

Zillionaire 781

Chapter 781 Call Dolores

Dustin showed up just as Collin stepped out of the hotel room with Zander in his arms.

"What happened here?" he asked, glancing around the vacant suite, confusion written all over his face.

But where was the boy's mother?

Collin didn't respond right away. He didn't want to say anything in front of Zander. "I'll fill you in later. First, find out if Linsey reserved this suite. Also, get your hands on the security footage-see exactly when she left."

"Understood."

Collin brought Zander to his apartment near the company.

Since Linsey's departure, he hadn't visited Vista Villa much.

This place was modest, nothing like the villa he used to live in.

By the time they arrived, Zander had dozed off in Collin's arms, worn out from all the crying

Collin gently slipped off the boy's coat and shoes, placed him on the bed in the main room, and pulled the

covers over him.

Once he was sure Zander was fast asleep, he stepped out quietly and closed the door behind him.

In the lounge, Dustin was waiting on a single chair. The moment Collin joined him on the sofa, Dustin leaned in. "What exactly is going on with Linsey?"

Collin gave a quick summary of the situation.

"I knew it. She actually had two kids in secret," Dustin muttered, stunned. He paused, brow furrowed. "But why did she take off so suddenly? There's no way she just left her son behind."

Right then, one of Collin's men walked in holding a report. He greeted them respectfully.

Dustin jumped in. "Was the room under Linsey's name?"

Collin looked over at him.

The man lowered his gaze and spoke. "No, sir. The original reservation was made by Gorman. But all the follow-up bookings and the final checkout were handled by someone named Caylee Garrett."

He handed them a printed image—a snapshot from Caylee's profile online. "This is Ms. Garrett. She arrived in Grester recently with Ms. Brooks. She's not from around here."

Collin took one look and instantly recognized her. She was the same woman who posed as Aurora at the design

contest.

Dustin stared at the photo. His eyes widened in shock. "That's her! Both times I ran into the boy, she was the

one looking after him. I figured she was the mom."

Collin paused to think "Which means Caylee vanished with Linsey and the other child-Zenia."

Then he asked, "Any idea where they went?"

The man's expression tightened. "This part's odd. We only found footage of Ms. Brooks walking out alone that morning. No sign of her, Caylee, or the girl leaving together. Whoever planned this made sure it couldn't be tracked. We're still digging to find out where she went after that."

Dustin shook his head. "Something's not right. This runs deeper."

Collin's eyes darkened. He turned sharply to Dustin. "Call Dolores, Right now."

Dustin looked stunned. "You're thinking of grilling her about Linsey's location?"

He hesitated, then said firmly, "You know how close those two are. No amount of pressure will make her talk. And I won't let you treat her unfairly."

Chapter 782 Is Collin With

You Right Now

A crease formed between Collin's brows the moment he heard that. His voice dropped, slow and deliberate. "If Dolores really knew where Linsey went, I'd feel better. But right now? I don't think even she knows."

While he spoke, Collin's eyes settled on Dustin, the weight in his gaze unmistakable. "I'm starting to believe Linsey didn't leave by choice."

A cold unease crawled down Dustin's spine.

It didn't take much to connect the dots.

There was no way Linsey could have erased the hotel's surveillance footage on her own-not without clearance

or help.

And that wasn't the only red flag. Linsey would never abandon her child like this. Ignoring Zander's calls was

not her style.

If she had chosen to disappear, she would have left clues-a note or a message. But what made the whole thing even stranger was the silence from Zenia's end. Zander hadn't been able to reach his sister either.

Surely Linsey wouldn't be so upset with her son that she would isolate him from his sister, too. That didn't add

1. up.

With tension rising fast, Dustin grabbed his phone and placed a call to Dolores.

The line connected almost instantly. "Why are you calling this late?" she asked, her voice edged with confusion. Shooting a look at Collin, Dustin lowered his voice and got to the point. "Did Linsey get in touch with you today?" There was a pause on the other end, brief but telling. Dolores returned with a question of her own, feigning confusion. "Why are you suddenly asking about her?"

Dustin had expected resistance. He braced himself and responded with deliberate emphasis, "Dolores, we already know. Linsey had two kids. They're Collin's. You don't have to keep covering for her anymore."

For several seconds, there was only silence. Then came a stunned whisper. "You found out? But... how?" "That's not important right now," Dustin replied, urgency threading through his words. "The important thing Linsey is missing. And no one can reach her daughter either. Do you have Caylee's number? Call her. She might still be with Linsey and Zenia."

