

The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

The Heiress Revived Ch 151

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Chapter 151 Kneeling, Screaming, Begging—Casey Loses It

The wealthy socialites who'd tormented Lauren were utterly humiliated. Their hands were wrecked beyond repair, and no powerful family would ever accept someone like that as their lady of the house. Their lives were basically over...

A tense, heavy silence pressed down on the banquet hall like a thick fog

Willow and Kenneth had seen just how ruthless Felix really was. Fear gripped them so tightly they didn't even dare to exhale, doing everything they could to make **themselves** invisible, like moving an inch would get them punished next.

Felix slowly turned to Casey, **his** tone cold and merciless. "You're up."

Casey's legs gave out and she collapsed straight to her knees at Felix's feet. Her knees slammed against the floor with a deep thud that echoed like a blow to everyone's heart.

"Mr. Brooker, please, I'm begging you. I was wrong... I swear!" Her voice had twisted into a sobbing mess, every word scratched out from her **throat** like it was tearing her apart from the inside.

It was **all** fear and desperation.

Tears spilled down her face **without control**, carving through the expensive makeup she'd so carefully applied, leaving it smeared and ruined.

Gone **was** any trace of the pride or swagger she usually carried. She looked like a hunted animal, backed into **a corner and** trembling with panic,

She kept slamming her head into the cold floor again and again. The dull bang of her forehead hitting the ground filled the

room.

It didn't take long before her skin started to swell and turn red. Tiny red veins burst beneath the surface, and soon blood welled up, gathering into dark drops that slid down her cheeks.

Everyone watching was frozen, stunned silent by the sight

Some couldn't take it and turned away, unable to keep watching. Others stood there, mouths slightly open, completely shocked

After seeing how harshly Felix had just punished Willow and those four socialites, every one had a clear picture now—he wasn't someone to show mercy.

And since Casey had been the one leading the attack on Lauren, no one doubted it—whatever was coming for her next would

be even worse.

Felix stood there like a statue made of ice, not a flicker of emotion on his face. His gaze was cutting and cold. fixed on Casey as she knelt in front of him. There wasn't the slightest trace of sympathy in his expression

He tilted his chin slightly, his voice quiet but firm **as** steel when he addressed Josh nearby. Take her to the private room."

Josh nodded without **hesitation** and motioned for a few large bodyguards to follow.

With arms like steel clamps, they grabbed Casey by the arms and dragged her away from Felix's feet without a shred of gentleness.

"No, please! Let me go!" Casey shrieked, thrashing wildly. Her legs kicked out in every direction and her nails scraped against the floor, leaving behind sharp, grating sounds,

Her screams tore through the suffocating stillness of the banquet hall

She'd been married into the Brooker family for over 20 years—she knew exactly what kind of man Felix was.

If he **was** doing something out in the open, that meant he didn't care who saw it. But when he did something in private... that **was** when he got truly vicious. And yet, he never left a trace.

Just like earlier. He wanted those four wealthy women punished, but made their husbands do it instead. Even if the cops showed up, it would just be chalked up to a domestic fight between spouses.

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Chapter 151 Kneeling, Screaming. Begging—Casey Loses it

Felix was cold. Merciless. Smart enough to get his hands dirty without ever leaving blood behind.

He wasn't just ruthless—he was terrifying

Finished

“Please. I’m begging you, let **me go!**” Casey screamed, her **voice** ragged with panic and despair. As they dragged her across the floor, her cries were so chilling they made people’s skin crawl

Kyle saw what was happening and his face turned pale.

He rushed forward. “Felix, no matter **what** she’s done, Casey is still your stepmother. You **can’t** do this to her.”

Felix turned his head slowly. His eyes were like **knives** as they locked onto Kyle. “If you care about her that much, why don’t you take her place?”

His voice felt like **it** carried the dead of winter, sharp and freezing. Despite the warmth inside the banquet hall, the air turned cold, sending shivers through everyone

Kyle was so stunned he couldn’t speak. His face flushed deep red—from the base of his neck to the top of his head—**like a** rooster puffed up for a fight.

To be called out like that by his own son, and in front of all these people, made him feel completely disgraced. The fury inside him exploded.

“Felix. I don’t care what you say. I won’t let you lay a finger on her. He stepped forward with force, throwing his arms out and standing tall like a human shield in front of Casey.

A **spark** of hope flickered in Casey’s eyes. She lunged at Kyle, gripping his arm with everything she had, like he was her last lifeline.

“Kyle, save me!” she sobbed, helpless and terrified

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Chapter 152 Casey and Kyle Dragged Into Hell

Felix's face turned even more frosty. He didn't hesitate for a second before giving the next order. "Wow. Such touching **loyalty**. **Take** him too."

The bodyguards responded instantly. Two of them stepped up and grabbed Kyle by the arms.

Kyle fought back hard, twisting and jerking, trying to shake them off. He kept yelling, "Felix, I'm your father! You can't treat

me like this!"

Then he turned to Kate, desperate. "Mom! Are you **really** gonna **stand** by **and** let Felix act like this toward his own father?"

Kate had been watching quietly, detached—but now, a trace of inner conflict showed in her eyes.

Felix was her grandson, sure. But Kyle was still her son.

Telix.."

The word had barely left her mouth when Felix cut in. His tone was respectful, but there was steel underneath "Grandma, I "know exactly what I'm doing."

Kate let out a helpless sigh and slowly closed **her** eyes. She didn't say another word.

She understood all too well—

Felix had lived through too much trauma as a **kid**. He didn't have a shred of affection for his father.

