

# The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

## The Heiress Revived

### The Heiress Revived Ch 15

15843 Views, Released on March 26, 2025

#### Chapter 15 Don't Die in My Car, It's Bad Luck

"I already have nothing left; what would I even be afraid of?"

Elliot stared at her intensely, but Lauren met his gaze without flinching. For the first time, Elliot saw disgust in her eyes.

She **actually** loathed met

His impression of Lauren had been obedient, always putting his feelings first. For three years, he had grown accustomed to her submission, to her unconditional admiration. He couldn't accept **how** fast she had changed. I had gone against Kenneth for her. Kenneth was Willow's fiance, which meant I had hurt Willow too. I had done so much for her, and yet she was still dissatisfied?

"Lauren!" His voice darkened with fury. If **you** try to run away again. I'll terminate Marilyn's employment

Lauren's heart clenched. Marilyn was the only person in the Bennett family who had ever been kind to her. If she lost her job because of her, Lauren would feel guilty for the rest of her life. Her fists clenched tightly as she forced herself to act indifferent "You firing your maid has nothing to do with me."

If I didn't care, then maybe Marilyn would be safe.

Just as she was thinking **this**, Elliot let out a cold **chuckle**. "Is that so? Then I won't just fire Marilyn: I'll have her daughter expelled from school"

Marilyn's daughter is named Mia, and she **is** a sophomore in college this year.

Five years ago, when she was in junior high, she had ridden her bike in the pouring rain to deliver Lauren's exam admission slip. The roads had been slippery, and she had broken her right hand in an accident, almost missing her high school entrance

EXILIS

By the time Lauren had finished her college entrance exams and returned home, Marilyn had told her that someone had thrown her admission slip into the trash. If Marilyn hadn't found it in time, the sanitation workers would have taken it away, and she never would have been able to sit for her exam.

Lauren owed Marilyn and Mia too much. If they lost their jobs and education because of her, that would be worse than death. Her entire body tensed; her fury barely restrained.

Elliot mistook her silence for defiance. He let out a cold snort. "I heard Mia is a top student, **always** winning scholarships. If she were expelled.

"Smack!" A sharp slap interrupted his words, jerking his head to the side.

Jeffrey, watching everything unfold through the rearview mirror, widened his eyes in shock.

Lauren slapped Elliott

Not even in his worst **nightmares** had he imagined something this ridiculous. He'd always seen Lauren as weak, easy to control. But now, she was fighting back, claws **out**, Guess it's true—push someone too far, and they'll bite back.

Compared to her **previous** meekness, this version of Lauren piqued his interest.

Jeffrey smirked, enjoying the show. "Elliot, does it hurt?"

Elliot's face darkened, Lauren was frail, she hadn't eaten or drunk anything in over a day, so her slap had barely stung. It's **not** about whether his face hurts or not; Elliot's heart aches.

My sister **shouldn't** be this disobedient

Blinding rage surged through Elliot. His eyes turned bloodshot as he grabbed Lauren by the throat, slamming her **against** the seat. A sharp pain shot through her neck; her breathing became labored. Her lungs felt like they were about to burst; every breath **was** agonizing. Slowly, her face turned purple.

Jeffrey spoke up, his tone casual but firm. "Elliot, let go; you're going **to** kill her.

Elliot gritted **his** teeth. "It would be just as well if she died." **But** despite his words, his grip loosened.

Chapter 15 Don't Die in My Car, It's Bad Luck

Jeffrey scoffed. "If she's going to die, at least not in my car. I hate bad luck."

Finished

Elliot flung Lauren aside. She collapsed like a discarded rag doll, gasping for air, coughing violently. Elliot glared at her and roared, "Listen carefully, this is the last time you disobey me. If you try this again, Marilyn and her daughter will suffer a fate far worse than you can imagine!"

His words echoed in the confined space of the car, heavy with warning. Lauren lowered her gaze, concealing the disgust in her eyes. The rest of the ride was spent in silence..

They arrived at the Bennett Residence an hour later. The moment Lauren stepped out of the car, Alice Pierce rushed toward her, grabbing her hand. Lauren immediately yanked her hand away, as if burned.

Alice's hand froze midair, a flicker of embarrassment crossing her face before she quickly composed herself. She put on an affectionate expression and said, Laurie, you're too stubborn. Your father was **just** angry: don't take his words to heart. Do you know how worried I **was**?

Willow quickly chimed in, clutching Alice's arm. "Laurie, you really scared us

Lauren stood still, her expression cold. She waited until they had finished their performance before turning and **walking** straight inside.

Her indifference reignited Elliot's fury. He barked, "Lauren, stop right there! Can't you see that Mom and Willow are worried about you?"

Lauren **paused**; she turned around and looked at Alice and Willow, both still in their bathrobes, their hair slightly damp. Her lips curled into a mocking smile. Tell me, were you worried about me while taking a bath, or **while** getting ready for bed?"

It was obvious, the moment she had left the house, these two had showered and prepared for sleep. Here teases the worry in that!

The air **went** deathly silent. Alice's eyes darted away, unable to meet Lauren's gaze. Elliot stiffened, **his** mouth opening **as** if to refute her words, but there was no excuse. Lauren had long since seen through this family's hypocrisy. This entire act was nothing surprising.

Without another word, she walked into the house, ignoring them all.

