

# The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

## **The Heiress Revived Ch 191**

, 9098 Views, Released

Chapter 191 Squeezing Alice Dry

Finished

Alice couldn't stop crying. Her tears spilled freely, soaking the bed beneath her in dark, spreading blotches.

In a frantic struggle, she lurched forward, crashing off the hospital bed and hitting the floor with a dull thud.

She barely noticed the pain. All she could do was lay there, a mess on the floor, staring after Lauren with pleading eyes, silently begging her to stop, to turn around, to show just the smallest sign she still cared.

But she didn't.

Lauren didn't even slow down as she couldn't hear a thing. She kept walking with steady, unwavering steps.

Even if she'd heard Alice, she wouldn't have turned back.

The moment Lauren crossed the threshold and disappeared through the doorway, something in Alice broke. Her pupils dilated, and her face twisted into a mask of raw panic.

"Please don't go—come back—Laurie, please, I'm begging you—"

She lay on the floor, body wracked with tremors, crying like her soul was shattering.

The tears came in waves. She stretched her arms out, fingers swiping at nothing, desperate to grab hold of the daughter who had already made up her mind to leave.

"Laurie! Laurie!" she shouted, voice wrecked and cracked, each scream soaked in anguish and remorse. She sounded like she was being torn apart from the inside.

But the room stayed empty. No reply. Only the echo of her cries filled the silence. Lauren was already gone.

Lauren walked steadily down the hospital hallway, step by step, without the slightest hesitation.

But as she neared the corner, she suddenly came to a full stop.

Gael noticed and stopped as well, glancing at her with a trace of confusion. “Ms. Bennett, is something wrong?” he asked gently.

From where she stood, Lauren had a clear view straight into David’s room.

Her eyes narrowed, a sharp light flashing through them like a streak of lightning across a dark sky.

Then she smiled—a sly, meaningful smile filled with both mischief and anticipation.

“What do you think Madam Alice is going to do now?” she asked in a quiet voice.

Gael gave it some thought before answering. “She’ll probably go straight to David and confront him.”

Lauren gave a soft laugh, but there was no warmth in it. “Exactly what I was thinking. This is gonna be a good show. No way I’m missing it—I don’t get to enjoy scenes like this often.”

Gael looked at her, surprised.

He’d known Lauren for a little over a month and always thought of her as calm and kind. But now, seeing how she handled those who had hurt her—how precise and merciless her response could be—he saw her in a whole new light.

102

15:31 Sun, 30 Mar

Chapter 191 Squeezing Alice Dry

Finished

*She* might look gentle, *but* there’s real strength *under* that calm surface, he thought. Any devastation she is about *to* regret it big time.

Just as the two had predicted, it wasn’t long before Alice rolled herself down the hallway in a wheelchair and shoved open the door to David’s hospital room.

Lauren’s eyes sparkled with a thrill she didn’t bother hiding. It was the look of someone who’d been waiting for this moment the thrill of the hunt. She picked up her pace immediately, following after Alice without a second thought.

Gael followed close behind, ready to step in if anything went wrong.

Inside, David sat brooding, the anger practically radiating off him.

He had just gotten off the phone with Michael, who had delivered three blows in one shot—  
Bennett Corporation was bankrupt, Elliot had been picked up by the cops, and Willow had been arrested for robbery.

The company collapse and Elliot getting taken in weren't surprises. David had set it all up himself—he'd shorted the company and used Elliot as the legal fall guy. That part had gone according to plan.

But Willow—his sweet, pampered daughter—getting locked up? That he hadn't seen coming. That part shattered him.

"Damn that Lauren," he muttered, fury making the whites of his eyes blaze red. "If my leg worked, I'd be at her door already, making her pay."

While he sat there, stewing and trying to figure out how to bail Willow out, the sudden sound of the door swinging open made him pause.

He looked up, startled to see Alice rolling in.

But in just a flash, a glint of cunning appeared in David's eyes. An idea—what he thought was a brilliant one—hit him like a lightning bolt.

If he was going to get Willow out of jail, he was going to need money. A lot of it.

The embroidery she ruined alone was worth 2.8 million dollars. That had to be paid back in full.

But that was just the surface. With someone like Felix involved, getting Willow out would mean greasing the right palms and pulling the right strings. That didn't come cheap.

All told, it'd take somewhere in the ballpark of 5 to 7 million dollars.

Technically, he had the money—he and Sharon had already funneled all their assets into offshore accounts under her name. But that money was meant for their escape plan, for their luxurious life overseas. Blowing it all on problems back home? That idea made him sick.

Then his eyes landed on Alice, and suddenly she looked like a solution.

, ? Views, Released

## Chapter 192 David's Secret Grudge Revealed

Fusched

Everything David transferred had only included assets under his name or the company's. He hadn't been able to touch Alice's holdings.

But Alice still had shares in Bennett Corp. She had a sizable bank account. And most importantly, the Bennett family estate—still under her name—was worth a fortune. Coming up with 5 to 7 million wouldn't be hard for her.

*Better to use this Willow mess as leverage and bleed Alice dry while I still can*, he thought. No point letting all that value go to waste.

This plan would kill two birds with one stone—get Willow out of jail and make Alice suffer. And suffer hard.

David couldn't help thinking about what his life could've been. He had been a star student at Hoverdale Tech University, sharp and full of ambition. He was meant to thrive in Hoverdale, to make a name for himself, to live out the future he deserved.

But instead, that old coot from the Pierce family had strong-armed him into marrying in. And just like that, he became a live-in son-in-law. The kind people whispered about. The kind nobody respected.

It was the one thing he could never let go of. A lifetime of humiliation stuck in his chest.

*If Alice ever really loved me*, he thought darkly, she would've brought the Pierce Corporation with her and married me like *someone with pride*. Instead, she made me the one who *had to marry* into her family—like I was beneath her. I had to put up with *that shame* like a damn joke.

If he hadn't had the foresight to take out Alice's father, he'd still be choking on that shame, forced to keep his head down while everyone trampled all over him.

His anger built the more he thought about it. Rage and bitterness fanned the flames until they were roaring inside him.

All these years, he'd kept Alice in comfort, given her the best of everything, treated her better than she ever deserved.

Now that Willow was behind bars, it was Alice's turn to step up. She owed him that much.