"Alright. I'll check." Dolores hung up without another word.

Just ten minutes later, her name lit up on Dustin's screen again.

Urgency laced every word when Dolores spoke. "Is Collin with you right now? Send me your location. I'll be

there soon."

Without hesitation, Dustin replied, "Got it. Be careful on the road

Quiet tension settled over Collin as he clenched his fists, saying nothing

Dolores's involvement could be the breakthrough they needed.

Still, something else was gnawing at the edges of Collin's mind

In all of Grester, there was only one man with the reach, audacity, and motive to

pull off something the dis Everything pointed to Gorman.

"M-mommy... Mommy!"

Linsey could hear her children's voices echoing through the haze of her dream.

Zander's panicked cries mixed with Zenia's desperate call for her. They were both looking for her

"Mommy, where are you?"

"Are you going to leave us behind?"

Linsey's face turned pale, beads of sweat appearing on her forehead as she lay there, her eyes squereed shot. "No... No, I wouldn't... Zenia... Zander..." she whispered in a strained, breathless voice. Mommy's right here

A sudden warmth touched her cheek, jarring her from the dream entirely.

Linsey snapped awake as her eyes shot open.

Hovering just inches above her was Gorman-his gaze soft, expression almost too gentle.

Revulsion washed over Linsey like ice.

Every moment leading up to her blackout surged back all at once, hitting her like a tidal wave.

Chapter 783 Where Is My Daughter

"Zenia!" Linsey's arms trembled as she pushed herself upright, her voice cracking with desperation. "Where is my daughter?"

Nothing came back to her-not even a breath of acknowledgment. Her face hardened, and the fear in her eyes

turned to steel.

With sudden force, she latched onto Gorman's arm, her grip tight and shaking. "Tell me what you did to Zenia.

Where is she?"

Despite the frantic clutch of her hand, Gorman remained perfectly still, not a flicker of irritation crossing his

face.

His brows lifted, and his voice came soft, like damp air on skin. It was quiet, but cold enough to chill.

"Why are you panicking, Linsey? Didn't you arrange for Zander to be taken to Collin? He's the one who looks too much like his father. If I had to choose, I'd be more inclined to resent him. You've already done what it takes to keep your son safe. So why are you still afraid?"

A low chuckle slipped from his mouth, but it didn't reach his eyes. The sound was dry, and something cruel lingered underneath it.

"Zenia reminds me of you. That's why I've always looked at her differently. She matters to me. Hurting her wouldn't make sense," he continued.

Color drained from Linsey's cheeks, and her eyes filled with a hatred she no longer tried to hide.

"You're vile," she hissed. Each word came loaded with disgust.

Once she confirmed that Zander was with Collin, she didn't waste another second. She packed up what she needed and intended to take Zenia straight to the safe house Dolores had arranged.

Living in that hotel suite came with a risk-Gorman could appear out of nowhere.

By noon, hunger kicked in. Linsey asked Caylee to keep packing and watch Zenia while she stepped out to grab

lunch.

She didn't make it far. The second she left the building, she caught sight of Gorman.

One small gesture from him was all it took. Her vision went black before a single word escaped her lips.

Not when she stirred awake did she realize he had orchestrated this.

Every move had been calculated. He had been patient, waiting for the one

moment she would be alone and unprepared.

The realization hit her. Her eyes stung, rimmed red with rage that boiled up from helplessness.

Rather than flinch at her fury, Gorman looked like he had just received a gift. Her anger delighted him.

He let out a full-bodied laugh, then sighed like a man satisfied by a long-awaited indulgence. "I forgot how alive you look when you stop pretending not to care."

Without hesitation, he leaned in, eyes gleaming with something close to joy- twisted and bare.

For a moment, he lost himself in the sight of her. Her pupils, wide and dilated, reflected only him. It mesmerized him.

"You never really see me... not unless I bring you to this place," he whispered, letting the words settle slowly between them.

His smile shifted, softer now but laced with regret. "If I'd known it would feel this good, I wouldn't have wasted four years trying to play the part you wanted. I should've done this sooner."

Without hesitation, Linsey delivered a fierce slap across Gorman's face.

The sound sliced through the quiet of the room.

From the impact, Gorman's head snapped to the side.

For a brief moment, he didn't move. A faint sting crawled along the edge of his mouth, proof that Linsey hadn't held back.