That night. Elliot tossed and turned in his massive, comfortable bed, unable to sleep. After a long internal struggle, he finally got up, went downstairs, and walked toward the storage room

It wasn't a place fit for human living. To put it bluntly, even the family dog had a better space.

Standing in front of the door, he hesitated. For a long time, he couldn't bring himself to **knock**. Yet he also couldn't walk away.

He lingered outside for 30 minutes. Only when a dull ache spread through his stomach did he finally leave.

The next morning

Lauren had slept surprisingly well. Maybe it was exhaustion, or **maybe** it was the relief of being free from prison. In contrast, the entire Bennett family looked terrible. Elliot, with deep bags under his eyes, appeared completely unrested.

At breakfast, David Bennett spoke in a stern voice. "Laurie, a driver will take you to Hoverdale Skyline Medical Center today. As long as you show sincerity, I believe Kenneth will forgive you and resume our partnership with Gray Corporation,"

Lauren sat silently, her gaze **cast** downward, emotionless.

David's patience snapped. "Are you mute?"

Alice quickly stepped in. "Let's eat first; we can talk after breakfast.

Breakfast **was** Western-style. The maids carefully placed plates before David, Alice, Elliot, and Willow. But Lauren's seat was empty

? Views, Released on March 26, 2025

## Chapter 16 You Have to Listen

The dining room fell silent in an instant, the atmosphere turning ice-**cold**. It was like someone had hit the pause button—no one **moved**.

David frowned slightly but said nothing.

Alice looked uncomfortable, her mind racing for a way to break the awkward tension.

Only Elliot reacted. He slammed his knife and fork onto the table with a loud bang, startling the servants. "What the hell is going on?"

One of the maids flinched, lowering her head as she stammered, "Mr. Elliot, we've always prepared meals for four people,

Her explanation sounded weak, doing nothing to calm Elliot. Instead, it only made him angrier.

“Seriously? Are you blind? You saw Lauren come home, didn’t you? Or did **you** just choose to ignore her deliberately!”

“Mr. Elliot, L. The maid tried to **explain**.

But Elliot cut her off impatiently. “You’re fired.”

The maid’s face turned pale with panic. She turned to Willow for help, but Willow kept her head down, lost in thought

David cleared his **throat**. “Marilyn, go make another serving

“Yes, Mr. Elliot!” Marilyn’s face lit up with relief as she hurried into the kitchen.

Willow’s eyes flickered. In the next moment, she put on a concerned expression and pushed her own plate toward Lauren.

Lauren didn’t look at her or say a word, but she also didn’t reject the gesture. She was genuinely hungry, so she **picked** up her utensils and started eating

Her pace was steady, completely unfazed by the tension and conflict around her, **as** if none **of** it had anything to do with her.

Willow watched her expectantly, waiting for her to say something. But after a long while, Lauren didn’t even spare her a glance. Willow’s anticipation slowly turned into disappointment, like she’d **just** been **brushed** aside.

David tapped his fingers against the table to get Lauren’s attention, but she continued eating **as** if she hadn’t heard him.

He coughed loudly.

Lauren remained unfazed.

Alice couldn’t stand it any longer. With a hint of disappointment in her tone, she said, “Lauren, look at **how** much Willow cares about you. Shouldn’t you at least thank her?”

So this is what all the fuss was about? Seriously? Can’t I even have breakfast in peace? What was this? Some kind of obedience test!

She had spent three years playing by their rules, and it still wasn’t enough. If she kept bowing to their will now, she’d be nothing but a fool who never learned her lesson.

Lauren set down her utensils and swept her gaze around the table. “Thank her? For what—stealing my life? Turning **you** all against me and framing me? Or maybe for the five years I spent rotting in prison because of her? I take one bite of her food, and **suddenly**, I’m supposed to be grateful? Then what about the three years I spent in this house? I never even got a proper breakfast or lunch. Every night, I came home to nothing but leftovers while enduring your insults, and somehow, I was still expected to smile and **take** it. If anything, **shouldn’t** your whole family be apologizing to me first?”

They expected her to do something they’d never do themselves. Classic hypocrisy.

Alice let out a disappointed sigh. That’s all in the past. Why can’t you just let it **go?**”

Lauren let out a sharp laugh. “Let it go? You weren’t the one who suffered. You don’t get to decide when it’s over.”

2.40 PM m d

Chapter 16 You Have to Listen

David’s patience finally snapped. His rage exploded.

Finished

“Because I’m your father, and you’ll do as you’re told! Listen Lauren, don’t think that just because you’re back, you can act however you want. This family doesn’t need you. Whether **you** stay or leave makes no difference to us. If you resent us so much, then get out! I never said you were welcome here in the first place.”

Lauren suddenly let out a cold laugh, dripping with mockery

“You think I wanted to come back? Have you already forgotten what happened last night, Mr. David? You were desperate to use me to rebuild your partnership with Gray Corporation, yet now you’re acting like I forced my way in here. What, do you think you’re so high and mighty that I should be grateful for the way you treat me?”

“Enough!” David roared, his entire body trembling with fury. He shot up from his chair, stormed over to Lauren, and without hesitation-

Slap!

The impact was brutal. The force knocked Lauren sideways, sending her crashing against the dining table. Her plate tumbled to the ground, shattering into pieces.

Her face swelled **instantly**, her lip splitting open as blood trickled down, staining the crisp white tablecloth.