When he was five, his biological mother was **literally** driven to death by Casey, the woman who'd wrecked their family and taken her **place**.

After that, the cheerful little boy with the big smile disappeared. What was left was a deeply withdrawn child, always shadowed by something dark.

She still remembered the day Casey married into the Brooker family. Felix **had** gone completely off the rails. He grabbed a knife and charged into their wedding room, nearly killing both Casey and Kyle.

And what he said that day left everyone in shock. “Even if I kill you, the law won’t punish me.”

He was five. A kid who should’ve been innocent, running around without a care in the world. But instead, he was eaten up by hatred.

From then on, he tried over and over to kill Casey and Kyle. He never managed it—he was just too young, too weak—but it wasn’t from lack of trying.

Most families deal with the stereotype of a wicked stepmother tormenting the stepson.

But in the Brooker **household**, it was the other way around. Casey was terrified of Felix — genuinely, to her core. Every time she saw him, she’d freeze like a mouse cornered by a cat

And with good reason. Felix wasn’t bluffing. He would’ve killed her, fully aware that being a minor meant the **law wouldn’t** do **a** thing to him.

She had finally clawed her way into a rich family and hadn’t even gotten to enjoy the life style before fear of death became her new **normal**. If she had died **back** then, it would’ve been meaningless—Felix was just a kid, and he’d walk free.

As the years **passed**, Felix learned to mask everything. He buried **his** rage and hate deep down. For him to lash out like this in public again—especially at Kyle and Casey—this hadn’t happened in years.

Inside the banquet hall, everyone **was** frozen in shock by the sudden **chaos**. No one knew what to do.

Willow and Kenneth looked like they were about to collapse—completely terrified.

Kyle and Casey kept fighting, but against the bodyguards’ sheer strength, their struggles were useless.

The door to the private room had barely clicked shut when a woman’s scream erupted **from** inside. It was the kind of scream. that sounded like her **throat** was being torn apart —sharp, painful, and cutting through the air like a knife.

Chapter 152 Casey and Kyle Dragged Into Hell

Then came a man’s panicked, broken yelling.

Outside, everyone stood completely still. No one even dared to breathe.

Finished

The banquet hall was dead silent. The only sounds were the haunting screams and shouts echoing from the private room, bouncing off the walls and squeezing the air tighter with each passing second. People could feel their own hearts racing just listening to it.

No one knew what was going on behind that door—but Casey's screaming alone was enough to make their skin crawl. Just hearing it **made** them break out in cold sweat

Every second crawled by,

No one could tell how long it had been. But eventually, the screaming faded.

And then—nothing. Just total, chilling silence.

The door to the private room creaked open **with** a long screech.

Everyone watched in frozen silence **as** Casey was dragged out, limp and lifeless like a dead **animal**.

The moment people saw her, a wave of horror rippled through the room—every person gasped, and the fear in the air hit its highest point.

Her arms and legs were twisted in disturbing directions, clearly broken in multiple places. Swollen skin bulged around the fractures like it **was** about to split open.

Her once—glamorous face was unrecognizable, torn up with deep, crisscrossing cuts. Not a single patch of **smooth** skin remained. Blood mixed with torn flesh streamed slowly down her cheeks—it was gruesome.

Her mouth was a bloody mess. Every tooth had been knocked out, leaving behind raw, shredded gums. Just opening her mouth released a wave of thick metallic blood scent into the room

They threw her to the ground without care. She curled **up** in a tight ball, completely motionless. The only thing showing she was still alive was the faint rise and fall of her chest. And even that looked like it might stop any second

Then came Kyle—he was a wreck. Limp like a sack of wet cement, dragged between two bodyguards. He didn't have any blood or bruises, but his expression was blank, eyes empty. He looked like the lights were on but no one was home. Like whatever had happened in that room had ripped his soul right out of him.

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Chapter 153 Karma Comes for Willow and Kenneth

Finished

Kyle's lips kept trembling, but no sound came out. He looked completely broken, like whatever he'd been through had **shattered** him inside. His mind was gone, wrecked beyond recognition.

Felix walked toward them slowly, calm and collected, his steps graceful.

He glanced down at **Casey** and Kyle lying on the floor and spoke in a light, almost breezy tone. "Looks like there was a fight between husband and wife. Madam Casey tried to hurt herself to punish Mr. Kyle. Good thing my people stepped in when they did. Who knows how bad it could've gotten."

His voice **was casual**, like he was making polite small talk. There was even a faint smile on his face—but it was cold. Completely empty. The kind of smile that sent a chill down your spine.

Everyone in the banquet hall **stared** at Felix in stunned silence

They knew exactly what had happened. But none of them had actually seen it. And **with out** proof, no one could **say** a word.

People had always said Felix was dangerous—but now that they'd seen it for themselves, they realized those stories didn't even scratch the surface.

In the back of every mind, one thought took hold loud and clear—
never mess with this man

Felix raised his head just slightly. His icy gaze swept across the banquet hall like a blade, sharp enough to cut

In a heartbeat, everyone
dropped their heads, silent and afraid. No **one** dared to meet his eyes—
like just locking eyes with him might get them caught up in something they'd never escape.

Right then and there, the message was loud and clear—
Felix, the man who ruled the Brooker family from the **top**, was not someone you crossed. Ever.

His face stayed calm, unreadable. He gave a **small** wave of his **hand** and spoke with a quiet authority that left no room for argument. "Take them back to Balewood.