The thought settled in his mind, and with practiced ease, he put on his next act. His face tightened with fake pain, his muscles twitching just right as he slipped into a look of deep sorrow. He turned to Alice and said, "Babe, thank God you're here."

The tone was perfect—tired and full of grief. Back in the day, Alice would've fallen for it in a heartbeat. With how much she used to love him, one look at his face and she would've begged to know what was wrong.

And that was all he needed to bring up Willow. Right on cue.

But this time, Alice wasn't the same woman he was used to. She held a few sheets of paper in a death grip, and her eyes—cold and sharp—locked on him with an intensity that could cut through steel.

David blinked in surprise. He assumed she was still too shaken up from her broken leg, too distraught to notice the sad, burdened expression he'd carefully crafted.

So he gave up trying to ease into it.

1/2

15:31 Sun, 30 Mar

Chapter 192 David's Secret Grudge Revisted

Finished

He sighed heavily, looked down, and said, "Willow's been taken in by the cops, Babe, we've got to get her out. She's never gone through anything hard in her life. A place like jail—dark, miserable, cruel—she won't last. She's not built for that."

He rubbed his forehead dramatically, leaning into the look of a man who was totally worn down,

But the second those words hit the air, something snapped in Alice. Her eyes filled with a flush of red.

Willow can't handle *jail*? And my daughter, Laurie could?

The fury rushed over her like a wave crashing over a seawall. Her voice dropped to a chilling calm as she stared him down.

"And how exactly do you plan to get Willow Bennett out?"

David's brow tightened. Something about Alice was... off. She sounded too cold.

And seriously? She was calling Willow by her full name?

So her *leg* is broken and now she thinks she can act like a queen? he sneered internally,

Just wait till I've *squeezed* every last cent out of her. Then she's worthless. Twenty-plus years playing the good little housewife and what's she got? No property. No savings. A son behind bars. A daughter who can't stand her. She'll be nothing.

*She'll end up on the streets. No man to protect her. Just some broke, worn-down woman waiting to be used. That's all female drifters are good for in this world anyway. Pathetic.*

His thoughts churned with venom, but on the outside, he kept his face composed, calm, almost gentle.

And yet, just picturing Alice—once so privileged and untouchable—reduced to that made something ugly flicker inside him. The fantasy brought a hint of smugness to his lips that he couldn't quite hide.

In a better mood now, he brushed off her frosty look.

He cleared his throat and put on the performance of a worried, helpless husband. "Babe, the Brooker Corporation crushed the company. We're bankrupt. All my assets are frozen. You're the only one who can help Willow now. You've still got shares in your name, right? I was thinking, if we sell those, and your high-end bags, and maybe the house your dad left you, we could make it work. That should be enough to get Willow out. We can always earn more money. But being together, staying close as a family—that's what really matters."

He said it like he meant every word. But deep in his eyes, no matter how carefully he masked it, the greed was still there—sharp and calculating.

In an instant, everything clicked for Alice. David's game plan wasn't just about money—it was about wiping her out completely.

He's *trying to drain me* of everything I have, she realized. *He wants to corner me until there's nothing left. No escape. No mercy.*

280

, ? Views, Released

2/2

15:32 Sun, 30 Mar

The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

Chapter 193 When the Illusion Shatters

63%

Finished

If Alice was clueless, maybe she really would've agreed. Maybe she would've gone along with it, blindly trusting the man who had ruined her.

But she wasn't clueless anymore. She knew now. She knew David had been playing her all these years- manipulating, deceiving, slowly tearing her life apart. And now he wanted to use her money to save the daughter he had with another woman?

The  
fury surged through her like fire in her veins. Her face turned a deep, furious red, and she gave off the raw, dangerous energy of a wild animal ready to strike.

Without thinking, she shoved her wheelchair forward and raced right at him. She didn't hesitate. Her hand flew up and cracked across his face with everything she had.

"David, you bastard!" she screamed. Her voice was hoarse, like each word scraped its way out of her throat.

"You lied to me for years. You took my father from me. You ruined my son. You tore my daughter away. You even stole my kidney! And now you want me to save your bastard daughter with that other woman? You're lower than dirt. I swear—I will kill you!"

She lashed out, arms flailing, completely consumed by rage. At that moment, she didn't care about dignity or control—she just wanted him to suffer. To feel even a fraction of what he'd made her endure.

The hospital room glowed with cold, piercing white light, giving everything a harsh, almost unreal edge.

Alice looked unhinged. Her hair was tangled, her expression feral. Her bloodshot eyes burned with *rage* as she launched herself at David. Her hands twisted like talons, going straight for his face while she cursed through gritted teeth.

"David, you soulless bastard, I'm done with you!" she screamed, her voice raw and breaking.

For thirty years, she had loved him fully, quietly, without pause. Even when their daughter went missing because of his so-called accident, she didn't scream or blame him. She just cried in silence, night after night, tucked into the dark, letting the grief fester in silence.

*How could someone do that and still look me in the eye?*

He tried to restrain her, grabbing her wrists, but she wasn't the same woman he thought he could control. She was a hurricane of fury. He could barely keep her off him.

“Alice, have you lost your damn mind!” he roared, panicking as she came at him with everything she had.

“...—1——ཅིས་...:༼འདྲ-འབྱུག་༽ འ་འ:-༼འ-འཕ་འ༽

 $1/2$ 

## Chapter 193 When the Illusion Shatters

Finished

But he slipped back into his old act fast. His face shifted into fake confusion, eyebrows raised like he didn't have a clue. "What are you talking about? I honestly don't understand a word you're saying."



That lie was gasoline on fire. Alice's fury boiled over, her body shaking with rage.

Without hesitation, she hurled the papers in her hand straight at him, hitting him full in the face.

"Here. This is your proof. Still wanna pretend you don't know?" Her voice trembled as she spoke, tears glimmering in her eyes, but it wasn't weakness. It was rage. Deep and sharp.

David's eyes landed on the papers, and his heart just stopped.

T

Everything he thought was long buried—  
every secret, every crime he believed would stay in the dark—  
was now right in front of him, staring back with sharp teeth.

He went pale instantly. His skin turned ghost-white. He stood frozen like a man who'd just seen his own death, unable to move, unable to look away. Just staring.

Alice looked at him—  
this man standing in front of her, stripped of every lie, exposed for what he really was -  
and something inside her broke for good. Any last illusion she'd clung to was gone.