Her right ear, already weakened from years of abuse, buzzed violently from the blow. A high—  
pitched ringing filled her head. like a swarm of bees buzzing relentlessly in her ear.

Did it hurt?

For Lauren, not really.

After everything she endured in prison, getting hit was nothing new,

But just because it didn't hurt didn't mean she wouldn't hate them for it.

Lauren turned her head slowly, her expression ice—cold. David's face hardened with rage, his eyes showing no hint of a father's love. Alice looked devastated, but she **hadn't** done a thing to stop him. Elliot's brows were furrowed, a flicker of something complicated crossing his gaze before he quickly masked it with indifference. And Willow—she didn't even bother hiding the smug satisfaction in her eyes.

Years of bottled—up pain and resentment finally erupted.

With **a** sudden burst of strength, Lauren  
grabbed the edge of the dining table and flipped it over.

**Crash!** Dishes shattered, **food** splattered across the floor, and silverware clattered noisily.

David and Alice stumbled back in shock. Willow let out a terrified scream.

“Lauren, are you out of your mind!” Elliot roared.

Lauren's voice shook with fury. “What gives you the right to treat me like this? What did I ever do to deserve this?”

Tears spilled down her face, mixing with the blood at the corner of her mouth, streaking down her cheeks.

Alice stepped forward, reaching for her. “Laurie, calm down. We're family. We can talk about this. There's no need **to** make a

scene.

Lauren yanked her **arm away**, her chest heaving.

David's face darkened. “**You** ungrateful brat! Look at yourself—you're a disgrace to the Bennett family!”

Willow peeked out from behind David, her voice soft, **trembling** with fake guilt. “**Laurie**, please don’t be mad. It’s all my fault. Blame me if you want; just don’t be upset **anymore, okay?**”

But Lauren wasn’t listening.

She saw their mouths moving—angry, disappointed, insincere—**but** their words sounded distant, muffled.

**כיב**

2:40PM **d**

Chapter 16 You Have to Listen

She felt trapped, like she was shouting into a void—giving it everything she **had**, yet hearing nothing in return.

The room swayed. Her vision blurred.

Finished

She staggered toward the door, trying to steady herself, but her body wouldn’t cooperate. The dizziness was overpowering.

Her knees buckled, and before she could catch herself, she collapsed forward.

“Lauriel Elliot lunged forward just in time, catching her before she hit the floor.

His arms trembled slightly as he held her, his grip firm yet careful.

“She was fine just a second ago! What happened?” Alice’s voice wavered with panic, her eyes filling with tears.

David scoffed. “I know her tricks. If she’s good at anything, it’s playing the victim. She’s always been a manipulative little liar

“Enough!” Elliot’s voice was sharp, veins bulging at his temples. “Lauren just passed out, and all you can do is stand here and **mock** her? I’m starting to wonder if she’s even really your daughter.

Without waiting for a response, he **swept** Lauren into his arms and strode upstairs.

**David’s** face burned with fury. “If she weren’t my daughter, she wouldn’t even have the chance to throw a **tantrum** in my



house!

? Views, Released on March 26, 2025

## Chapter 17 No Difference at All

Lauren woke up in Elliot's room—again

The first thing she saw was Marilyn sitting beside the bed, carefully dabbing a cotton swab against her swollen face, her expression full of concern

As soon as Marilyn noticed she was awake, she asked anxiously, “Ms. Bennett, are you feeling any discomfort!”

Lauren stared blankly at her moving lips her tears falling silently.

Marilyn's eyes turned red with worry. “Ms. Bennett, what's wrong? Did I hurt you?”

Lauren couldn't hear her clearly

David's slap had further damaged her already weak right ear, leaving her only able to catch faint, muffled sounds.

But she could read lips. She understood what Marilyn was saying

Before prison, she never **had** to rely on lip-reading.

But after losing hearing in her left ear, she struggled to understand the guards' commands. And **when** she didn't respond fast enough, their punishments were even harsher.

To avoid more beatings, she had forced herself to learn. Even if she couldn't **hear** clearly, at least she could read their lips and

Lauren swallowed the bitterness and forced a smile. “Marilyn. I'm fine. I am just really hungry.”

Thinking back to what happened that morning, Marilyn felt a wave of injustice on Lauren's behalf.

Ms. Bennett is such a kind and thoughtful person. How can Mr. David, Madam Alice and Mr. Elliot not see that!

“What would you like to eat, Ms. Bennett?”

“Noodle soup”

“Alright. Ill make some right away

Lauren nodded. leaning against the headboard. She stared out the window, her thoughts drifting.

She wasn’t sure how much time had passed before the door opened again.

Assuming it was Marilyn, she turned her head—only to see Alice standing there

Alice met her distant gaze, and a sharp pang shot through her chest. But instead of retreating, she walked over and sat beside the bed

“Laune, I made you some noodle soup myself. Try it

She reached out to feed her, but Lauren instinctively pulled **away**.

I can do it myself” Lauren took the utensils from her hand.

She looked down at the bowl of noodle soup The broth was clear, the noodles soft yet firm, topped with fresh green scallions. and a perfectly poached egg

No heavy seasonings, no extra garnish—just a simple, comforting dish with an **inviting** aroma.

She picked up some noodles and slowly chewed. The familiar taste spread through her mouth, warming her from the inside

Alice watched her with anticipation “How is it Do you **like** it?”