The bodyguards moved at once. Without ceremony, they hauled Casey and Kyle away like they were dragging dead weight.

Casey's limp body slid along the floor, leaving behind a trail of blood that made everyone's stomach turn.

Kyle's eyes were vacant. He didn't fight, **didn't** react. He was like a shell of a person. The two of them vanished slowly out of sight.

Silence fell over the banquet hall like a heavy curtain.

And then, like their heads were pulled by strings, every guest turned to look at Willow and Kenneth—still kneeling, still pinned to the floor by **guards**.

Willow might've gotten off the easiest—her punishment **was** just having her head shaved—but right now, the fear inside her **was** crashing down like waves in a storm, one after the other, threatening to completely swallow her.

Her heart was pounding like it was about to explode, and every breath she took came with a shaky tremor.

She **couldn't** stop **thinking** about it—Felix had turned her **bald** just because she messed up Lauren's **hair**.

But she'd done worse than that to Lauren. Much worse. Things way more spiteful and cruel

If Felix ever found out

She couldn't even imagine what kind of horrific punishment she'd face.

The thought alone made her body start **trembling**, her teeth chattering without control.

And then came the part that made her stomach **drop**—Kate, the guest of honor at today's banquet, turned **out** to be the same elderly woman who had helped Lauren at the hospital that day.

That realization felt **like** someone had stabbed her right **in** the heart. Whatever hope she had left evaporated, replaced by

Chapter 153 Karma Comes for Willow and Kenneth

She didn't dare look up at Felix. She was terrified she'd meet his eyes and see the end coming.

Finished

Chopped fingers... stripped down shattered limbs, broken teeth... Scene after scene played out in her head like a nightmare reel. Every one of them made her blood run cold.

All she could do now was pray like crazy that she wouldn't be next.

Kenneth looked just as pale.

Ever since his dad handed over the company, he'd thought he was a powerhouse—cutthroat and calculated. He knew how to **spot** a weakness and press hard. For someone his age, he was already a big **name** in Hoverdale's business scene, and people respected him for it.

But compared to Felix! He now saw the truth. I'm **just** a kid playing pretend

Felix wasn't just ruthless—he was terrifying. One who could destroy someone completely and still walk away spotless, without leaving a single shred of evidence behind.

Kenneth's shirt was drenched in sweat, sticking to his **skin** like plastic wrap and outlining every bit of his nervous breakdown.

Felix walked forward slowly. Each step of his dress shoes echoed with a sharp click that rang through the room. Every **tap** landed like a blow to the chest, making the tension worse with every second.

He stopped right in front of Willow and Kenneth, towering above them like a judge staring down at two worthless bugs.

The entire banquet hall was so quiet you could hear the sound of every racing heartbeat. Nobody moved. Nobody breathed. Everyone just **waited**—frozen—while Felix decided their fate.

Felix had that icy smile still tugging at his lips as he smoothly pulled out his phone and made a call—every move polished and deliberate.

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Chapter 154 Felix Calls the Cops on Them

Felix's voice was calm and deep.

"Hi, this is the police department, right? I need to report a robbery. Ms. Willow from Bennett Corporation stole an embroidered piece from me valued at 2.8 million dollars."

The second those words left his mouth, the entire room exploded with whispers.

Robbery was no small charge. It was a serious felony. The law said a minimum of 3 years and up to 10 years in **prison**. And with the stolen item worth 2.8 million? She was looking at serious time—maybe more.

People turned their heads, eyes **locking** onto Willow, their expressions a mix of shock and uneasy sympathy.

Willow felt like she'd been hit by a bolt of lightning. Her face went sheet white.

She couldn't stop the images flooding her mind—Lauren, humiliated **and** suffering in prison.

the

I end up behind bars... with the Brooker family's influence and Felix's vengeful nature, it'd be nothing for him to have me quietly killed *in*

there

"No, no, please!" Willow fought like crazy, but the bodyguards had no trouble forcing her **back** down.

She cried out, her voice hoarse and breaking, eyes wide with pure panic. "Mr. Brooker, I didn't mean to! I swear I'll pay you back! Call my parents—they'll send the money right now! Please don't **send** me to prison!"

Tears poured down her pale face, completely out of control

Felix acted like he didn't even hear her. Instead, he turned toward Lauren. **And** just like that, his entire demeanor shifted—**his. cold** expression softened as if the man who'd just been handing down punishment had never existed..

"Does this feel right to you?" he asked, voice low **and** gentle.

Lauren stood frozen, staring at him

And **then** it hit her—Felix wasn't doing this for revenge. He was doing it for her. To give her justice. He was giving Willow the exact punishment she once made Lauren suffer through.

All those painful memories—
being tormented by Willow, thrown in jail for something she didn't do—
they began to fade away, softened by the shield Felix had become for her.

Lauren's eyes instantly filled with tears. They shimmered, on the verge of falling.

She wanted to **say** so much, to **thank** him, to let him know what it meant—but her throat locked up like it was full of cotton. Nothing came out.

So everything she felt—all the gratitude, all the emotion—
was poured into one quiet, trembling word.

"Yeah"

Kenneth was glaring at Lauren, his **eyes** stretched wide like they were about to burst **out** of his skull.

His look was pure accusation—How could you do this to Willow?

He tried to say something, but with **a sock** shoved in his mouth, all that came out were muffled noises.

"Mm-mm... mm!"

Then he started to fight back, flailing with everything he had.

The two bodyguards had to brace themselves—he was fighting so hard they were almost losing their **grip**.