*I gave him thirty years of my love, she thought, and he turned **out** to be a monster. A real, heartless **monster**.*

The pain was unbearable. It stabbed through her chest like knives and pulled her apart from the inside.

Her heart felt shredded.

The grief, the fury, the betrayal—it all crashed down on her at once. And it was too much.

"You bastard! You absolute bastard!" she screamed, throwing herself at David again. She wasn't just trying to hurt him—  
she was trying to destroy him. The way he'd destroyed her.

Her fingernails raked across his skin, digging in with brutal force. Every mark she left was fueled by the years of trust he'd shattered. Blood streamed down his face and neck, carving red trails into his flesh.

David looked wrecked—  
his face covered in cuts and blood, panic in his eyes. He was no longer in control.

“Give me back my father! My son! My daughter!” Alice sobbed, slamming her fists against him with everything she had. Every word was a gut-punch, every strike fueled by years of heartbreak.

And through it all, her tears kept coming—hot, furious, endless. Like the flood of everything she’d bottled up for far too long.

280

15:32 Sun, 30 Mar

The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

, ? Views, Released

Chapter 194 David, You Monster!

63%

Finished

Alice screamed at the top of her lungs, her voice raw with grief. “What did I do wrong? Why would you do this to me? Did thirty years of love mean nothing to you?”

David

was helpless. His leg, still recovering from when Josh broke it for the second time, left him completely vulnerable. He could barely shield himself as Alice came at him with everything she had. There was no fight in him—just desperate defense.

He waved his arms weakly, trying to block her hits. “Alice, stop it!” he yelled, over and over, panic rising.

But she

wasn’t listening. She couldn’t. Her rage had taken over. She lunged at his throat and locked both hands around it, her fingers pressing in so hard her knuckles looked like bone.

“You don’t deserve to live. You’re a demon. I will kill you!” she shouted, her eyes blazing with hate so deep it looked like it could eat her alive.

David gasped and grabbed at her hands, trying to tear them away, but her grip was like steel. She wouldn’t let go.

His eyes rolled back into his head, showing only white. His tongue slipped out of his mouth, and his whole face twisted in panic and pain. He flailed wildly, reaching for anything, as his body thrashed across the bed. His le

gs kicked and twitched from the pain and lack of oxygen. The sheets were torn and rumpled beneath him, yanked into chaos by his flailing limbs.

Outside the hospital room, Lauren stood still, watching the chaos inside through the glass. Her expression was icy and unreadable.

She used to think Alice was someone who'd quietly endure betrayal. A woman with too much grace to lash out. Someone who forgave, even when she shouldn't.

But this—this raw, unhinged retaliation—told a different story. Alice wasn't passive. She wasn't calm. Not when everything she believed in had been ripped away. She had finally snapped.

Lauren let out a silent, bitter laugh. *No one really feels pain until it hits home. Until then, they don't understand. They don't care.*

Her face remained cool, with just a hint of irony in her expression.

*Well, I didn't feel bad. Not at all.*

She stood there like a stranger, as if what was happening on the other side of the glass had nothing to do with her.

Alice had never lacked comfort. She'd always had money, security, and ease. What she truly craved—what she held dearest—was love. Genuine, pure love.

But in just a flash, that love had been ripped away. Everything she cared about was gone, and it broke her.

Now she was consumed by rage. Her fingers locked tight around David's neck like a vise, refusing to let go. Like she needed to feel him slip away to make up for everything he'd taken from her.

David was seconds from blacking out, flailing helplessly as Alice choked the life out of him.

His right hand scrambled blindly over the bed and knocked against something solid—his fingers wrapped

around the handle of a fruit knife tucked inside the pocket on the nightstand

Sun, 30 Mar

Chapter 194 David, You Monster!

63%

Finished

There was no time to think. Driven by panic and instinct, he lashed out with the blade and plunged it into her.

The sickening sound of the knife piercing flesh filled the air.

Alice let out a scream that could split glass. It wasn't just pain—it was devastation, pure and primal. The sound could stop hearts.

Her grip loosened immediately, and she collapsed backward, her body folding from the shock.

Blood sprayed into the air and splashed across David's face. The heat of it jolted him back into reality, pulling him from the brink of death.

He sucked in air like a drowning man, chest heaving, lungs desperate for oxygen.

But then he saw her.

The knife had sunk deep into her left eye. Blood spilled through her fingers as she held her face, coating her hands and dripping steadily to the floor until it formed a growing, gruesome pool.

Alice rolled on the ground in agony, her body twisted with pain, her screams bouncing off the walls of the hospital room. The sound was chilling—unnatural—like something ripped from a nightmare.

David looked down at Alice, his hands shaking, eyes wide with fear. "I—I didn't mean to. You were choking me. It was self-defense," he stammered, trying to convince himself more than anyone else.

For a second, he was frozen, overwhelmed and uncertain.

But then logic kicked in—or at least, what he told himself was logic.

*We're married. It's not like I killed her. All I did was blind her in one eye. The law's not going to do much just chalk it up to a domestic dispute, maybe a slap on the wrist and some counseling. That's it.*

With that thought, his fear vanished. In its place was ice-cold composure.

He grabbed his phone and called Sharon.

“Hey, Sharon. Get up here. Alice found out about us. She tried to kill me. I stabbed her in the eye. Bring someone and clean this up—I don’t want her stinking up my room,” he said, disgust dripping from every

word.

Alice, still writhing in pain, heard him loud and clear. Her good eye locked on him, blazing with fury. Her voice came out rough, heavy with hate.

“David, you’ll die a miserable death.”

David threw his head back and laughed—loud, arrogant, cruel. His laughter filled the room like poison.

“You think I kept you alive out of love? No. I just wanted the last of your shares. That’s it. If it weren’t for that, you’d have been dead a long time ago.”

280

63%

The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

, ? Views, Released

Chapter 195 Rage Below the Belt

Finished

David’s grin was monstrous—wide and crooked, like something dark and poisonous was crawling just

beneath the surface of his skin.

“Every time I had to sleep next to you, I wanted to vomit. And when we had sex? You just laid there like a dead fish. No emotion, no spark. You really think you could ever compete with Sharon? Please. You’re not even in the same league. You couldn’t even carry her purse. He rolled his head smugly, basking in his own filth like it was some kind of twisted victory.