A low chuckle slipped from him instead of rage. Just as he began to turn his gaze back to her, something caught his eye, her hand lifting again, ready for another strike.

Something shifted in Gorman's expression. In one swift motion, he caught her by the wrist, his grip unyielding as a glint of menace sparked in his eyes. "You really think I'll keep letting that slide?"

Chapter 784 You've Always Belonged To Me

A bitter smirk played across Linsey's lips, her eyes sharp with distrust and simmering with quiet rage. "Do you seriously think people crave your attention?" she said, her voice like ice. "Get over yourself, Gorman. You're not some gift to the world. Right now, all I see is someone I can't stand to be near."

Gorman didn't respond right away. His gaze lingered on her, swirling with a mix of things he never put into

words

"I've been by your side for years, waiting, giving everything-and you call that disgusting? All I'm doing now is reclaiming what's mine. And this is the thanks I get?" he said, sounding almost wounded.

A deep crease appeared between Linsey's brows. Her voice turned stiff, disbelieving "What exactly are you reclaiming?*

That question made something shift in him. The tension in his face melted into a grin, slow, almost pleased.

He said, "You've always belonged to me. You just never realized it."

Linsey's composure finally cracked. Her voice rose, sharp and furious. "You're out of your damn mind."

For a second, she fought to steady herself, her chest rising and falling as she breathed through the fury. "I already know where this is going. You'll bring up how

I saved your life. Or maybe you'll say you loved me before Collin ever showed up."

That name struck him like a nerve exposed. It never failed to cut deep.

His expression soured on the spot, the bitterness clawing its way to the surface.

By now, his obsession had consumed him whole. He had stayed by her side for four years, swallowing his pride, pretending not to see that the children she protected didn't carry his blood, but Collin's. And still, he treated them like they were his own.

It hadn't even been a full week since Linsey returned to Grester with the kids, yet Collin had already found a way under her skin again. She had handed Zander over to him without hesitation-just to protect the boy from Gorman's reach.

The more Gorman mulled it over, the more it all felt like a cruel joke.

Gorman couldn't wrap his head around it. Why was she so willing to reveal Zander and Zenia to Collin as if it were some long-awaited reunion?

"I've told you this again and again, Gorman." Her voice held firm, but her eyes wavered. "Collin being around not changes nothing. You and I were never meant to be."

"Stop lying!" Gorman's voice exploded, shattering the air between them.

The sudden fury in his tone made Linsey flinch before she even realized she had moved

His features twisted violently. The anger in him was thick and consuming, filling the space live survive

"How much longer are you going to do this? How many times are you going to pretend i don't exist, while running back to a man who left you?" Blood rushed to his eyes, casting them a dangerous red His jaw clenched, and his cheek twitched like something was barely being held back. "If your love for Collin was real, why you walk away from him in the first place? Why end the marriage at all?"

Then came the laughter-dark, unhinged, and full of something that made linsey's stomach twist. "That divorce wasn't an ending. It was fate that cracked open a door for you and me. Don't you see it, Linsey? You were never meant to stay with him. You were meant to be mine. You have to know that."

Curled beneath the covers, Linsey sank deeper into the bed, as if the fabric could protect her from what was coming. Tremors ran through her limbs; small, constant, and fueled by fear, she couldn't hold back

She forced her trembling to stop, muscles tight with effort. A sharp breath slipped out as she clenched her ju. She finally said, "Gorman, why is this so hard for you to accept? Even if Collin vanished from my life completely, I still wouldn't choose you. You can't twist feelings into something they're not. I really believed you'd understand that by now-after everything, after four years."

Chapter 785 I Could Probably Snag You An...

Out of nowhere, Gorman's hands clamped onto Linsey's shoulders like a vice.

Her heart skipped a beat, racing like a runaway train. Instinctively, she squirmed to break free, but Gorman's grip was unbreakable.

"Linsey, you're always preaching clarity to me, but what about you, huh?" Gorman's eyes bored into hers, a mix of confusion and frustration, his words tumbling out in a chaotic rhythm. "How can you even think about forgiving Collin so fast? Have you forgotten the hell he put you through four years ago? Or do you need me to jog your memory to finally cut him loose?"