Josh noticed the commotion and narrowed his eyes, irritation flickering across his face.

He had no patience for tantrums. Without missing a **beat**, he stepped forward and slammed his **foot** into Kenneth's gut.

Chapter 154 Felix Calls the Cops on Them

It hit hard.

Finished

Kenneth let **out** a low grunt of pain, his body curling in on itself like a shrimp out of water. He started shaking, his face contorted in agony, **and** sweat poured off him like he'd **just stepped** into a storm.

Felix **didn't say** a word at first. He just stared at Kenneth with a cold, unreadable expression. Then, slowly, he lifted his foot and used the tip of his shoe to raise Kenneth's chin—forcing him to look him in the eye.

His voice came out like a blade. "You're part of what Willow did. You're going to prison too."

Kenneth's eyes went wide in pure panic. His pupils tightened like a camera lens snapping shut.

Lauren stood nearby, watching everything.

Seeing that look of fear on Kenneth's face only made her **hate** him more.

So now he's scared. Now he realizes how **bad** prison can be

But back when she was thrown behind bars **for** something she didn't do—five whole years of her life gone—he hadn't lifted a finger to help. He'd known the truth. He'd heard Elaine try to tell him what really happened. And he still chose to ignore it. He buried his head in the sand and pretended it wasn't happening. Eventually, he actually convinced himself that she was guilty and that Willow was innocent.

If he was that desperate to protect Willows, then fine. Let them sit in a cell together. Let him get a real taste of what he let happen to her.

Soon enough, the police showed up.

Felix spoke quietly to the lead officer for a moment, then gestured toward Willow and Kenneth, who were both crumpled on the floor.

The cops moved in right **away** and slapped cuffs on them.

"No, I'm not going to prison, I'm not!" Willow screamed, kicking and flailing, but none of it made a difference.

She was hauled up by the officers, her sobs and screams echoing through the silent banquet hall.

Watching **it all**, a memory hit Lauren like a punch to the chest. Five years ago—same kind of night, same **kind** of crowd—she'd been the one dragged away in handcuffs.

Back then, she kept trying to explain. “It wasn’t me. Willow pushed-”

But before she could even finish, Alice had slapped her across the face.

“You rotten thing. You do something that vile and still try to pin it on Willow? Your dad and I saw it with our own eyes. It was **you**

And behind Alice, **there** was Willow, standing there with that smug little smirk—like she was saying, So what if you’re the real daughter? You’re still the one taking the fall for me.

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Chapter 155 It Was Your Fault

Back then. Willow **was** full of herself, basking in the spotlight. Looking at her **now**—half, tear-streaked, her face a smudged mess—it was like seeing a completely different person

Five years ago, she was the center of attention at her graduation party, the little princess the Bennett family treated like royalty

Now? Karma had come full circle. Even Willow couldn’t escape the cuffs.

As the cops dragged Kenneth past Lauren, they yanked the sock out of his mouth.

He turned to her, looking totally let down. “Lauren, what happened to you? I don’t even recognize you anymore. I’m so disappointed. Don’t expect me to forgive you easily.”

Lauren looked up at him, her expression calm, eyes like glassy ice—quiet but cutting

All she **saw** was a man bloated with self-importance

Where did he get the idea I need his forgiveness!

Trying to use something meaningless to threaten her—God, he’s so dumb it’s almost sad

“Kenneth” she said, voice cool and brittle, like glass soaked in ice, “**has** anyone ever told you you’re like a dying peony?”

She ran her finger lightly across a red wine **stain** bleeding **into** the gold-trimmed tablecloth.

“Still trying to look elegant, but the center’s already rotted through.”

She had spent five years crawling through the dark, her body broken but her spirit hardened into steel.

And Kenneth Time had dulled his senses and left him lost in his own foolishness.

Lauren turned her head sharply, refusing to give him another glance. The way she did it—so **dismissive**—it was like she was shooing away a fly she couldn’t stand.

Kenneth’s throat bobbed as if he was about to say something, but nothing came out

That last look he gave her burned into his memory. In her eyes, he caught the reflection of Felix—
every line of his suit precise and crisp, the fabric resting perfectly against Lauren’s slim shoulder

Felix stood there, tall and composed, his presence sharp and intimidating. Lauren might’ve looked soft on the outside, but even then, her beauty stood out. The two of them together—him strong and cold, her elegant and quietly fierce—looked like they were made to stand side by side.

And all Kenneth could feel was jealousy—
deep, ugly jealousy, crawling through his chest like a snake chewing him up from the inside.

Thad met Lauren first. So why the heck was Felix the one beside her now

But it didn’t matter. No amount of regret would change anything now. All he could do was let the cops drag him away.

After a long heavy silence, the energy in the banquet hall started to slowly
return

The men glanced at Felix with cautious respect—
the kind of unease only a man with real power could inspire.

The women’s eyes were fixed on Lauren, full of envy. She is so lucky to be defended like that with no hesitation.

One by one, the guests approached, offering their carefully chosen birthday gifts to **Kate**.

Every gift was **luxurious**, priceless even. Each one a symbol of flattery, an effort to win favor.

Kate sat calmly in the seat of honor, wearing a kind smile. She accepted each gift graciously, **thanking** everyone for their kindness.

Chapter 155 It Was Your Fault

She took a breath, then stepped forward. Her feet felt like they were made of lead.