“And you know what? I never loved you. Not even for a second. If your family hadn’t been loaded, I wouldn’t have touched you with a ten-foot pole. But lucky for me, you were stupid enough to fall for it. That’s how I got control

of Pierce Corporation. And once I get out of here, I'm leaving the country with the real woman I love and our kids. You can't do a damn thing to stop me."

He broke into hysterical laughter, rocking back and forth, his whole body trembling with it. The cuts on his face moved with every shake, like a nest of twisted, living insects crawling across his skin—ghastly, grotesque, and proud of it.

David's taunts hit like knives, every word cutting deeper than the last. For Alice, it wasn't just betrayal—it was annihilation. And then, something snapped.

A surge of pure adrenaline tore through her, ripping away the pain in her leg, her eye—everything. All that remained was fury.

Her breathing turned loud and ragged, each inhale like a warning. Her chest heaved. Her hands slammed to the floor for balance, muscles tightening, veins popping as she pushed herself up. Her fingers curled into fists, and the cords under her skin throbbed with raw, rising energy.

Across the room, David's wild laughter filled the air—until it didn't.

He was in his

He caught sight of her rising, and the sound died in his throat.

His grin collapsed in an instant. His eyes went wide like saucers, disbelief carved into every line of his face. It was the look of a man who just realized his worst nightmare wasn't over—it had only just begun.

Alice's face had transformed into something monstrous. Every inch of her was distorted by rage. The soft, graceful woman she once was had vanished—now she looked like a nightmare.

Her lips twisted, her teeth clenched so tightly they clicked, and the muscles in her face jerked and twitched like she was possessed.

"You disgusting piece of trash.

I'll kill you," she rasped, her voice shredded with fury as she launched herself at David.

She didn't hesitate. Powered by rage and adrenaline, she yanked the knife from his hand like it was nothing.

Then came the first stab—

and David's scream tore through the air like a siren. Blood burst from his groin, dark and fast.

But Alice wasn't done. She lost herself in it. The knife kept moving. Up. Down. Again. Again. Each stab was more frenzied than the last.

Blood sprayed in every direction—on her face, her arms, her hospital gown—but she didn't register any of it. Her focus was locked in.

1/3

15:32 Sun, 30 Mar N

Chapter 195 Rage Below the Belt

林念63%

Finished

"You wanna cheat? You like cheating so much? Go ahead! Cheat now!" she shrieked, her voice spiraling into wild, maniacal laughter.

With just a few savage jabs, she mutilated everything between his legs. David's body jerked on the bed, soaked in blood, writhing in unbearable pain.

The air in the hospital room was heavy with blood. The sharp, metallic scent crept into the hallway, slipping through the door frame.

Lauren stood just outside, watching the carnage play out inside. David and Alice were locked in destruction. And she felt nothing. No sadness. No guilt. Just... calm.

Everything she had suffered in that house—the cold shoulders, the emotional wounds—had drained her dry. She had nothing left to feel for them.

Looking in at the chaos, she thought, *They earned this. Every part of it.*

Alice was blind in one eye. David had lost everything that made him a man. It was brutal, even shocking. But instead of horror, Lauren felt a strange kind of relief. It was justice, twisted as it was.

*Bad people deserve bad endings*, she thought. *If not, then what's the point of any of it?*

Her chest felt lighter. The pressure she'd carried for so long had finally lifted. A smile tugged at her lips—soft, but real. It was the smile of someone who'd just watched karma do its job.

Suddenly, rapid footsteps echoed from down the hall. Sharon was charging toward the room with a handful of nurses in tow.

Lauren tensed.

*I have no time to run.*

But Gael moved without hesitation. He stepped smoothly in front of her, tall and solid, completely blocking her from view.

Lauren ducked her head, nestling between Gael and the wall, making herself small and unseen, disappearing into the safety of his shadow.

Sharon didn't even glance at Lauren. She pushed through the door with the medical team, all of them rushing into the room.

But the moment they stepped inside and saw all the blood—smeared across the sheets, pooled on the floor—everyone froze. Even the most experienced nurses turned ghost-white.

Sharon's eyes dropped to David, and what she saw between his legs made her ears ringing. Her stomach twisted. Her brain just... stopped for a beat.

*Yeah, David had always been pretty useless—*  
but now? With that gone? He was totally finished.

But the shock didn't last long. Sharon quickly recomposed herself. She wasn't heartbroken. Just mildly

stunned.

She had never truly loved him anyway.

How could she? The guy had ditched his wife and kids like they were garbage. He was a lowlife. She'd always known there was no real future with someone like him.

Chapter 195 Rage Below the Belt

63%

Finished

In fact, she'd constantly worried that one day, if he ever decided she was more trouble than she was worth, he'd get rid of her too—and no one would even know how it happened.

☐



, ? Views, Released

## Chapter 196 A Face from the Past

Finished

To her, David was nothing more than a soulless opportunist, a man born to be used rather than cherished,

She often wondered what kind of twisted genetics could have produced someone as ruthless as him.

Taking a deep breath, Sharon quickly calmed herself down and turned to the medical staff. "What are you waiting for? Hurry up to save him!"

The nurses and doctors jolted back to reality, a rush surrounded David's and wheeling him away in a flurry of

movement.

Meanwhile, Alice had exhausted all her strength and collapsed on the side.

Sharon signaled for someone to take her to the operating room as well. Not out of kindness just because with so many eyes watching, she had no choice but to play the role of the responsible hospital director.

Once the commotion died down, Gael finally stepped aside, revealing Lauren.

"Ms. Bennett, why didn't you tell David that Willow isn't his daughter? That would've broken him instantly," Gael asked, his tone laced with curiosity.

Lauren smiled faintly. "That would be too easy on him."

"He's always been good at squeezing people dry for his own benefit. I figured it was time he got a taste of his own medicine. David will do everything in his power to get Willow out of prison. Let him throw away everything for a daughter who isn't even his. Only when he's lost everything will I tell him the truth—that the children Sharon bore was never his to begin with."

*What a cruel irony.*

*For the sake of someone else's children, he had sent his own son to prison.*

*I can already picture his face when he finds out. The man who values his bloodline above all else... single-handedly ended it.*

*How ironic!*

Gael raised his brow. "That's quite ruthless, Ms. Bennett."

