of Linsey’s mouth as memories of Gorman’s schemes resurfaced. “He used your grandmother’s surgery money to control you, all while using you to watch my every move. If it hadn’t been you, he would’ve found someone else to play his game.”

Linsey’s expression dimmed as she continued, her tone quieter now. “Don’t forget. It was Gorman who helped me book that hotel in the first place.”

Looking back, it became painfully clear. The moment Linsey called the front desk about checking out, Gorman must have realized what she was planning. That was how he managed to show up at the hotel entrance right on time, prepared to stop her in her tracks.

Caylee stood there in silence, stunned by the realization. Gorman’s manipulation ran deeper than she had imagined.

Chapter 895:

After gathering her thoughts, she leaned in and whispered, “I noticed something yesterday. There aren’t any phones or Internet access here. We’re completely cut off. If we could somehow get a message to Ms. Davidson or the police, we might be safe.”

Linsey didn’t immediately shoot down Caylee’s idea, but her eyes darkened with doubt. With the kind of power Gorman held, she doubted the police could do much, let alone Dolores.

And after everything Dolores had done to get her company back on its feet, the last thing Linsey wanted was to pull her into this dangerous mess.

Truthfully, Linsey had someone else in mind—someone she trusted more than the police or even Dolores when it came to asking for help.

But Caylee had a point. First and foremost, they had to find a way to reach the outside world. Without that, any plan would fall apart before it even began.

Quietly, Linsey said, “You’re right. For now, we need to keep our heads down and stay alert. Once the timing’s right, we’ll make our move.”

Caylee gave a quick nod. “Got it. I won’t do anything reckless.”

Just as Linsey and Caylee stepped into the hallway, a servant approached with a polite smile. “Ms. Brooks, someone’s here to see you.” The moment she heard those words, Linsey grew cautious instead of feeling pleasantly surprised.

Considering where she was, she couldn’t imagine anyone casually dropping by to visit, especially not at Gorman’s place. Whoever it was had to be someone she knew. More importantly, they had to be someone Gorman trusted enough to let through the door. Otherwise, there was no way they would have been allowed in.

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Linsey's brows furrowed as she tried to make sense of it. "Okay, I'll come down now."

Before heading off, she turned to Caylee. "Can you go back to my room? If Zenia wakes up and finds no one there, she might panic."

Worry flickered in Caylee's eyes as she tightened her lips. "Do you want me to come downstairs with you, Linsey?"

Linsey offered a soft smile. "It's alright. Just stay with Zenia. That'll ease my mind more than anything."

She had finally managed to calm Zenia yesterday, and she wasn't about to let anyone from Gorman's people upset the child again. With no better option, Caylee gave in to Linsey's request and quietly stepped back into the room to stay with Zenia.

After watching Caylee quietly shut the door behind her, Linsey turned and headed down the stairs.

In the living room below, a woman sat calmly with her back facing Linsey.

Linsey's chest tightened for a moment as a certain face flashed through her mind. The woman on the couch turned her head at the sound of approaching footsteps.

"It's been a while, Ms. Brooks," Haven said with a graceful smile. Even from where she stood, Linsey immediately spotted the necklace glinting against Haven's neck—the unmistakable Star of the Desert.

Chapter 896:

That same piece had sold for a staggering 2.7 billion dollars at the charity auction, with Collin placing the final bid. Now, it rested around Haven's neck like it had always belonged there.

Though Linsey's world revolved around fashion design, she knew enough about fine jewelry to recognize the piece instantly. One glance was all it took to confirm it: this was definitely the same Star of the Desert from that night.

For a brief moment, Linsey remained frozen, a quiet scoff echoing in her mind. She didn't know why she needed to be sure. Everyone already knew Collin had purchased the Star of the Desert for Haven during the charity auction. Collin had offered it freely, and Haven had every right to wear what had been gifted to her.

Pushing down the emotions threatening to surface, Linsey calmed herself, walked forward, and took a seat across from Haven in a single chair.

"To what do I owe the pleasure, Ms. Walton?" Linsey asked, her eyes fixed calmly on Haven's graceful posture.

Haven let out a soft smile, her voice smooth and deliberate, carrying the effortless grace of someone well-versed in high society. "The last time we crossed paths, you never got the chance to introduce yourself. It was only afterward that Collin mentioned you were his ex-wife—and quite the celebrated designer in Grester, too."

"Why are you here?" Linsey asked, her tone even and unreadable. She met Haven's gaze with calm indifference. The moment Haven noticed Linsey's unreadable expression, a flicker of irritation passed through her eyes.

Haven's dislike for Linsey wasn't new; it had taken root long before they had ever officially met. In Haven's mind, if Linsey hadn't left Collin at the altar, Linsey never would have had the chance to become his wife.

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But what stung more was the truth Haven couldn't ignore: Collin had genuinely loved Linsey. Even though four years had passed since the divorce, Haven could still see how much Linsey meant to Collin.

It wasn't only what Collin had said to her during the banquet that bothered her. It was the way Collin had repeatedly, whether intentionally or not, stepped in to protect Linsey. She recalled that moment at the restaurant, how Collin had downplayed Linsey's identity, like she wasn't someone Haven needed to know.