Lauren’s hand paused mid-motion “You made this”

Chapter 17 No Difference **at** All

Alice nodded with a smile. “Yes. Even Willow has never had my homemade noodles. You’re the first

She said it like it was something special, a gift, a sign of love.

But Lauren wasn’t moved.

Instead, she let out a cold, mocking laugh.

She didn’t say a word and simply continued eating

Alice had **no** idea what noodle soup meant to her.

A simple bowl of noodles had once gotten her through an entire winter.

Finished

Even after all these years, Lauren still remembered the first time Marilyn made her noodle soup—it was the winter of her freshman year of high school.

That night was pitch-black. She had biked home, pushing through the wind and snow,

The entire Bennen estate was dark. No one had left a light on for her.

The family had already eaten their fill and gone to bed early, while she stood there, shivering, with nothing but cold leftovers. To quiet her hunger.

Later that night, the pain hit—her stomach twisted in unbearable cramps. It wasn't until she threw up everything she had eaten that she finally felt some relief.

That was when Marilyn, up in the middle of the night, found her sick and took care of her. She made her a steaming bowl of noodle soup.

From that night on, Marilyn always left a light on for her. She stayed up, waiting for Lauren to come home, making her noodle soup, dumplings, and porridge—simple, comforting meals that were easy to digest.

Everyone in the Bennett family knew Elliot had a weak stomach. But no one ever noticed that Lauren **had** developed the same condition after moving in.

She never had stomach **issues** at the orphanage.

Yet in her own home, she went hungry so often that she ruined her health.

How ironic.

The taste of Marilyn's noodle soup was something she could never forget. So how could she not recognize whose hands had really made the bowl in front of her?

She finished every last bite, even drinking the broth.

Alice's face lit up. "**Was** it good?"

Lauren fixed her gaze on Alice's lips and cut straight to the point. "Just say what you need to say. No need to beat around the bush."

Her flat, emotionless tone made the gap between them feel even wider.

Alice frowned, clearly displeased. "Laurie, I truly care about you. Why can't you just let go of the past?"

Lauren didn't answer. She just stared at her, gaze **steady**, sharp—as if she could see right through her.

Under that look, Alice faltered. Her confidence wavered. Finally, she sighed. "Laurie, tell me what do I have to do for you to accept me

Lauren still didn't speak

Because she already knew the answer. Even if she told Alice, she wouldn't be able to do it. So why bother saying anything at all

even them.

Chapter 17 No Difference at All

But all she got in return was Lauren's cold indifference

Finished

It just.

In the **end**. Alice let out a long, weary **sigh** and dropped the act "Laurie, Understand that you're upset, but you can't, stand by **and** do nothing while Bennett Corporation struggles. If we don't restore our partnership with Gray Corporation, the company & losses will only get worse. You're a part of the Bennett family. **You** should do your part"

Lauren had once believed **that** Alice was different from the rest of them.

Today, she realized she had been wrong.

Alice was just like the rest of the Bennetts.

If she really wanted to pretend she cared, she could've at least tried a little harder.

Instead, she didn't even bother putting in the effort—handing her a bowl of Marilyn's noodle soup and pretending it was some grand gesture while spouting empty words about family and responsibility.

In that moment, a bitter realization hit her—no matter **how** much she wished otherwise, she was still one of them.

Get out

What

“Either you **leave**, or I do” Lauren threw off the covers, **making** a move to get out of bed

Alice’s chest **heaved** with anger. “In just five years, you’ve become completely unreasonable.

Lauren let out a cold laugh. “Of course, five years must have felt short for you—living freely, enjoying life. But for me I spent those five years in prison, either getting beaten or insulted. Five years that should have been Willow’s. You’re the one who erased the security footage. **You** sent me to prison and ruined my name forever. And now, you want to act like you care? Please. Spare me. I don’t need that kind of love”

You, you’re being unreasonable”

“That’s right. So do us both a  
a **favor** and stay out of my life.”

Furious, Alice turned on her heel, unwilling to face Lauren any longer.

Lauren spent the rest of the day in Elliot’s room.

That night, David stormed in, pointing a finger in her **face as** he exploded in rage,

Bennett Corporation had lost another 110 million in just one day.

Until they restored their partnership with Gray Corporation, the losses would only continue.

Lauren simply smiled at David the entire time.

That expression alone nearly made David pass out from rage.

Before leaving. Elliot cast her a long, meaningful glance.

At the time, she didn’t understand what it meant.

Not until the next morning

When she woke up, she realized her hearing in her right ear had slightly improved.

As she made her way downstairs, she overheard two maids whispering.

“Why is Marilyn here today?”

"I heard something happened to her daughter. The school's even considering expelling her

Lauren head snapped toward Elliot, who was casually reading the newspaper on the couch

i

## Chapter 17 No Difference at All

As if sensing her stare, he looked up and met her gaze—then flashed her a slow, knowing smile.

### Send Gifts

? Views, Released on March 26, 2025

## Chapter 18 Hurt Marilyn, and I'll Destroy You

The warnings echoed in her mind.

Lauren's chest rose and fell sharply, her loose strands of hair trembling with her fury.

She locked eyes **with** Elliot, her gaze filled with pure hatred, **as** if she wanted to tear him apart. "Was it you?"