"Thank you for the compliment."

Their gazes met, a knowing smirk passing between them.

As they left the hospital and made their way to the parking lot, they unexpectedly ran into someone.

The person was in a wheelchair, far from the polished image of the elite lawyer they once knew. His once-polished appearance had vanished, replaced by a tattered outfit and a gaunt face. Sunken cheeks, dark circles under his eyes—he looked exhausted, as if life had drained the last bit of energy from him.

It was none other than Lucas, Lauren's best friend during childhood.

It had been nearly two months he hadn't seen Lauren. Now, here she was, appearing out of nowhere. For a brief moment, it felt almost surreal.

1/2

15:32 Sun, 30 Mar

Chapter 196 A Face from the Past

Finished

Her face was fuller, her skin smoother, her once brittle hair now cascading in a sleek, healthy black sheen over her shoulders.

Every inch of her showed happiness.

In contrast, he looked disheveled and worn down.

The contrast was so stark, so painful, he wished he could disappear into the ground.

He had always been the one in the spotlight, proud. Now, the roles had reversed. He can't adapt.

And then, he saw a man beside her—tall, broad-shouldered, exuding an undeniable strength.

A wave of jealousy surged through him. His fingers clenched around the armrests of his wheelchair as he blurted out, "Who is he?"

His sharp and accusatory gaze locked onto Lauren, like a betrayed husband confronting infidelity, filled with anger and disbelief.

Lauren cast a cold glance at him, her eyes carrying the indifference one would have toward a stranger.

Her gaze flickered past him, disinterested, before she turned away, making it clear she had no intention of engaging.

Ever since he had his legs broken in prison, Lucas had never been able to control his emotions -since they shattered his legs and stripped him of everything.

Added to his woes, the revocation of his law license shattered his proud career.

His home, his car, his savings—everything was gone.

His fall from grace had been swift and merciless.

The once high-spirited Lucas was now reduced to living in a damp, windowless basement, where the musty air and endless darkness gnawed at his very soul.

The world had turned its back on him. Friends, colleagues, even strangers sneered at his downfall, not even during the tough times at the orphanage, where he had managed to retain a shred of dignity.

He had lost everything—his career, status, and wealth—all reduced to nothing overnight.

Lauren was the only light left in his world.

Day after day, counting down the hours until he might catch a glimpse of her..

And now, when that moment finally came, she was standing beside another man, looking at him like he was a stranger.

It was the last thing he could never have anticipated.

He struggled to maneuver his wheelchair forward, blocking her path.

His voice trembled with urgency. "Laurie, I asked you a question. Who is he?"

Chapter 196 A Face from the Past

Finished

To her, David was nothing more than a soulless opportunist, a man born to be used rather than cherished,

She often wondered what kind of twisted genetics could have produced someone as ruthless as him.

Taking a deep breath, Sharon quickly calmed herself down and turned to the medical staff. "What are you waiting for? Hurry up to save him!"

The nurses and doctors jolted back to reality, rush surrounded David's and wheeling him away in a flurry of

movement.

Meanwhile, Alice had exhausted all her strength and collapsed on the side.

Sharon signaled for someone to take her to the operating room as well. Not out of kindness just because with so many eyes watching, she had no choice but to play the role of the responsible hospital director.

Once the commotion died down, Gael finally stepped aside, revealing Lauren.

"Ms. Bennett, why didn't you tell David that Willow isn't his daughter? That would've broken him instantly," Gael asked, his tone laced with curiosity.

Lauren smiled faintly. "That would be too easy on him."

"He's always been good at squeezing people dry for his own benefit. I figured it was time he got a taste of his own medicine. David will do everything in his power to get Willow out of prison. Let him throw away everything for a daughter who isn't even his. Only when he's lost everything will I tell him the truth—that the children Sharon bore was never his to begin with."

*What a cruel irony.*

*For the sake of someone else's children, he had sent his own son to prison.*

*I can already picture his face when he finds out. The man who values his bloodline above all else... single-handedly ended it.*

*How ironic!*

Gael raised his brow. "That's quite ruthless, Ms. Bennett."

“Thank you for the compliment.”

Their gazes met, a knowing smirk passing between them.

As they left the hospital and made their way to the parking lot, they unexpectedly ran into someone.

The person was in a wheelchair, far from the polished image of the elite lawyer they once knew. His once-polished appearance had vanished, replaced by a tattered outfit and a gaunt face. Sunken cheeks, dark circles under his eyes—he looked exhausted, as if life had drained the last bit of energy from him.

It was none other than Lucas, Lauren’s best friend during childhood.

It had been nearly two months he hadn’t seen Lauren. Now, here she was, appearing out of nowhere. For a brief moment, it felt almost surreal.

1/2

15:32 Sun, 30 Mar

Chapter 196 A Face from the Past

Finished

Her face was fuller, her skin smoother, her once brittle hair now cascading in a sleek, healthy black sheen over her shoulders.

Every inch of her showed happiness.

In contrast, he looked disheveled and worn down.

The contrast was so stark, so painful, he wished he could disappear into the ground.

He had always been the one in the spotlight, proud. Now, the roles had reversed. He can’t adapt.

And then, he saw a man beside her—tall, broad-shouldered, exuding an undeniable strength.

A wave of jealousy surged through him. His fingers clenched around the armrests of his wheelchair as he blurted out, “Who is he?”

His sharp and accusatory gaze locked onto Lauren, like a betrayed husband confronting infidelity, filled with anger and disbelief.

Lauren cast a cold glance at him, her eyes carrying the indifference one would have toward a stranger.

Her gaze flickered past him, disinterested, before she turned away, making it clear she had no intention of engaging.

Ever since he had his legs broken in prison, Lucas had never been able to control his emotions -since they shattered his legs and stripped him of everything.

Added to his woes, the revocation of his law license shattered his proud career.

His home, his car, his savings—everything was gone.

His fall from grace had been swift and merciless.

The once high-spirited Lucas was now reduced to living in a damp, windowless basement, where the musty air and endless darkness gnawed at his very soul.

The world had turned its back on him. Friends, colleagues, even strangers sneered at his downfall, not even during the tough times at the orphanage, where he had managed to retain a shred of dignity.

He had lost everything—his career, status, and wealth—all reduced to nothing overnight.

Lauren was the only light left in his world.