Finished

Head bowed her voice came out low, weighted with guilt and regret. “Madam Kate, I’m truly sorry. This is all my fault. I didn’t protect the Queen of Blooms embroidery that Mr. Brooker had picked out just for you”

In the month she’d spent with the Brooker family, Kate had cared for her in every way possible. Every little gesture felt like a warm coal in the dead of winter, slowly thawing the ice around **Lauren’s** heart.

She was weak and sickly, so **Kate** made sure to cook different **nourishing** meals every day. In just a few weeks, Lauren’s face had started to regain its color,

When her legs hurt too much to move, Kate didn’t **hesitate**—she brought in a massage therapist to help ease the pain every single day.

Lauren knew she was far from perfect. Her past was messy, her body fragile. But Kate never judged her.

She was gaunt, and Kate still called her pretty. She had once picked up a knife in anger against her parents, **and** Kate still described her as warm and kind. She saw herself as someone broken, dying, and worlds apart from someone like Felix—
but Kate always insisted that he was the lucky one to have found her.

Lauren could see clearly that Kate was trying to set them up. But how could she let herself believe it was even possible!

Felix was like a star—
bright, untouchable, too far above. A man like that should be with someone stunning, powerful, someone who came from a family like his

Not someone like her—damaged, exhausted, and running out of time.

The thought made her eyes sting. Tears welled up without falling

Kate noticed right away and gently reached out to grab Lauren's hand, giving it a reassuring pat

"You did nothing wrong, sweetheart. They're the ones who should be ashamed. The gift getting damaged doesn't matter to

1. me. What matters is that I know how much heart you put into it. **That's** what makes me happy"

The more kind and forgiving Kate was, the more Lauren felt the emotion swell in her chest. Her nose started to sting, and she was barely holding back the tears.

Then Felix's **voice** rang out—sharp and sudden. "No, it was your fault"

Kate's head snapped toward him, her eyes wide with disbelief. She couldn't help but grumble to herself, Seriously? What's wrong with this brat? Can't he read the room? Can't he see Laurie's already deepening in guilt?

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Chapter 156 Stitches in Time.

She glared fiercely at Felix, her eyes seemingly shouting. "If you can't speak well, don't open your mouth and save yourself the embarrassment."

Yet Felix appeared oblivious, his expression calm, his tone indifferent as he continued, "I'm punishing you to redo the embroidery; if you don't finish, you won't leave the Brooker's Villa"

Lauren was stunned, looking up at Felix with eyes misty with tears, bright yet pitiful. Such a gaze slightly heated Felix; he loosened his dark-patterned tie, his Adam's apple rolling under the black silk in a dangerously alluring curve.

Kate caught on, her heart bursting with glee. "That little rascal finally got smart, knowing how to keep Laurie here with this trick," she thought, not wasting her efforts.

Though the reasoning was far-fetched, Felix was never one to reason.

He addressed Lauren, "How does **that** sound, Ms. Bennett?"

This 'punishment' was hardly a punishment for Lauren. At the Brooker's Villa, she was well-fed, well-attended, with a large, well-lit bedroom and her own embroidery room to herself.

She was never disturbed while working, and the entire household respected her. It was the life she **had** always dreamed of.

“Okay,” she responded softly, her voice slightly husky, with a hint of barely noticeable delight.

Felix’s lips curved slightly, a subtle eyebrow raise revealing his inner glee. “The girl is as gullible as ever”

He squinted at Lauren, his gaze devouring her as if to consume her entirely, while Kate watched, inwardly clicking her

tongue.

No one knew better than she the kind of man her grandson was. In front of Felix, the sly old fox, Lauren was as innocent as **a** lamb—likely to be completely taken advantage of, yet still thinking of Felix as a kind-hearted **man**.

After exchanging a few pleasantries, Felix was whisked away by a group of suit-clad men to discuss some arcane business

matters.

Kate looked at Lauren with a fondness, “Laurie, you must be hungry after the long day. Go have something to eat, talk to whoever **you** like, ignore those you don’t. Just follow your heart.”

“**And**, no alcohol,” she added with a tone like she was reminding her most cherished granddaughter, warm and full of

affection.

Lauren nodded obediently, grabbed a juice, and slowly walked to the balcony.

The night had already fallen; the dark sky was like a vast sheet of black silk, heavily draped overhead, sparsely dotted with dim stars.

The night breeze, carrying a hint of coolness, lightly brushed her hair. She stood there quietly, as if merging with the tranquil night, her weariness and worries gradually dissipating.

Still, her head buzzed persistently, like **a** hive of activity inside.

It was **a constant** ringing in her ears, ever since she had been brutally beaten by Casey and his cohorts, causing her hearing to deteriorate.

After finishing her juice, she pulled up a chair and sat down, her arms weakly resting on the balcony railing, her head leaning

on her arms.

A wave of fatigue swept over her, and she slowly closed her eyes, soon slipping into a light sleep

After some time, Felix finished his socializing and glanced back unintentionally, spotting the curled—**up** figure on the balcony.

The dim light cast on her, outlining her slender silhouette. Felix's **gaze** softened immediately, and he walked towards her uncontrollably.

Chapter 156 Stitches in Time

Finished

Her cheeks were slightly reddened from lying down for so long, her eyebrows slightly furrowed, as if even in her sleep she was not at **peace**.

Felix took off his jacket and draped it over Lauren. Then, he gently leaned down, lifted her horizontally, his actions tender **as** if afraid to wake her.

Lauren stirred lightly in her sleep, as if feeling the warmth, and snuggled closer into his arms.

Watching her like this, Felix's lips involuntarily lifted into a smile.