To her, it felt like Collin didn't think she was important enough to even be properly introduced to Linsey. Then there was the allergy incident. Collin had taken Linsey to the hospital himself, and Haven had only learned about it much later. Honestly, if Gorman hadn't told her the truth, Haven would have remained unaware for a little while longer.

Haven had a strong suspicion that Collin was the reason Joanne came up empty-handed when trying to dig up anything on Linsey. He must have gone out of his way to keep her background buried.

As the thought settled, a calmer expression replaced the tension on Haven's face.

Chapter 897:

Wearing a polite smile, she said, "I hope I'm not intruding. I heard you're engaged to Gorman, and I wanted to stop by and offer my congratulations. I even brought a few gifts for the occasion."

Haven then gestured gracefully toward a table, where a selection of carefully arranged presents awaited.

Linsey barely glanced at them. "Thank you, Ms. Walton," she said coolly.

Linsey's tone remained courteous, but something in her manner seemed off, and Haven could feel it.

Still, remembering what Gorman had told her beforehand, she carried on in a gentle tone. "Funny how life works, isn't it? It's almost like fate decided we should meet."

Linsey looked Haven in the eye, her voice steady. "And what makes you say that?"

With a poised smile, Haven replied, "Collin and I are planning to get married later this year, if everything goes as expected." For a split second, Linsey's expression faltered.

Haven caught it instantly, and her smile stretched just a bit wider. With deliberate subtlety, Linsey allowed a trace of sorrow to seep into her expression. Her gaze dropped slightly, and the sadness behind her eyes felt genuine, even if it wasn't.

For a moment, even Haven was caught off guard by the emotional weight in Linsey's face.

Though she sneered inwardly, Haven put on an innocent face, feigning confusion, and tilted her head as she asked sweetly, "Ms. Brooks, aren't you going to wish Collin and me well?"

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Linsey shifted her gaze away, her voice edged with a chill tone. "Is my blessing really necessary?"

Without waiting for a response, she added flatly, "If there's nothing else, Ms. Walton, I think I'll excuse myself. I'll head upstairs." She turned to leave, not bothering to wait for permission.

But before she could step away, Gorman's voice floated in from the doorway, casual, yet loaded with intent. "Linsey, your guest just got here, and you're already trying to send her off?"

Though Linsey's expression stayed composed and frosty, her mind was anything but calm. This was exactly what she had anticipated. Gorman had clearly run out of patience.

She didn't doubt for a second that Haven's visit had been carefully arranged by Gorman.

Linsey understood exactly what Gorman expected from her, and she was more than willing to play along. Maybe, just maybe, putting on a convincing performance would buy her the opportunity she needed to break free.

With her back still turned to the sound of Gorman's footsteps drawing closer, Linsey took a silent breath and prepared herself. By the time Gorman reached her, Linsey had already summoned tears. Her eyes shimmered, and her gaze held a quiet sorrow.

Chapter 898:

The moment Gorman saw her like that, something twisted inside him. Jealousy wrapped tight around his chest, followed by a sharp pang of resentment. It stunned him to think that, after everything, Linsey still held feelings for Collin.

Just the idea that Linsey was genuinely upset by news of Collin and Haven's upcoming wedding made Gorman seethe with anger. Fueled by spite, Gorman became determined to tear down whatever fragile hope Linsey might still be clinging to. She needed to understand that there would never be a future between her and Collin—not in this lifetime.

With that bitter thought, a cold smirk tugged at Gorman's lips as he reached out and grabbed Linsey's wrist.

Linsey tried to pull away, but Gorman tightened his hold, refusing to let go.

"Miss Walton is also getting married. Why don't you two try on your wedding dresses on the same day?" Gorman said with a steady gaze locked on Linsey, his smile laced with quiet defiance and unwavering resolve. "Besides, the dress I created for you has already been refined to perfection. Why not let her weigh in and tell us whether it fits you well?"

Although the question seemed to be aimed at Linsey, Gorman wasn't actually waiting for her to answer. His gaze stayed on Linsey, yet he addressed Haven. "What's your opinion, Miss Walton?"

He paused for a moment, then casually flashed a smile and added, "Collin would definitely agree, no doubt about it."

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Catching on to what Gorman really meant, Haven gave a faint smile and answered in a calm voice, "Of course he would. I'll let him know once I return."

She had already planned to update Collin about Gorman and Linsey's impending marriage and would try to convince him to come along and accompany Linsey to try on her wedding dress.

What Gorman truly wanted was to trick both Linsey and Collin into believing the other had moved on. He was confident Linsey would never directly ask Collin about it, given how she usually kept her feelings to herself. And Collin? He wouldn't get the chance to clear up the confusion with Linsey.

As a result, the distance between them would only grow wider. Once Linsey became Gorman's wife, neither of them would be able to undo what had happened.

When Gorman first pitched the idea, Haven wasn't entirely convinced it would work. It was hard for her to believe that a single miscommunication could create such a rift between Linsey and Collin.