Day after day, counting down the hours until he might catch a glimpse of her..

And now, when that moment finally came, she was standing beside another man, looking at him like he was a stranger.

It was the last thing he could never have anticipated.

He struggled to maneuver his wheelchair forward, blocking her path.

Chapter 196 A Face from the Past

Finished

To her, David was nothing more than a soulless opportunist, a man born to be used rather than cherished,

She often wondered what kind of twisted genetics could have produced someone as ruthless as him.

Taking a deep breath, Sharon quickly calmed herself down and turned to the medical staff. "What are you waiting for? Hurry up to save him!"

The nurses and doctors jolted back to reality, a rush surrounded David's and wheeling him away in a flurry of

movement.

Meanwhile, Alice had exhausted all her strength and collapsed on the side.

Sharon signaled for someone to take her to the operating room as well. Not out of kindness just because with so many eyes watching, she had no choice but to play the role of the responsible hospital director.

Once the commotion died down, Gael finally stepped aside, revealing Lauren.

"Ms. Bennett, why didn't you tell David that Willow isn't his daughter? That would've broken him instantly," Gael asked, his tone laced with curiosity.

Lauren smiled faintly. "That would be too easy on him."

"He's always been good at squeezing people dry for his own benefit. I figured it was time he got a taste of his own medicine. David will do everything in his power to get Willow out of prison. Let him throw away everything for a daughter who isn't even his. Only when he's lost everything will I tell him the truth—that the children Sharon bore was never his to begin with."

*What a cruel irony.*

*For the sake of someone else's children, he had sent his own son to prison.*

*I can already picture his face when he finds out. The man who values his bloodline above all else... single-handedly ended it.*

*How ironic!*

Gael raised his brow. "That's quite ruthless, Ms. Bennett."

"Thank you for the compliment."

Their gazes met, a knowing smirk passing between them.

As they left the hospital and made their way to the parking lot, they unexpectedly ran into someone.

The person was in a wheelchair, far from the polished image of the elite lawyer they once knew. His once-polished appearance had vanished, replaced by a tattered outfit and a gaunt face. Sunken cheeks, dark circles under his eyes—he looked exhausted, as if life had drained the last bit of energy from him.

It was none other than Lucas, Lauren's best friend during childhood.

It had been nearly two months he hadn't seen Lauren. Now, here she was, appearing out of nowhere. For a brief moment, it felt almost surreal.

1/2

15:32 Sun, 30 Mar

Chapter 196 A Face from the Past

Finished

Her face was fuller, her skin smoother, her once brittle hair now cascading in a sleek, healthy black sheen over her shoulders.

Every inch of her showed happiness.

In contrast, he looked disheveled and worn down.

The contrast was so stark, so painful, he wished he could disappear into the ground.

He had always been the one in the spotlight, proud. Now, the roles had reversed. He can't adapt.

And then, he saw a man beside her—tall, broad-shouldered, exuding an undeniable strength.

A wave of jealousy surged through him. His fingers clenched around the armrests of his wheelchair as he blurted out, "Who is he?"

His sharp and accusatory gaze locked onto Lauren, like a betrayed husband confronting infidelity, filled with anger and disbelief.

Lauren cast a cold glance at him, her eyes carrying the indifference one would have toward a stranger.

Her gaze flickered past him, disinterested, before she turned away, making it clear she had no intention of engaging.



Ever since he had his legs broken in prison, Lucas had never been able to control his emotions -since they shattered his legs and stripped him of everything.

Added to his woes, the revocation of his law license shattered his proud career.

His home, his car, his savings—everything was gone.

His fall from grace had been swift and merciless.

The once high-spirited Lucas was now reduced to living in a damp, windowless basement, where the musty air and endless darkness gnawed at his very soul.

The world had turned its back on him. Friends, colleagues, even strangers sneered at his downfall, not even during the tough times at the orphanage, where he had managed to retain a shred of dignity.

He had lost everything—his career, status, and wealth—all reduced to nothing overnight.

Lauren was the only light left in his world.

Day after day, counting down the hours until he might catch a glimpse of her..

And now, when that moment finally came, she was standing beside another man, looking at him like he was a stranger.

It was the last thing he could never have anticipated.

He struggled to maneuver his wheelchair forward, blocking her path.

His voice trembled with urgency. "Laurie, I asked you a question. Who is he?"

Lauren's patience wore thin. "That has nothing to do with you."

15:32 Sun, 30 Mar N

Chapter 196 A Face from the Past

A short, simple response.

Yet it hit Lucas like a sledgehammer, knocking the breath from his lungs.

His voice trembled with urgency. "Laurie, I asked you a question. Who is he?"

Lauren's patience wore thin. "That has nothing to do with you."

15:32 Sun, 30 Mar N

Chapter 196 A Face from the Past

A short, simple response.

Yet it hit Lucas like a sledgehammer, knocking the breath from his lungs.

Lauren's patience wore thin. "That has nothing to do with you."

15:32 Sun, 30 Mar N

Chapter 196 A Face from the Past

A short, simple response.

Yet it hit Lucas like a sledgehammer, knocking the breath from his lungs.

, ? Views, Released

280

63%

Finished

The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

Chapter 197 Shattered Delusions

Finished

Lucas's fingers gripped the metal frame of the wheelchair tightly, his knuckles turning white from the pressure. The biting chill seeped into his bones, but it was nothing compared to the coldness he felt in his

chest.

Does *she* really want *to* cut *ties* with me?

*No!* I wouldn't allow it.

"How can you say that? We grew up together. We're childhood sweethearts!"

Lauren scoffed. “You might be my childhood friend, but you’re not my father. Who I associate with is none of your business.”

Lucas’s face darkened instantly, his eyes full of jealousy and fury as they locked onto Gabriel.

Through clenched teeth, “Laurie, have you forgotten our promise? You told me that once I made something of myself, you’d always be by my side.”

Lauren chuckled, the sound laced with mockery.

A deep, overwhelming sense of irony filled her chest.

Back in the orphanage, they had been each other’s only family. She had once believed they would never be apart.

She had thrown herself into hard labor, participated in competitions, and fought tooth and nail for scholarships—all for his sake.

Because of a single promise.

I’ll become a lawyer and put everyone who hurt you behind bars.

She had been so foolishly entranced by those words.

She had worked tirelessly, sending every penny she earned to him in secret, making sure he never had to struggle the way other poor students did.