Linsey bit back the pain shooting through her shoulders, her face pale. "Gorman, you've lost your damn mind

He barreled on, ignoring her. "Four years ago, you and Collin had that whirlwind marriage, remember? He kept his true self under wraps, thinking you were just some gold-digger chasing the power and wealth of CR Corporation's founder!" Stop it..." Linsey shouted, his words slicing into her heart like a jagged knife.

Even after four years, those memories still stung.

"Oh, yeah." Gorman's face softened suddenly, his voice dripping with a deceptive warmth. "Collin did have a soft spot for you back then. Why else would he drop a cool billion on that auction necklace for you?"

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With that, he let go of her shoulders, his fingers brushing her long hair gently, his words slow and deliberate. "But you saw it with your own eyes, didn't you? Just days ago, at that auction, Collin threw down \$2.7 billion for the Star of the Desert- for Haven."

Linsey's pale face froze, stiff as stone.

"I hear Haven's family is already cozying up with Collin's grandma, talking wedding plans," Gorman said, a smile curling his lips. "If nothing derails it, they'll tie the knot that got shelved five years ago. So, what do you say, wanna attend their wedding? I could probably snag you an invite."

Linsey swallowed the dull ache gnawing at her chest, her voice barely above a whisper. "Their marriage? It's got nothing to do with me."

Gorman raised an eyebrow, unconvinced. "Nothing? Come on, Linsey. You're the one who sent Zander to Collin. Once Collin confirms he's Zander's dad and marries Haven, who do you think Zander's gonna call Mom-you

or her?"

His words shattered the fragile wall she had built around her heart, and tears welled up, betraying her.

Gorman's smug expression flickered for a moment

He reached out to wipe her tears, but Linsey turned away sharply, swiping the wetness from her cheeks herself "This is none of your damn business," she said, her voice raw and hoarse "just tell me where Zeza"

Gorman let out a soft chuckle, dodging her question about Zenia. Instead, he leaned in "Linney, you could lean on me, you know. I'd help you get Zander back from Collin."

"No!" Her voice shot up, cold as ice. "Even if Collin's marrying Haven, he's not the type to hurt Zander. You said it yourself-I went through hell to get Zander to him. So why are you pushing to drag him back now? What's your game, Gorman? You know exactly what you're doing!"

Chapter 786 You're Accusing The Wrong...

Zander showing up at Collin's company hadn't been something anyone had planned.

It never crossed Linsey's mind that her son, overwhelmed by her emotional breakdown that night, would take matters into his own hands and confront Collin face-to-face.

But the truth behind it all pointed straight to Gorman, who had quietly pulled the strings and ordered Caylee to

carry it out.

To Linsey, it was painfully clear-everything spiraling out of control had been Gordon's doing, And now he had the gall to accuse her of pushing Zander toward Collin on purpose?

The accusation was nothing short of ridiculous.

Fighting to stay composed, she filled her lungs with air and said, "Where is Zenia? If you've hurt her in any way, I won't stop until I've made you pay."

Not knowing where her daughter was sent her thoughts racing, each one darker than the last

Even if Gorman hadn't shown the same hostility toward Zenia that he did toward Zander, it didn't change the fact that she, too, was Collin's flesh and blood. Because of that, Linsey refused to believe Gorman could ever truly care for Zenia. Gorman leaned back with the same unsettling calm he always wore. "She's fine," he said casually. "I just had someone take her out to enjoy the day."

His tone was too easy, too smooth, and Linsey didn't trust a word of it.

This was the same man who had gone to great lengths to trap them before they could slip away. Whatever he was up to now, she was certain it wasn't innocent.

A sudden ding from his phone echoed through the room.

After a quick glance at his phone, Gorman looked up with a surprisingly gentle tone. "She's back now. Zenia's downstairs."

The moment those words registered, Linsey threw back the covers and started to get up.

Before she could take a full step, Gorman's hand clamped around her wrist. "Wait. Something's not right with her. You might want to brace yourself."

His words struck her like ice water. Linsey turned to him, disbelief written across her face. "She's only fo Her voice cracked. "How could you even think of hurting her and not feel anything?"

Feigning innocence, Gorman widened his eyes and spoke with mock sincerity. "You're accusing the wrong

person. I haven't left your side-not once. How would I even have the chance to hurt her?"

"Let go." Linsey tore herself free, done listening, done reasoning

She stormed out of the room, the hallways unfamiliar and twisting, until she finally found the staircase

The space was lavish, cold in its elegance. A passing thought drifted through her mind-this must be Corman's

estate in Grester.