Josh, seeing this, sported a gossip-laden grin. "Mr. Brooker, you seem to be caring more and more for Ms. Bennett. Do you like her?"

Felix paused, looking at Josh's grinning face, "Your bonus this month, gone."

Josh's smile vanished instantly, his face turning sour, "Why?"

"Because, you talk **too** much."

Josh couldn't believe it. Mr. Brooker had to be so authoritarian,

Quickly catching up to Felix, Josh rubbed his hands together, looking ingratiating. “Uh, Mr. Brooker, could you maybe reimburse me for my socks?”

Felix, recalling Kenneth’s embarrassing moment with the smelly socks, a hint of amusement appeared in his stern eyes, feeling particularly pleased.

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Chapter 157 Punches, Pouts, and Propriety

Felix **said**, “It’s done.”

Josh’s mood brightened again. “Mr. Brooker, in my eyes, you’re the most handsome man in the world.”

“Keep it down, or you’re going back to the office for overtime.”

Josh quickly covered his mouth, scurrying after Felix

The night was deep, ink—like darkness thickly splattered across the sky. Neon lights flowed over the black Rolls **Royce**, and as Felix approached, the driver crisply opened the door, bowing slightly with deep respect, waiting for Felix to get in.

Felix, holding Lauren, his crystal cufflinks shimmering in the night, Lauren cuddled in his arms like a weary e

Suddenly, a dark figure tore through the champagne—colored light. The man’s fist, carrying a **chilling** wind, stopped just inches from Felix’s nose, intercepted by Josh,

The sound of bones misaligning made the man groan in pain, Josh holding him down, immobile.

“Felix!” the man struggled and roared, “We, the Bennetts, have no quarrel with you. Why did you have someone break my parents legs and send my sister to jail? What are you up to?”

Felix narrowed his eyes, finally recognizing the disheveled man as Elliot

Elliot, his suit as crumpled as dried salted vegetables, his hair a mess above his forehead, his face **rugged** with stubble, looked particularly worn and haggard. Dark circles under his eyes looked as though he’d been punched, his eyes bloodshot

Lauren was startled by the sudden **noise**; she stirred in Felix's arms, her long eyelashes trembling, slowly opening her eyes. still blurry and confused from sleep.

When she saw the tense scene before her and realized she was in Felix's tight embrace, a blush swept over her cheeks, and she said, somewhat embarrassed, "Mr. Brooker, put me down, please

Felix's arms suddenly emptied. He frowned slightly, displeasure flashing in his deep eyes **as** he looked coldly at Elliot, the disturber, his gaze icing over.

Elliot, seeing Lauren, first flashed a look of surprise, which quickly vanished, replaced by anger.

He remembered drowning his sorrows in alcohol daily after Lauren's disappearance, ending up in the hospital with a perforated stomach from excessive drinking

After being discharged, he was wandering aimlessly, tormented by the memory of Lauren's **awards** and acceptance letters from prestigious universities cluttering the storage room. He hated himself for ruining Lauren's life.

Over the past month, he tortured himself, using nearly masochistic means to atone, but he never imagined Lauren had already climbed up high with Felix.

Compared to a month ago, Lauren looked significantly healthier, her cheeks fuller and rosy, dressed in a high-end gown intimately held by Felix—a sight that pained his eyes.

During her disappearance, she must have been quite comfortable, he thought bitterly, while he was left in the dark, worrying **like a fool**

"Lauren!" His voice was hoarse with emotion, raspy **and** harsh as sandpaper on rough wood.

"Your parents **legs** were broken by the Brooker family, and they're still in the **hospital**, and here you are with him. Do you even consider us family anymore?"

Lauren looked at Elliot quietly, her gaze as calm as a deep lake, unrippled.

"Family? Did I ever really have one?"

Her voice **was** soft, yet it dropped like a bomb, echoing through the silent night with a piercing force.

11:43 AM

Chapter 157 Punches, Pouts, and Propriety.

managing to **say**, “Laurie, family ties can’t be cut easily. Any grievances you have can be resolved at home.”

Finished

Lauren remained unmoved, her voice as cold as ice in the night, chilling to the bone, “Going back to the Bennetts means. nothing but bearings. When have you ever seen my struggles, or thought about resolving issues peacefully?”

Her **eyes** revealed deep disgust, as if looking at something revolting

The Bennetts

are always full of righteousness, judging me from their moral high ground, yet never reflecting **on** their own faults. I’ve been deceived by you, not once or twice, but for three years. I kept trusting you, giving you chances, only to end up in **jail**.”

Send Gifts

, ? Views, Released

Chapter 158 At What Cost?

Finished

Lauren spoke quietly, recounting the painful memories of her past—memories that no longer left a trace on her face, as if her heart had been completely frozen by the pain. “I’ve paid a price so steep, like breaking legs and digging out kidneys, **it** should be enough to repay the kindness of being born to your parents.”

Elliot knew that everything Lauren said was true, but she was, after all, their biological child. Pointing at Felix, he exclaimed, “Can you really be so heartless? Ignoring even our parents’ wellbeing to be with this murderer?”

Lauren fell silent. Mr. Brooker is so kind, so outstanding any woman would find it hard not to be moved.

Bur

she knew, with all her scars, she didn’t deserve someone like him.

Her silence seemed like an admission to Elliot.

Suddenly losing control, he shouted at Lauren, “You’re an adult; how can you not even distinguish right from wrong? Do you know how much it hurts to have your legs broken?”