Even in her suffering, she had been happy, fueled by the dream that one day, Lucas would become a top lawyer, shielding her from the world.

Reality had been cruel.

Not only had he failed to bring justice to those who wronged her—he had sent her to prison himself.

And the money she had painstakingly earned?

Not spent on books. Not spent on necessities.

But on luxury sneakers, designer jackets, and watches worth thousands.

And worst of all, on gifts for Willow.

A socialite who never even wanted them.

## Chapter 197 Shattered Delusions

She had tossed his presents to the maids the moment she got home, too disgusted to keep them.

Lauren had never known.

63%

Finished

She had been too used to poverty to recognize the price tags on Lucas's clothes. She had never questioned how a mere law student could afford a wardrobe worth nearly ten grand.

It wasn't until Gael's investigation into the Bennett family uncovered everything—until she saw for herself how Lucas had spent years pretending to be someone he wasn't—that she realized the truth.

The boy she once trusted had become greedy, selfish, and vain.

He was nothing but a parasite.

Her gaze turned ice-cold.

"A promise?" She let out a short, scornful laugh. "Lucas, do you really think you deserve to bring that up? You ruined my life. Did you honestly believe I would ever forgive you? Have I not made my disgust clear enough since the day I got out of prison? You're not even worth calling a stranger. At least a stranger wouldn't make me sick. Every time I see you, I feel like throwing up."

Lucas visibly flinched, his body jerking as if he had been slapped. A sickly red flush spread across his cheeks, a twisted mix of rage and humiliation.

"No! I didn't put you in prison! It's you! you brought that on yourself!" His voice trembled with desperation. "If you hadn't pushed Elaine down the stairs, if you hadn't turned her into a vegetable, none of this would have happened! You were convicted because of your own actions!"

Lauren's expression turned ice-cold.

Her patience snapped.

Without hesitation, she raised her hand and slapped him.

Hard.

A sharp crack echoed through the air.

“Are you blind or just deaf?” she spat. “Elaine woke up and proved I wasn’t the one who did it. How long are you going to keep pretending? If it weren’t for you and the rest of them covering for Willow, Elaine would have pointed her out as the real culprit that very day! And you still have the nerve to push the blame on me? You’re disgusting.”

Lucas sat there, stunned.

His mind went blank.

He refused to acknowledge his mistakes. Because if he did—if he admitted the truth—then there was no future left for them.

So, he did what he had always done. He forced the blame back onto her.

If she carried the burden of attempted murder, if she remained an outcast, then she would have no choice but to rely on him forever.

Sending her to prison had never been about justice.

15:32 Sun, 30 Mar N.

Chapter 197 Shattered Delusions

It had been about control.

63%

Finished

The moment he realized Kenneth had feelings for her, the moment he saw their engagement approaching, his world had cracked.

He hadn’t wanted to see her in another man’s arms.

So, he had destroyed her instead.

If he couldn’t have her, then no one could.

And now, seeing her with Gael, seeing the way she had completely erased him from her life, his emotions spiraled out of control.

10

, ? Views, Released

Chapter 198 A Devastating Truth

63%

Finished

Lucas's gaze locked onto the ring on Lauren's left hand, his suppressed emotions finally snapping.

"What's with that ring? Are you engaged? Who gave you permission to marry another man? You belong to me. Only I can make you happy, yet while I'm at my lowest, you've climbed into another man's arms. Lauren, you're disgusting! Have you already slept with him? How desperate are you? You're covered in scars, missing a kidney, and yet you can't live without a man? First Kenneth, now this random guy—just how many men have you been with? Tell me, damn it!"

He ranted like a madman, spewing filth as if Lauren were his possession, something no one else was allowed to touch.

Lauren glanced at the ring on her middle finger. It was Felix's signet ring, and it fit perfectly on her hand.

In the past, she might have been infuriated by such a way.

But this time, instead of anger, she smiled and wrapped her arm around Gael's.

"That's right. We're together now."

As she spoke, she gently placed a hand on her stomach. "And there's another piece of good news I want to share with you. I'm pregnant. We're at the hospital today for a checkup."

The word pregnant struck like a thunderbolt, leaving him stunned, while Lucas felt a deep anguish wash over him.

Gael froze, stunned beyond words

*Ms. Bennett you can't just throw me under the bus like this. I haven't even had a girlfriend before, don't ruin my innocence.*

Lucas, on the other hand, looked as if he had been plunged into a frozen abyss.

His body went rigid, an unbearable chill spreading from his heart to his entire body,

He trembled slightly, but no sound came out. His bloodshot eyes, filled with a wild intensity, stayed locked onto Lauren, as though he could set her on fire with his stare alone.

"You... you..." His voice cracked, struggling to squeeze out words through clenched teeth, laced with endless resentment and defiance.

"You're shameless!"

Then, he completely lost it and his anger spiraled out of control.

"Do you even understand what it means for a woman, the best dowry is her reputation? You're not even married, yet you're carrying another man's child! Aren't you afraid his family will use that child to control you? To make sure you never know peace for the rest of your life? Lauren, you disgust me! Even if you get rid of the child, I will never want you. Your womb once carried another man's blood—you're filthy, unworthy of being my wife, unworthy of being the mother of my future children!" He spat the words, his face contorted with repulsion.

Lauren stared at him, utterly unmoved.

.

—1:—h... 1

— of thinkin

**TFT** don't I...

d..nrad from

1/2

15:32 Sun, 30 Mar

Chapter 198 A Devastating Truth

Finished

university, I'd assume you never received any higher education at all. If I had known you were this ignorant, couldn't even tell right from wrong, I never would have funded your tuition by anonymous support. It's a shame I wasted my hard-earned money on an ungrateful leech."

Lucas's entire body stiffened. His breath hitched, his eyes widening in shock.

"What are you saying? What do you mean you funded me?"

His voice rose, laced with panic. He was trying to mask the inner turmoil and fear with an angry sound, but the slight tremor in his words betrayed his fear.

Lauren's expression remained icy, her gaze sharp and unwavering she locked eyes with Lucas. She spoke slowly and deliberately:

"I paid for your university tuition. I was the person who funded it anonymously."

The words were simple and straightforward, yet they crashed down on him like a landslide, stirring a storm of emotions.

His mind reeled.