Elliot sat up slightly, folding his hands loosely over his lap, his expression perfectly calm — untouched, composed, almost aristocratic. "What? I **have** no idea what you're talking about

"**Mia** was expelled. Did you order it?" Lauren's voice was tight, forced through gritted teeth. "Elliot, I'm warning you—stay away from Marilyn and Mia. If you don't..."

Elliot's eyes narrowed, a dangerous **glint** flashing through them.

All this over a maid's daughter she cared so much about outsiders, yet when it came to me, her own brother, all I got was cold indifference.

The thought made his blood boil. He clenched his jaw, bitterness twisting inside him. "Or what?"

Lauren's voice was unwavering. "I'll take you down with me."

A strange ache twisted in Elliot's chest. "I'm your brother. And this is how you see me?"

Lauren didn't respond, but the coldness in her eyes said it all.

Their eyes locked, tension thickening the air between them.

Suddenly, the shrill ring of a phone shattered the silence.

Elliot glanced at the screen—Marilyn.

His lips curled into a smirk **as** he answered, meeting Lauren's expectant gaze.

The moment he picked up, Marilyn's anxious, desperate voice poured through the speaker. "Mr. Elliot, please, I have no one else to turn to. I beg you—use the Bennett family's connections; do something to stop the school from expelling Mia! She's my only daughter. I've worked so hard to raise her, and she's so close to graduating. If she gets expelled now, her future will be ruined..."

Elliot listened to her frantic pleas, but his focus never wavered from Lauren, watching her every reaction.

Lauren's hands clenched into tight fists, her nails digging deep into her palms.

Marilyn had no idea she was begging **the** very **man** responsible for all of this.

And Lauren—knowing the truth—was powerless to stop it.

Once again, she had no choice but to put her fate in Elliot's hands.

Her voice was low, strained. "Help her."

Elliot arched a brow, covering the phone's mic with his hand. "I'll help her—but only if you apologize **to** Elaine. Get Kenneth to forgive you, and Marilyn's daughter won't be expelled."

Lauren's eyes burned red with anger, but she had no other choice.

"Fine. I'll do it."

Satisfied, Elliot turned back to the phone without hesitation. "Don't worry, Marilyn. Mia won't be expelled." After hanging up, he stood and grabbed his **keys**. "I'll drive you."

"No need. I'll take a cab Lauren shot him down without hesitation.

"Til get **you** there faster. He insisted.

## Chapter 18 Hurt Marilyn, and I'll Destroy You

Without emotion, she **said**, "Looking at you makes me sick.

And with that, she turned and walked away.

Elliot's face flushed red, his jaw clenched so tightly it ached.

Finished

He tried to suppress the **rage** rising in his chest, but it was impossible. Fury took over, and with one swift **kick**, he sent the coffee table flying.

Glass shattered.

**Tea** splashed across the floor, soaking into the expensive carpet, but he didn't care.

His rage drowned out everything else.

"Lauren, don't push it!" Elliot's gaze burned into her retreating figure.

He just didn't get it—  
he had even lowered himself in front of her, yet she refused to budge. Why couldn't she just go back to the obedient girl she used to be? Why did she always have to challenge me?

Lauren **always** knew how to get under his skin, effortlessly striking where it hurt the **most**

But she didn't slow down  
for a second. In no time, she had walked out of the Bennett estate

At the gate, she ran into Jeffrey.

With his usual smug, playboy attitude, Jeffrey scanned her from head to toe, his eyes filled with amusement.

"Damn. Swollen face, busted leg—you look like a total mess"

Not that it mattered. No one pitied her anyway.

Lauren didn't even spare him a glance, brushing past him with cold indifference.

Jeffrey frowned.



As Elliot's friend, Jeffrey was used to Lauren treating him like a guest of honor—bringing him tea, tending to his every need, always eager to please whenever he visited the Bennett house.

But now, the complete shift caught him off guard. He couldn't wrap his head around it.

"Hey, where are you going? I'll give you a ride."

She ignored him.

Her indifference only fueled Jeffrey's irritation. He quickly caught up to her and grabbed her wrist. "I'm talking to you! What? Are you deaf?"

Lauren finally stopped, her voice calm but cutting. "Mr. Jeffrey, if it makes you feel better, go ahead—think of me as deaf, mute, or whatever you want. I don't care. I **have** one request—**stay** out of my life and pretend I don't exist. Can you do that?"

"What the heck? I never did anything to you! Why are you acting crazy?"

"Then just assume I'm crazy" Lauren yanked her hand free and walked away without looking **back**.

"Jesus, what's your problem!"

Jeffrey stood frozen, watching her limp away.

His eyes fell to her injured **leg**, the bruises and cuts barely hidden beneath her **clothes**.

For some reason, the sight of it made him feel uneasy.

Skulina Medical Center Hossendale

Chapter 18 Hurt Marilyn, and I'll Destroy Your

Lauren pushed open **the** door to Elaine's VIP hospital room **and** stopped at the foot of the bed,

The woman lying in the bed looked nothing like **the** one she remembered.

Finished

As the heiress of Gray Corporation, Elaine had always been effortlessly beautiful—sweet-faced, impeccably dressed, the picture of a storybook princess.

**But** now, she was nothing more than a shadow of her former self. The natural fullness of her body had faded, leaving only pale, delicate skin stretched tightly over fragile bones .

Her cheeks were hollow, her sharp cheekbones protruded, and her limbs had withered, fragile and thin.