As her feet hurried down the stairs, her eyes caught a glimpse of the living room.

From afar, Caylee looked weighed down by both sadness and graveness.

A sharp squeeze gripped Linsey's chest as dread took hold. Without thinking, she bolted forward, her voice cracking with urgency. "Zenia!"

Hearing her name, the little girl stirred in Caylee's arms and lifted her head, eyes searching

One look at her daughter's face made Linsey stop in her tracks, her breath catching mid-step.

Dirt streaked across Zenia's cheeks, and faint scratches ran along her soft skin. Her dress, once neat, now hung wrinkled and stained with dust.

"Mommy!" Zenia's voice cracked as soon as her eyes locked onto Linsey, tears rushing to the surface.

That single word carried more weight than a full confession-packed with sorrow, fear, and longing Without hesitation, Linsey dropped to her knees, arms open, ready to catch the little body barreling

toward her. The instant Zenia collided with her, she pressed her face into Linsey's shoulder and broke into sobs, her cries fragile and aching. "Mommy..."

Hearing the voice tightened something in Linsey's chest, her throat thick with emotion she couldn't swallow. Blinking fast, she fought the sting behind her eyes and lowered her head, gently cupping the back of Zenia's head with her palm. "You're safe now. Mommy's got you."

She wondered if he had heard part of her conversation.

A ripple of unease passed through her as her thoughts scrambled. She opened her mouth, ready to say something, but his low voice cut in first—quiet and weighty.

"Linsey," he said, voice low and raw, "tell me."

The simplicity of the words struck like a whip, the undertone sharp with accusation and uncertainty. She froze, a chill running down her spine.

Her disguise was gone. There was no mask hiding her face. Even with all the carefully applied makeup, anyone who had truly known her would recognize her, let alone Collin.

She straightened, steadying her voice into something cold and composed. "What do you mean?"

Collin's gaze darkened, every word that followed thick with restrained emotion.

"Are you with Gorman now?" he asked, his voice cracking slightly, as if each syllable cost him.

Snapped back to the present by those words, Linsey couldn't help but find the entire situation absurd.

A smile played on her lips, heavy with irony.

"Collin," she said, addressing him directly for the first time in years.

The Reference: galnovels.com

Collin's eyes welled up, emotion brimming as he struggled to hold back tears.

"Linsey, it's really you. I knew it was you." Overcome with emotion, he stepped toward her, his voice brimming with hope. "You've truly come back."

Instinctively, Linsey stepped backward, creating distance between them. Her voice was frosty, her demeanor distant as she responded, "We've been divorced for four years. My current relationships are no longer your concern, are they?"

Linsey reflected on the fact that Collin had just spent 2.7 billion on the Star of the Desert for Haven, clearly indicating where his affections lay. During her four-year absence from Grester, Collin, as the founder of CR Corporation, was inevitably surrounded by many successful and appealing women.

She was convinced that had she not returned unexpectedly, Collin might well have erased her from his memory.

The audacity of him now, questioning her about her personal life, struck her as both ironic and ludicrous.

As these thoughts ran through her mind, her eyes glowed with the threat of tears, yet she sternly repressed them. She refused to let Collin affect her any longer and was determined to do everything she could to move on from him.

But Collin was persistent, his voice a soft but firm plea. "You haven't answered my question, Linsey. Are you with Gorman now? Did you really spend these past four years together?"

"Yes," Linsey responded coldly, without a moment's pause.

She maintained her poise, determined not to give herself away. "I'm with Gorman now. Does that answer your question?"

Collin's face hardened, his eyebrows drawing together as a cold realization washed over him.

Linsey, sensing his doubt, added more forcefully, "I left Grester with Gorman four years ago. Since then, I've been abroad with him..."

Before she could finish her sentence, the air between them shifted dramatically.

Collin's lips crashed against hers in a kiss full of desperate longing, cutting off her words and overwhelming her senses.

Shock registered in Linsey's eyes, her body momentarily paralyzed by the unexpected intensity of his kiss.

She raised her hands to push him away, but Collin's strong grip on her head and waist held her tightly in place, leaving her unable to break free.

"Let go!" Linsey's voice was muffled against his lips as she struggled in vain.

In a sudden burst of defiance, Linsey bit down hard on Collin's lip.

Collin groaned through clenched teeth, his hold finally easing. Taking advantage of his brief moment of weakness, Linsey pushed him back forcefully.