Lauren's response was **a** laugh, sarcastic and sharp like a knife, piercing directly into Elliot's eyes.

His pupils contracted sharply as his gaze fell on Lauren's broken legs.

In that moment, **he** seemed to lose all his strength, his figure drooping, **looking** even more wan and pained

No one knew the pain of **having** legs forcibly broken better **than** Lauren—she had experienced it firsthand...

Lauren's voice **was** firm, "I believe that your parents' injuries have nothing to do with Mr. Brooker."

She looked **at** Felix

Felix, with a hint of a smile in his eyes, indulged her, "It has nothing to do with me."

Josh quickly **added**, "I can vouch for that; Mr. Brooker hasn't even seen the Bennetts to day"

What Felix and Josh said was indeed the truth.

Lauren had no doubts about this, as she had seen David and Alice at the hotel earlier that day.

They had been full of life then.

What happened after that, perhaps only the driver knew.

She, Felix, and Josh all looked at the driver. True to Felix's people, under the intense scrutiny of three pairs of eyes, the driver remained **calm** and undisturbed, stating. "The Bennetts fell down the stairs and broke their legs."

Lauren, **Felix**, and Josh fell silent at the **same** time.

"Bullshit!" Elliot yelled at the driver.

The hotel's entrance steps were hardly ten steps high; even a real fall would at most cause scrapes, not break legs, especially not both people at the same **time**.

"You can ask the security **guard** who's been at the **door** all this time if I'm lying, the driver **said** calmly.

The commotion had not escaped the security team's watchful **eyes**.

Hearing his name, the head of security's heart pounded as he hurried over, his face all smiles, "Mr. Elliot, Mr. **David** and his wife really did fall down the steps on their own and broke their legs. We all saw it."

The security **guards** at the hotel entrance, all echoing each other, **said in unison**, "Yes, we all saw it."

Elliot's eyes widened in disbelief. Despite the impossibility, everyone insisted it was true .

Lauren's lips curled into a playful smirk, a feeling Elliot was surely familiar with.

Chapter 158 A1 What Cost?

Elliot met Lauren's half-smiling gaze. his heart feeling as if it had been stabbed, the pain almost suffocating him.

Finished

The pain spread through his body, the suffocating feeling of knowing the truth but having no evidence overwhelming him.

He abruptly looked up to search for surveillance cameras, but Felix's cold voice rang out , "My people are very thorough in

their work.

The implication was clear; even if there were cameras, the footage would have been deleted.

Just like five **years** ago, when Alice had deleted footage that could have proved Lauren's innocence.

Felix always enjoyed using others' tactics against them.

The fountain 30 feet away suddenly lit up, startling the koi in the pond and shattering the water into sparkling splashes.

In the flickering light, Felix casually played with his signet ring, telling the driver, "Well done; your year-end bonus is doubled"

A smile finally appeared on the driver's stern face. "Thanks, Mr. Brooker.

After a pause, he turned to Lauren, "All thanks to Ms. Bennett's **luck**."

The blatant provocation nearly made Elliot faint. “You you”

The dim, yellow light of the street lamps elongated and then shortened the shadow of Elliot’s disheveled figure.

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, ? Views, Released

Chapter 159 Shattered Hopes.

Elliot stared desperately at Lauren, his eyes filled with despair, as if all hope had crumbled away in that moment.

There was a time when Lauren’s gaze towards him brimmed with dependence and anticipation, like a creature yearning for: affirmation pure and eager. Whenever he came home, Lauren would always run to him first, offering him slippers.

“Elliot, you’re back! You must be tired from working all **day**. Come sit on the couch, and I’ll rub your shoulders” she would say with shining eyes and an admiring smile.

Those happy memories now flickered through his mind like a carousel, starkly contrasting with the icy look in Lauren’s eyes, as cold as frost on a wintry night.

He struggled violently but was pinned to the ground by Josh, unable to move, forced to look up at Lauren and Felix in a humiliating posture.

“Lauren. I’m your brother. How can you just watch as outsiders treat me like this?” His voice was filled with resentment.

Lauren stood quietly, saying nothing, her slender figure exuding resilience. Her gaze was as calm as a deep, undisturbed lake, seemingly oblivious to Elliot’s cries

This silence was more devastating than any words, shattering his heart into countless pieces. He finally understood that the Lauren who once could be easily manipulated, craving familial warmth, was truly gone.

A torrent of anger and indignation surged within Elliot, rampaging through his chest with nowhere to escape.

His face turned beet red, his features slightly twisted as he spat out venomously. “Let’s put aside what happened to our parents for a moment. What about Ms. Willow! You know how much she loves her beauty, yet you had her hair shaved off. You’re still as vicious as **ever**

He emphasized as ever heavily, as if searching **for** a reason to keep accusing Lauren, even though he knew deep down that the old Lauren wasn't inherently evil.

Lauren just listened expressionlessly, as if Elliot's words were merely a breeze blowing past her ear, unable to stir even a ripple in her heart

"If you think so, then it must be," she said lightly, her voice carrying an undeniable chill

Elliot faltered, feeling like he had punched **a** pillow. He hadn't expected Lauren to not even bother defending herself.

Grinding his teeth, madness flickering in his eyes, he blurted out. "Don't get too smug; I'll soon rescue Ms. Willow. She's used to finer things, just some cheap embroidery—she wouldn't want it even if it were free. I think you deliberately ruined that embroidery to frame Ms. Willow."

Lauren had heard such accusations too many times before.

Once, such accusations from Elliot might have hurt her. But now, her heart had turned utterly cold.