Looking at her now, Lauren couldn't help but feel a pang of sorrow. A dull ache settled in her chest, as if she were staring **at** a reflection of her own suffering.

The truth was, she and Elaine had never gotten along

But that had always been one-sided. Elaine despised her, targeting her at every turn.

And the reason was simple—  
Elaine and Willow had grown up together. They were inseparable.

Elaine's perception of Lauren **had** been entirely shaped by Willow's words.

Lauren had no idea what Willow had told her, but it certainly wasn't anything good. Otherwise, Elaine wouldn't **have** been **so** convinced that she was the villain—that she was the one bullying Willow.

Even now, Lauren still couldn't wrap her head around it

Why would Willow push Elaine down the stairs if they were such close friends? More than that—  
why had David stood by, doing nothing to stop Willow! Why had he not only allowed Willow to commit the crime but also helped her pin it on me?

She had just been in the wrong place at the wrong time.

She **had** seen what happened.

She had witnessed their attempted murder.

And worst of all, Alice had arrived at the scene just in time to catch her standing there—turning her into the perfect scapegoat.

Because Elaine and Willow were best friends, Elliot and Kenneth refused to believe **that** Willow could have hurt her.

To them, it had to be Lauren.

She was the scapegoat. The villain in their perfect story.

? Views, Released on March 26, 2025

## Chapter 19 Kenneth Forces Her to Apologize

Lauren stood by Elaine's bedside, staring down at her motionless form. "Elaine, it's me. Lauren. You hate me so much—

**you should** recognize my voice, right? I've heard some coma patients are still aware of their surroundings. I wonder if you can hear me now. If you can, when are **you** going to wake up?"

She kept talking, her voice quiet and steady.

But the woman in the hospital bed didn't stir. Not even the slightest response.

The sharp scent of antiseptic filled the air, cold and sterile. The stark white walls and crisp hospital sheets only made Elaine's frail, skeletal frame look even more fragile.

Lauren slowly sat down by the bed, her eyes fixed on Elaine's pale, lifeless face.

"You know, everyone thinks I did this to you. **But** you know better than anyone that I'm innocent. You and I both know the **truth**. You've been in a coma for five years... and I spent those five years in prison for a crime Willow committed. You have no idea what it was like in there. They stabbed me with needles, beat me with sticks... they even took one of my kidneys. All because of Kenneth—he made sure I suffered, all in the name of revenge for you."

Sunlight streamed through the small gaps in the curtains, casting fractured patterns of light across the floor. But no amount of warmth could cut through the cold, suffocating air in the hospital room.

Lauren took a deep **breath**, forcing her tears **back**. "I still remember the first time I met you. You smiled so brightly, like a princess straight out of a **fairy** tale. Back then, I envied you. You had a **family** who adored you a life of privilege, **and** so **many** friends. And me? I finally **returned** to the **Bennett** family, but I never once felt like I belonged... And now. I'm nothing but a disgrace—a convicted criminal everyone despises. But we both **know** the truth. It wasn't me who hurt you. It was Willow.

Overwhelmed by a deep sense of injustice, tears welled up and spilled down her cheeks before she could stop them. She wiped them away quickly, unaware that, for the first time in five years, Elaine's eyes twitched—just the slightest **movement**.

Once she **had** composed herself, Lauren stood up. "Elaine, you **have** to **wake** up soon. I'll come back to see you.

She had barely stepped out of the hospital room when she froze.

A pair of piercing, ice-cold eyes locked onto hers.

The man standing before her was dressed in a sleek black suit, his tall frame exuding an overpowering presence. His **sharp**, chiseled features carried an almost ruthless precision—high cheekbones, a strong jawline, and deep-set eyes that seemed to pull everything into their depths.

His thick, arched brows angled slightly, sharpening the intensity of his gaze. Beneath his straight, well-defined nose, his lips were set in a firm, unreadable line. His clenched jaw and rigid posture exuded an air of dominance—cold, commanding, and impossible to ignore.

One look—**just** one—and Lauren's body betrayed her. Her hands went cold. Her knees weakened. Every muscle in her body tensed, locked in place by sheer terror.

Her heart pounded **against** her chest, each beat hard and unsteady. Her breathing **turned quick** and shallow, struggling to keep up.

Kenneth **took a** slow, deliberate step forward, radiating an overwhelming sense of **control**—like a predator closing in on its

prey.

Lauren instinctively stepped back.

One step

Another

Then—bang

Her **back** hit the hospital room door, the dull thud echoing in the silent corridor.

His eyes locked onto her, making Lauren feel like prey caught in a predator's sights—trapped, helpless, and with nowhere to

4-

240 PM M

Chapter 19 Kenneth Forces Her to Apologize

With nowhere left to run, Lauren was forced **back** into the hospital room.

Finished

His towering figure loomed over her, his presence suffocating. The air in the room grew thick, almost frozen: the only sound breaking the silence **was** the ragged rise and fall of Lauren's breath.

She stumbled backward until her legs hit the hospital bed. There was nowhere left to go.

"Mr. Kenneth."

Kenneth's brow twitched slightly. His voice was deep and cold, dripping with authority

"Are you scared of me?"

Lauren lowered her gaze, barely able to breathe, Scared? How **could** I not be!