Then, without a word, she delivered a sharp slap across his face, the sound echoing sharply.

Collin's head turned from the force of her slap, the sting snapping him to reality.

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The sudden sting that struck his cheek cleared the haze from his mind.

In an instant, Collin grasped the gravity of his actions, and regret swept over him.

Collin stood frozen, staring at Linsey, who was breathing heavily, visibly shaken by her agitation. His eyes reflected a mixture of apology and conflicting emotions.

Linsey slowly collected herself as she clenched her hand into a fist.

“Sorry...” Collin said, his voice faltering, his usual poise replaced by a look of defeat.

Linsey cut him off, her expression empty, as she said firmly, “Let me be clear once more. Gorman and I have a strong bond. I need you to keep your distance from my life.”

At her words, Collin’s face drained of emotion.

He inhaled deeply, his lips trembling, unable to speak, his breaths uneven and heavy in the silence.

Eventually, Collin turned and walked away, each step laden with the weight of his sorrow.

His retreating figure visibly crumbled under the emotional strain.

Turning away, Linsey felt a lump form in her throat.

She averted her gaze, her eyes stinging with tears she fought to hold back.

A profound heaviness settled on her chest, constricting her breathing. Bending slightly, Linsey felt drained, her hands gripping the railing to prevent herself from falling.

Why did Collin insist on confronting her? What right did he think he had? Why couldn’t he let her be?

Despite his affections for another, why did he continue to bother her? Confusion swirled in Linsey's mind, the barrage of thoughts intensifying her headache.

The emotional torment radiated through her, her entire body throbbing with pain.

Finally, Linsey staggered away, caught a taxi, and headed back to her hotel alone.

The minute she entered her room, her phone immediately rang—it was Gorman.

"Linsey, where have you been? I've been looking everywhere for you." There was a trace of worry in Gorman's voice as he spoke.

Just then, Caylee emerged with a welcoming smile, ready to greet Linsey.

However, the perplexed and distant look on Linsey's face made her halt mid-step, unsure of how to proceed.

It was apparent that something was wrong with Linsey.

Her hair was tousled, her eyes swollen and red, and her gaze distant. Clutching her phone tightly, Linsey looked downward. When she finally spoke, her voice was hoarse and almost unrecognizable. "I'm sorry. I've made it back to the hotel." She compressed her lips, then added, "I'm just extremely exhausted, that's all."

Gorman waited a moment before responding in a forced calm tone, "Alright, I'm relieved you made it there safely."

He paused, concern lacing his voice. "Please, try to rest, okay?"

"Okay," Linsey murmured softly, then quickly hung up the phone.

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“Linsey...” Caylee said tentatively.

Linsey forced a smile and said, “I’m fine. Please keep an eye on the kids. I need to take a shower.”

As Linsey retreated to her room, Caylee stood watching, her concern deepening.

Caylee was about to go check on the children in the next room when her phone buzzed.

A message from Gorman popped up.

Caylee slipped into a corner to read the message more carefully.

Shock registered on her face as she read, her eyes widening.

How could Gorman consider such an action?

Trying to steady her racing heart, Caylee typed back quickly, “Mr. Green, I can’t do this...”

Almost immediately, Gorman responded with a terse threat. “If you refuse, remember, I can withdraw support for your grandmother’s medical care at any moment.”

Caylee’s face drained of color as she read Gorman’s message.

She clenched her teeth and wrung her hands.

After a few moments, Caylee took a deep breath to calm herself and then texted back, “I got it.”

She had reached the door of the guest bedroom when it swung open from within, revealing two small figures in front of her.

“Caylee, we thought we just heard Mommy’s voice,” Zenia said.

Zander saw the purse by the entryway and pointed at it, saying, “Look, that’s Mommy’s purse. She’s back!”

Chapter 787:

Before Caylee could say a word, the two children dashed toward Linsey’s room.

“Mommy! Are you in there?”

“Come out and have some cookies with us!”

Caylee stood rooted to where she was as she watched the children pat the door to the master bedroom. Suddenly, a lump rose in her throat.

If it were any other day, she would have gently led the kids away and not let them disturb Linsey when she was in a bad mood. However, Gorman’s message to her made Caylee hold back.

It wasn’t long before Linsey opened the door. She was wearing a bathrobe and no makeup. Her hair, too, was still damp.

She crouched down and gently said to the children, “I haven’t showered yet. How about you wait for me to finish, and then we can have cookies together?”