Given how deeply Collin cared for Linsey, Haven doubted he would simply back down, even if Linsey went through with marrying Gorman. Still, she went along with Gorman's scheme because she had her own plan to fall back on.

And with that thought, Haven's smile remained warm, though something far colder flickered in her eyes.

Chapter 899:

Haven didn't stick around for long and made her way out shortly after. Just before stepping into the car, she glanced back at the villa one last time.

To her, it felt like Gorman had locked Linsey away in a luxurious prison.

She hadn't noticed until now how isolated Gorman's home truly was.

As soon as she got inside the car, her phone rang. It was Joanne calling.

“Haven, I took care of everything you asked. She’s right here with me. Want to say something to her?”

A brief flash of disdain crossed Haven’s face. “No need for that. I don’t waste my time talking to people from prison. Just relay the message.” Letting out a slow, unbothered sigh, she added, “Tell her to think hard about who got her locked up and who ruined the life she once boasted about. Since there’s nothing left for her anyway, she might as well take this shot at revenge and get rid of the one we both despise.”

Joanne gave a short laugh. “Relax. If anything, she probably hates Linsey more than you do. She’ll get the job done, beautifully.”

As soon as Haven stepped out of the villa, Linsey turned and made her way upstairs.

To her surprise, Gorman had already predicted she would try to walk away and pulled her back without hesitation.

With Gorman’s firm grip on her shoulder, he forced Linsey to sit beside him, leaving her unable to pull away.

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“Gorman! Let go of me!” she snapped, trying to fight him off. Her eyes were puffy and red, filled with fury as she glared at him.

Still, Linsey kept her voice low, knowing Zenia was resting in the room above.

Meanwhile, Gorman kept smiling at Linsey, though his gaze was laced with a chilling intensity that made her skin crawl.

Gorman opened his mouth and spoke slowly. “Linsey, I’ve always respected your choices. I never forced anything because I hoped... one day, you’d come to me on your own.”

He paused, and when he spoke again, his voice was low, heavy with bitterness. "But what did I get for waiting all these years?"

A bitter smile tugged at his lips. His tone turned cold. "All I ever got was your distance... and disgust."

Linsey clenched her jaw. Her voice was firm, unshaken. "Gorman, I told you a long time ago—I have no feelings for you. You're the one forcing things."

"Yes!" Gorman suddenly snapped, his voice thundering. "Yes, I'm the stubborn one! I won't give up until I win your heart!"

Linsey flinched, her heart racing wildly. She couldn't catch her breath, and her brows knitted together as confusion clouded her eyes. She didn't understand his obsession.

Chapter 900:

There were so many beautiful women in the world—women better than her. And with Gorman's looks and status, he could have anyone. Yet still, he wanted her. She simply couldn't figure it out.

Gorman read her expression like a book.

He let out a cold scoff, his eyes narrowing. "Why can't you see me, Linsey? I'd do anything for you. I'd even treat your children with Collin like my own. But you? You won't even let me in. And now, you've barely returned to Grester, and you're already thinking of going back to Collin..."

His eyes darkened with resentment. But he quickly wiped the emotion from his face and spoke calmly. "What a shame. So what if you still have feelings for him? You gave Zander to Collin yourself, but it won't make any difference."

He smiled as if nothing had happened, reaching out with his other hand to run his fingers through her hair.

Linsey stiffened. Every part of her rejected his touch. She tried to pull back, but he held her tightly, giving her no room to move.

“You saw it, didn’t you?” Gorman’s voice was soft, almost like a lover’s whisper. But his words were sharp as knives. “Collin spent a fortune on the Star of the Desert. And now? It’s hanging around Haven’s neck. I heard it’s a birthday gift from him to her.”

Color drained from Linsey’s face. Her breath hitched as she whispered, “You called her here on purpose.”

Gorman chuckled, amused. “Of course I did. Why would I argue? Without me, do you think Haven could have shown up here?”

He paused for a moment, then continued, “Anyway, since you’ve already sent Zander to Collin, it should’ve been easy for him to find you. But tell me—why hasn’t he come?”

Linsey slowly closed her eyes. When she opened them again, they were red with emotion. “Because he’s marrying Haven. I don’t matter to him anymore.”

Linsey’s hands curled into fists. “For the record, I never planned to send Zander to Collin. He’s my son. I would never hand him over to a man I can’t stand.”

That much, Gorman didn’t bother disputing. He had spent enough time around Linsey to know that there wasn’t a chance she would have sent Zander to Collin.

He had told Caylee to poison the kids’ perception of Collin, painting him as the one who had mistreated Linsey. But truthfully, the outcome didn’t trouble him in the slightest. Zander had never been someone he was fond of. In fact, seeing him leave Linsey’s side made Gorman’s life easier. Zenia, though, was a different matter. She resembled Linsey so closely that her presence didn’t feel like an intrusion.

And as long as one of the children stayed close, it gave him exactly what he wanted: something to hold over Linsey whenever necessary. Once the wedding went through, he figured the kids would matter less. They would have a family of their own eventually, and these complications would fade.