She gently rubbed on Felix's sleeve, her voice steady, "Mr. Brooker, let's go. I don't want to talk to him anymore."

Felix looked down at Lauren, his icy gaze instantly melting into endless tenderness. "You get in the car first."

Lauren nodded slightly and gracefully got into the car under Felix's tender gaze.

The driver came forward, carefully arranging her skirt, then stepped aside to block Elliot's view of Lauren.

Elliot's eyes bulged, as if they might burst from their sockets, as he hysterically shouted, "Lauren, come out here! Ms. Willow shouldn't have to suffer in jail. You have to go to the police station with me and tell the cops everything, this was all your doing your lies and schemes. You're the one who should be in jail"

Elliot's voice cut through the night, as if he were still trying to salvage something by yelling

Felix's brow furrowed, a flash of disgust passing through his eyes at such a foolish person, the likes of which he had never seen in Balewood

Chapter 159 Shattered Hopes

Finished

Felix's eyes were like a bottomless cold pool, pitch-black, emitting a chilling aura that seemed to suck in one's soul.

Even though Elliot was the esteemed young master of the Bennetts, accustomed to luxury, he couldn't help but tremble under such a sinister gaze.

"So concerned about Willow, do you like her?" Felix's voice was low and cold, dripping with endless mockery

Elliot was so shocked by Felix's words that he was speechless, his mouth agape, his face a picture of disbelief, as if he had heard the world's most absurd joke.

Before he could recover, Felix coldly spat out three words, Truly disgusting"

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, ? Views, Released

Chapter 160 Dust-Ups and Disdain.

Felix released Elliot's jaw with a look of disdain, as if he had touched something filthy.

Seeing this, the driver immediately offered Felix a snow-white handkerchief.

Felix took the handkerchief and meticulously wiped his hands, then carelessly tossed it onto Elliot's face.

The white handkerchief slid off his face and fell to the ground, gathering dust, much like Elliot's dignity at that moment- pathetic and worthless,

Felix turned to get into the car.

Desperate like a drowning man grasping for straws, Elliot shouted, "Mr. Brooker, please spare Ms. Willow. I can pay you the 28 million dollars!"

Felix paused, slightly turned his head, and glanced at Elliot with a cold look. "The last thing I need is money."

"What do you want then?" Elliot was at his wit's end, unable to think of any other way to persuade Felix to let Willow go.

Felix didn't answer immediately; he just stood there silently.

After a moment, the corners of his mouth curved in a barely noticeable smile.

He naturally wanted to make Lauren happy, and to ensure **those** who had hurt her received their due punishment.

But these thoughts, he had no need to share with Elliot Felix got into the car

After the driver boarded. Josh pushed Elliot away and quickly followed into the car.

As the car slowly pulled **away**, Elliot watched it disappear and then collapsed to the ground.

He finally realized he had destroyed the last vestiges of familial affection with Lauren by his own actions

Struggling to his feet, Elliot staggered towards his car, his steps unsteady.

He started the engine and sped off to the hospital.

Arriving

at the hospital room, David and Alice's anesthesia had worn off, and the piercing pain made them writhe and moan on their beds, their cries echoing mournfully throughout the room.

"Get the pain pump, quickly use the pain pump, David rasped, sweat beads the size of beans rolling off his forehead, his face pale from pain.

As the nurse was about to administer the pain pump, Elliot burst in and yelled, "Don't use it

His voice was hoarse and furious, like **a** wild beast gone **mad**.

David, enraged by the interruption, ignored the pain in his legs and pointed at Elliot, "What nonsense are you spouting! Do **you** want to torture me and your mother to death?"

"Heh, **hahaha**—

Elliot suddenly burst into a crazy laugh, filled with endless sorrow, startling David and Alice so much that even their pain was momentarily forgotten.

The nurse, too, was frightened by Elliot's mad demeanor, almost dropping the pain pump.

Elliot rushed over, swept all the medicine off the cabinet onto the floor, shattering the glass bottles with a crisp sound.

His bloodshot **eyes** were wide with fury as he glared at his parents on the bed and roared, Laurie was beaten and had her legs. **broken** in jail, without any treatment, just enduring it. After all the suffering you caused her, why should you get any relief?"

Alice looked at the broken glass on the floor, tears welling in her eyes, her voice breaking, "Elliot, how can you say **that?**"

"You **know** Lauren's fiery spirit. She must have provoked someone in jail for them to have **attacked** her. Why else would the other inmates pick on her and not bother anyone else? Her broken legs have nothing to do with **us**. Why must you blame her

Chapter 160 Dust-Ups and **Disdain**

Finished

As Alice spoke, she could no longer hold back her emotions. She covered her face with her hands, her shoulders shaking violently, her muffled sobs echoing in the rooms, tugging at Elliot's heart.

Seeing Alice cry so sadly, Elliot felt a pang of guilt, just as he was about to speak soothingly, Lauren's cold, distant gaze flashed through his mind like a bucket of **cold** water, instantly extinguishing the warmth **in** his heart.

His heart clenched tightly, and his tone became harsh, Laurie doesn't want anything to do with us anymore. Are you happy

David, who had been leaning back on the bed, struggled to sit up, his face contorting with anger and pain.

"You ungrateful son" David roared. "Now you're blaming us? Lauren's misguided; she's been the bane **of** our family!"

Elliot's eyes blazed with anger. "Shut up! Back then, you forced Laurie to take the blame for Ms. Willow, Have you not conscience at all

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