Zenia reached out and touched Linsey’s damp hair. “Dry your hair quickly, Mommy, or you’ll catch a cold.”

Linsey smiled warmly at her and said, “Will do, sweetie. Thank you for reminding me.”

She then took both children by the hand and said to Caylee, who still stood there in a daze, "Could you take the kids to the dining room for me? I'll be there soon."

Caylee finally snapped out of her daze and hurried toward Linsey and the kids. "Do you want anything to eat, Linsey? The little ones already had some milk earlier."

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Linsey looked thoughtful for a moment before finally replying, "I'd like some pasta if you don't mind."

"Of course," Caylee said, not meeting Linsey's gaze.

Once Linsey went back into the bedroom, Caylee led the two children to the dining room.

"Can we help you with anything, Caylee?" Zander asked sweetly.

"We know how to do a lot of things now. We could help you cook pasta for Mommy," Zenia chimed in.

Caylee couldn't help but laugh. "In that case, I'll leave it to my two little chefs to help me wash some vegetables."

Not long afterward, Linsey came out freshly washed, and Caylee had finished preparing the pasta.

The two children sat obediently at the table. They had placed cookies next to the pasta.

This brought a smile to Linsey's face.

She walked over to the table and sat down. "Thank you for the yummy pasta and cookies," she said.

“Have some to eat, Mommy. You must be hungry,” Zenia said.

Linsey nodded, then picked up a fork and began to eat.

Zander watched her intently for a while before saying, “Mommy, Zenia and I washed the vegetables on your pasta. They are super clean.”

Chapter 788:

Linsey looked up at Zander.

His striking resemblance to Collin brought a flood of memories rushing back to her.

Collin had once prepared meals for Linsey with similar care, looking at her with anticipation.

Tears welled up in Linsey’s eyes, heating up until they blurred her vision.

As she bowed her head, a lone tear dropped onto her dinner plate.

Linsey quickly composed herself, attempting to brush the tears aside.

Yet, her children’s keen observation had not missed her distress.

“Mommy, are you okay?” Zenia asked, her voice laced with concern, her bright eyes clouding with worry.

Zenia climbed onto her chair, stretching her small hand to touch Linsey’s cheek.

Meanwhile, Zander didn’t waste a moment; he scurried to get some tissues and came rushing back. “Let me help, Mommy.”

Linsey had been keeping herself composed, but watching the two children care for her so gently made her emotions swell even more.

The next second, a quiet, strangled sob slipped from her lips before she could stop it.

It was quick and tightly held back.

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Linsey drew in a trembling breath, forcing herself to speak past the weight pressing against her chest.

In a voice tinged with rasp, she said, "I'm alright, sweethearts. I just swallowed wrong. I'm not crying."

With a faint sigh, she forced a smile and reached for a cookie, taking a slow bite.

"Delicious! You've both done such a wonderful job. These cookies are perfect!"

Zenia's face lit up with a joyful grin. "I'm glad you like them, Mommy! Have some more, please!"

Together with the children, Linsey continued her meal, their presence comforting her.

"Caylee, could you please take Zenia and Zander to bed? I'll handle the cleanup," Linsey murmured gently.

Caylee, mindful of a request Gorman had earlier made, complied without objection and guided the children to their bedrooms.

Once the bedroom door clicked shut, Zenia's small voice was barely audible as she looked up at Caylee. "Caylee, was Mommy crying earlier?"

Zander was more assertive. "I'm sure of it. Mommy was crying."

Caylee was taken aback by their acute observations.

She knew Linsey had struggled to suppress her emotions, hoping to shield the children from her sorrow.

If this had happened in the past, Caylee would have respected Linsey's wishes and skillfully sidestepped the children's curious questions. Considering Zenia and Zander's young age, barely four, redirecting their focus would normally be straightforward.

Chapter 789:

However, Caylee's face took on a serious expression as she gathered the children close on the couch, speaking in hushed tones. "You both noticed Mommy's tears, didn't you?"

Zander nodded and said, "Yes, I'm certain. Mommy cried. I think she even looked at me just as she began to cry."

A shadow of concern crossed Zander's features. "Caylee, did I upset Mommy somehow?"

Zenia interjected earnestly, "If we did anything to make Mommy sad, we want to say sorry!"

Touched by their sincerity and concern, Caylee felt a wave of affection and regret.