She had survived Bennett family cruelty. She had endured humiliation, suffering, and injustice. But him? He had broken her in ways no one else could

She had endured every one of his tactics in prison—he knew exactly how to strip away her dignity, push her to the edge of agony, yet never let her die. Instead, he left her barely clinging to life, trapped in a cycle of endless suffering

She could still summon the strength to fight back when facing the Bennetts.

But against **him**! Every last shred of courage disappeared, swallowed by the cold, paralyzing fear **that** gripped her entire **body**.

Her fingers twisted tightly into the fabric of her sleeves, her **knuckles** turning white.

Her breathing was erratic, her eyes wide with panic. Her terror was written all over her face.

"Mr. Kenneth, I've **already** spoken to Ms. Elaine. Can... can I leave now? Lauren's voice was unsteady, trembling with fear.

She didn't dare lift her head to meet Kenneth's eyes, yet she could feel the suffocating chill radiating from him.

He tilted his head slightly, regarding her with the cold indifference of someone assessing something insignificant.

"Spoken to her?" His lips **curled** into a chilling smirk. Your father promised me you'd drop to your knees before Elaine **and** apologize. And you'll keep going until I decide it's enough.

Lauren's face drained of color. Her head snapped up in shock, but under the weight of his piercing gaze, she quickly lowered it again.

**Memories** of the humiliation and suffering she endured in prison flooded her mind. The relentless torment, the days she wished for death just to escape, **had** conditioned her to instinctively fall at his feet and beg for mercy.

Kenneth **took a** step forward, his overwhelming presence pressing down on her.

"What's wrong? Are you hesitating? Or do **you** actually think five years in prison was enough to make up for what you did to Elaine?"

Lauren trembled. She wanted to run, but her legs felt rooted to the ground, too heavy to move.

She wanted to speak, to defend herself, but she knew it was pointless. She knew he wouldn't listen. He never had.

Five years ago, she had pleaded her innocence. He hadn't believed a single word. Instead, he had made sure she suffered- ensuring that every day behind bars was pure hell

She feared him—not just in her mind, but in her very soul.

Lauren's knees slowly buckled until she dropped to the floor.

**Tam** guilty. I bow my head before Ms. Elaine **and** beg for forgiveness. Please, Mr. Kenneth, have mercy on me. With those words, she lowered her head—hard.

Bang Her forehead slammed against the cold **floor** with a dull, heavy thud.

2:40 PM m

Chapter 19 Kenneth Forces Her to Apologize

Then again. And again. Each impact echoed through the room, each one heavier than the last

Dignity? She had given it up long ago—just to survive.

Finished

Kenneth watched in silence. But the satisfaction he had expected never came. Instead, a deep, unshakable irritation spread through him.

For years, he had wanted to see her like this—broken, on her knees, begging. Yet now that it was happening, there was no sense of victory, only an unshakable irritation gnawing at him.

**Lauren's** forehead split open from the force of her bows, a thin stream of blood trickling down her face. Drop by drop, it fell onto the pristine white floor, blooming into a stark, crimson stain.

Yet she didn't stop. Didn't even flinch. She kept going, her movements mechanical, her voice raw as she repeated the same words. I'm guilty. I was wrong. Please, Mr. Kenneth, let me go

Each word left her lips in sync with the dull, heavy thud of her forehead striking the floor.

Kenneth's fists clenched at his **sides**, the storm in his eyes raging

He didn't notice that as Lauren kept bowing and pleading, Elaine's eyes flickered beneath her closed lids. A single tear slid down her cheek, vanishing into the pillow

Send Gifts

13889 Views, Released on March 26, 2025

Chapter 20 What a Waste Not to Pursue Science

Finished

Kenneth's irritation deepened as he stared at Lauren's bloodied face. There was no satisfaction, no sense of victory—only a relentless, suffocating **frustration**.

His **gaze** turned icy as he spat out a single word. "Leave"

But Lauren didn't seem to hear him. She kept bowing, each dull thud of her forehead against the floor hitting Kenneth like a weight pressing **down** on his chest.

A **vein** pulsed at his temple, his patience wearing thin. "I told you to leave. Are you deaf?"

Lauren's mind was blank, her ears ringing. She couldn't hear him. All that remained was the instinct to bow, to beg, to

survive.

Kenneth's face darkened. In one swift motion, he strode **forward** and reached down to pull her up

But the moment his hand moved toward her, Lauren recoiled. Her body curled up in pure instinct, arms shielding her head as she **choked** out a broken sob. "Please don't hit me."

Memories of prison crashed over Lauren—  
blow after blow, her body covered in bruises, the endless darkness **and** agony that had broken her piece by piece. The weight of it all overwhelmed her, pushing her past the brink

Kenneth's eyes narrowed, his outstretched hand **going** rigid in midair. For a long moment, he didn't move.

His gaze stayed locked on Lauren, curled up on the floor, trembling as if she were bracing for an **impact** that never came. A storm of emotions churned inside him, tangled and unsettling.

For a fleeting moment, he saw her as she used to be—  
shy, **full** of laughter, her bright eyes sparkling like stars.

The first time he had heard her name was from a **teacher**.

The man had praised her without hesitation. "Kenneth, your biggest competitor in this year's physics competition is a freshman from Hoverdale Academy—  
Lauren. That girl is a natural talent.

At sixteen, Kenneth had been full of pride, unwilling to back down. "My talent is just as good as hers."

As the reigning top student at Kingsley Private School, he hadn't thought much of her.

Until she defeated him in that competition. And the **next**. And the one after that. **Again and** again, she outranked him.

Before he even realized it, he was chasing after her—  
entering every competition she did, **drawn** to the challenge, drawn to

her.

At some point, even he didn't know if he was competing to prove himself or just for the **chance** to see her.

For three years, every competition ended the same way—Lauren first, Kenneth second..

**Even** now, he could still hear their teacher's words. "Lauren is the kind of genius this country needs. She's destined to make a real impact on the world."



And he had believed it.

In their **final** competition, he had asked her why she was so determined to win. “Are you trying to get noticed by the higher- ups?”

She had laughed. “Nope. The first—place prize comes with money, I just need the cash. My real dream is to be a teacher—to guide students, watch them grow, and help them succeed. That’s how I’d feel like I made a difference.”

Kenneth had **scoffed**. “You’re so gifted. Not pursuing science would be such a waste.

She had grinned at him “And you? What’s your plan?”

“Me I’ll inherit the family business,”

## Chapter 20 What a Waste Not to Pursue Science

They had shared a glance—and for the first time, he had laughed with her.

Finished

Back then, he had even felt relieved. If her dream had been to become a scientist, he knew he would never be able to stand on equal ground with her. Not even **as** the heir to Gray Corporation.

He had fought against his arranged **marriage** to Willow for years. Whether it was her or the Bennetts’ lost daughter, he had wanted nothing to do with either of them.

It wasn’t until Willow’s graduation banquet that he finally realized—the girl who had occupied his thoughts for years was none other than the Bennetts’ real **daughter**.

The one he had been engaged to since birth was Lauren.

The news had left him elated, overwhelmed with a joy he couldn’t contain.

Only if only things hadn’t turned out the way they did.

The Lauren he remembered—bright, confident, full of life—was gone.

The woman standing before him was nothing like the **bold**, confident girl he once knew.

Kenneth’s expression shifted, emotions flickering behind his cold exterior.

Something caught in his throat. He wanted to speak, but no words felt right—anything he said now would be meaningless.

Lauren's trembling frame, the raw terror in her eyes—it cut through him like a blade, striking a part of himself he thought was untouchable. For the first time, the iron grip around his heart faltered, just slightly, as if a crack had formed in the walls. He had spent years fortifying.

"You can leave" His voice finally broke the silence, stripped of its usual coldness, laced instead with something almost imperceptible exhaustion.

Slowly, he lowered his hand, fingers curling into a tight fist.

Lauren didn't move. She stayed frozen on the floor, curled in on herself. Kenneth's brow furrowed, an impulse rising in his chest—a sudden, inexplicable urge to pull her into his arms, to steady her, to offer comfort.

But the moment the thought surfaced, he crushed it.

"Get out—now,"

Lauren couldn't hear him. The mix of blood and tears blurred her vision, making it impossible to see his lips.

Panicked, she wiped at her **face** with a shaking hand, her wide, wide eyes locked onto his **lips**, desperate to read his words.

Then it clicked

Leave. He was telling me to leave. Was he.. letting me go?

A rush of overwhelming relief flooded her—part disbelief, part liberation, but mostly the raw, desperate gratitude of someone who had just narrowly escaped.

Til leave. Right now."

Her voice was hoarse and unsteady, but she didn't stop. She couldn't. Ignoring the sharp pain in her knees and the throbbing wound on her forehead, she scrambled to her feet, hands bracing against the floor as she pushed herself up.

Her injured leg barely holding her weight. She stumbled, nearly falling multiple times, but the fear of Kenneth changing his mind kept her moving.

Terrified that Kenneth might change his mind, she didn't dare hesitate. **Without** looking back, she bolted out of the room. desperate to escape.

Kenneth stood there for a long time, unmoving. Only when her battered figure completely disappeared from sight did he finally look away

## Chapter 20 What a Waste Not to Pursue Science

Finished

Sitting down at the edge of Elaine's bed, he reached out, tracing a finger lightly over the hollow curve of her brow. "Elaine. I let her go so easily. Are **you** going to be mad at me?"

But what could he do? No matter how hard he tried, he could never be truly cruel to her.

Elaine remained motionless, lying there in silence, offering no response.

The harsh fluorescent lights in the hospital hallway stung Lauren's eyes, making her squint as she stumbled forward.

Her body felt unsteady, crashing into walls and brushing against passing strangers, but she didn't care.

People shot her wary glances, but their stares meant nothing to her. Right now, there was only one thought in her mind—get as far away **from** Kenneth as possible.

She couldn't slow down. If she did, he might catch up.

In her rush, she failed to notice someone stepping out of a nearby consultation room.

She slammed straight into them, the force of the collision knocking her backward.

Before she **could** hit the ground, a firm hand caught her waist. With a slight pull, she found herself steadied against a strong familiar chest

"Laurie A voice—familiar, yet distant—spoke above her.

The moment her eyes met Lucass, she was caught in his gentle, unwavering gaze in his eyes.

e she c

could see

e her own resistance mirrored

A jolt of panic surged through her. She quickly pushed him away, dropped her gaze, and turned to leave.

But she had barely taken two steps when a strong hand wrapped around her wrist.

Lucas didn't even need to use force—  
his grip alone was enough to stop her in her tracks.

Send Gifts