She ruffled their hair affectionately.

Drawing in a deep breath, she whispered, "Tonight, your mom and Gorman attended a significant event. She was cheerful at first, but their evening changed after an unexpected encounter."

Intrigued, Zander's eyes grew wide. "Who did they meet?"

Caylee felt a headache coming on as she pondered over the orders Gorman had given her.

He seemed to have grown even more unscrupulous, stooping so low that he used children to achieve his goal.

However, at the thought of her hospitalized grandmother, she realized that she was out of options.

“That guy must really be terrible. He hurt your mom then and made her sad. Tonight she saw him again, and this must be upsetting her.”

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Caylee paused shortly, then continued, “Tonight, Linsey wanted that necklace, and Gorman wanted to buy it for her, but that bad man took it away from her. He is a really awful man. Your mom wouldn’t be upset if it weren’t for him.”

It was easy for Caylee to sound serious to two four-year-olds if she deepened her voice a little.

After all, the victim of this wicked man was their dear mother, Linsey.

As expected, Zander’s face twisted into a look of anger, while Zenia seemed quite sad.

“That guy is so mean. Why does he bully Mommy?” Zenia asked, her voice trembling.

Caylee, seeing that Zenia was on the verge of tears, said soothingly, “Don’t cry, sweetheart. Linsey would only worry more if you cry.”

Zander nodded and said, “Caylee is right. We can’t cry, or we’ll make Mommy more sad.”

This seemed to calm Zenia down. She sniffed and took Zander’s hand.

“What can we do to make Mommy happy again?”

Zander looked to Caylee and asked, “Do you know who the guy is?”

Caylee took out her phone and showed them a picture of Collin. “This is the bad man, Collin Riley. He’s the founder of CR Corporation here in Grester and is a very powerful man. That’s why Linsey couldn’t fight back even though he bullied her.”

Caylee carefully watched the children’s expressions as she spoke. Both Zander and Zenia stared at the picture with what could be said to be anger.

Zander seemed angrier than his sister.

Chapter 790:

Caylee had never seen that kind of look on Zander’s face since he was born.

She sighed to herself.

She knew this was exactly what Gorman wanted—to make Linsey’s children hate Collin.

That way, even if Linsey wanted to get back together with him, the kids wouldn’t allow it.

Caylee knew that Zenia and Zander had come to love and trust Gorman. Zenia even called Gorman Daddy when no one was around.

Given how much Linsey loved her children, she would think twice about being with Collin so as not to upset them.

And with Haven still in the picture, even if Linsey wasn’t ready to accept Gorman now, she might have to change her mind.

Gorman knew that since Linsey had just returned to Grester, it was normal for old feelings to be rekindled after she ran into Collin again after so many years.

His plan now was to eliminate any chance of Linsey going back to Collin.

It didn't matter to him that he had to use two children to further his agenda.

Linsey was left feeling miserable after her unexpected meeting with Collin again.

Meanwhile, Dolores had pulled Dustin away from the banquet hall and was now wandering the hotel halls with him.

Dustin, after seemingly wandering the halls with no purpose, finally asked, "Where exactly are you taking me?"

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Dolores, on the other hand, was thinking of how to erase Zander completely from his memory, only to realize that was impossible. Suddenly, an idea popped into her head.

Dolores at that moment decided to distract Dustin with something even more exciting. She glanced back at Dustin and said, "Have a little patience. It's not every day I take a guy out for a walk. You should cherish a moment as rare as this."

Dustin's eyes lit up upon hearing this. However, that didn't last long, as he suddenly looked away awkwardly. He scratched his head, then asked in a voice barely above a whisper, "Is this your first time out on a night date with a guy?"

"I'm sorry?" Dolores asked, turning back.

Too embarrassed to repeat himself, Dustin replied, "It's nothing." Scanning the empty environment, he asked, "Are we just going to keep wandering about? Shouldn't we be heading back to the banquet hall? There's still an auction coming up."

"Auctions are so boring," Dolores said dismissively.

It was then she noticed a crowd gathered not far away. "What's going on over there?"

Dustin took the lead and went ahead of Dolores. After a good gaze, he finally said, "It looks like a wedding."

"Someone's having a wedding outdoors this late?" Dolores asked.

Faint music could be heard coming from the crowd.

"It seems to be an outdoor wedding with a dance party vibe. It's more of a big celebration with friends than a traditional ceremony," Dustin explained.