"N...No..., that's impossible!" He blurted the denial immediately, shaking his head furiously.

He refused to believe it.

Everything he had ever prided himself on, the self-made image he had built—it couldn't have been propped up by Lauren.

"Why is it impossible?" Lauren took a step forward.

"Every expensive piece of clothing, every luxury item you owned during university—where do you think that money came from? I worked my fingers to the bone, won scholarship after scholarship, just so you wouldn't have to struggle financially. And what did you do? You used my money to craft the illusion of being a rich kid, deceiving everyone—including me."

Lucas collapsed back into his wheelchair.

Memories flashed through his mind—days spent basking in admiration, draped in designer brands, enjoying the envious stares of his peers.

He had believed it was all his own doing.



But now, those memories felt like vicious slaps, each one landing harder than the last.

280

◦

, ? Views, Released

“No, this isn’t true. You’re lying to me-”

63%

Finished

Lucas’s voice cracked as he roared at Lauren. “You were just a high school student back then! How could you have possibly sent me 13 hundred dollars a month? You think I don’t know who really funded me? It was Willow! Only someone like her, a wealthy heiress, would be able to afford that kind of money. You were nothing in the Bennett family! They never give you a penny. So how could you have possibly helped me?”

So, he had always known.

He had always known how badly she was treated in the Bennett household.

Yet when she had come to him, exhausted and beaten down by their cruelty, he had dismissed her pain with a casual “You’re just too sensitive.”

He had known they never gave her money.

And yet, despite receiving ten grand a month, he had never once spared even a hundred dollars to help her.

*How could I have been so blind? How could I have given him everything I worked so hard for?*

A deep, hollow sorrow settled in Lauren’s chest. She exhaled slowly, her voice devoid of warmth.

“You never entered any competitions. Of course, you wouldn’t know that winning first place in a physics competition comes with a generous cash prize. I regret it now—spending all my winnings prize on you. If I had saved it for myself, imagine how comfortable my life would’ve been. Then again, no one knows the luxury of having money better than you, Mr. ‘Rich Kid’ Lucas Reed.”

Her words were soft, but each syllable sliced straight through Lucas’s pride like a sharp blade, leaving him utterly humiliated.

“N...no... I don’t believe it... You’re lying...” He was grasping at straws now, trying to convince himself this wasn’t real.

Lauren had no intention of wasting another moment on this unreasonable person...

She shrugged. “Yeah. I’m lying to you. Whatever you say.”

With that, she turned around, linking arms with Gael as she walked away without a second thought.

Her indifference felt like pouring salt in an open wound, a final confirmation that she truly did not care.

Lucas’s rage exploded.

Desperate to chase after Lauren, he pushed his wheelchair forward, the wheels screeching against the floor in a frantic as he tried to chase after her.

“Lauren, stop! Don’t walk away! Explain yourself—” His voice cracked, raw with desperation.

She didn’t turn back.

Even if she could, she didn’t want to.

Within moments, Lauren and Gael were inside the car. Gael started the car engine, and the vehicle sped

Chapter 199 A Bitter Awakening

#Finished

He sat there, watched the car disappear, his body collapsing back into his wheelchair. His vision blurred.

Muttering under his breath, he repeated, “No... It’s not true...” over and over again.”

But deep inside, he had already come to terms with this harsh reality,

The truth had been laid bare before him, undeniable and unforgiving.

He had come to the hospital for a routine check-up on his leg injury.

But now, he couldn’t care less about them, his mind was preoccupied with Lauren’s words,

There was only one thing on his mind—  
he needed to see Willow, get to the bottom of the truth.

Willow Bennett, the once—  
glamorous heiress of the Bennett family, was now promptly taken away by the police.

Her downfall had been as public as it was humiliating.

She had tried to steal a 2.8 million dollars embroidery piece at a high—profile gala.

In front of everyone.

The police had taken her away on the spot, and the scandal had been plastered all over  
the news that very night.

Lucas had seen the headlines. He knew where she was now.

In the dimly lit detention center, the air thick with unease, they sat facing each other.

For a moment, he barely recognized her. The once—  
proud, elegant socialite now looked like a broken doll.

Her head had been completely shaved off.

Not cleanly—the patches of scabbed—  
over wounds marked her scalp, raw and uneven, leaving her with sparse tufts of hair. The  
effect was grotesque.

A ridiculous, pitiful sight.

The arrogance, the self—importance—everything that had made Willow—  
had been stripped away without a

trace.

Now, she was nothing.

A peacock stripped of its feathers—  
showing vulnerability and despair, no longer dazzling, only pathetic.

When her eyes landed on Lucas, her eyes lit up with a spark of hope, yearning for this  
accomplished lawyer to come to her rescue.

Perhaps he could help. Perhaps he could get her out of this nightmare.

But then she **took** a closer look **at** him

15:33 Sun, 30 Mar N.

## Chapter 199 A Bitter Awakening

The hope vanished.

His clothes were wrinkled and cheap, his face haggard and weary.

He was in a wheelchair.

He looked no better than a beggar.

63%

Finished

Reality slammed into her like a freight train—  
Lucas was no longer the successful, influential lawyer she had once toyed with.

She swallowed her disappointment.

But he was still the first person to visit her.

“No, this isn’t true. You’re lying to me—”

63%

Finished

Lucas’s voice cracked as he roared at Lauren. “You were just a high school student back then! How could you have possibly sent me 13 hundred dollars a month? You think I don’t know who really funded me? It was Willow! Only someone like her, a wealthy heiress, would be able to afford that kind of money. You were nothing in the Bennett family! They never give you a penny. So how could you have possibly helped me?”

So, he had always known.

He had always known how badly she was treated in the Bennett household.

Yet when she had come to him, exhausted and beaten down by their cruelty, he had dismissed her pain with a casual “You’re just too sensitive.”

He had known they never gave her money.

And yet, despite receiving ten grand a month, he had never once spared even a hundred dollars to help her.

*How could I have been so blind? How could I have given him everything I worked so hard for?*

A deep, hollow sorrow settled in Lauren's chest. She exhaled slowly, her voice devoid of warmth.

"You never entered any competitions. Of course, you wouldn't know that winning first place in a physics competition comes with a generous cash prize. I regret it now—spending all my winnings prize on you. If I had saved it for myself, imagine how comfortable my life would've been. Then again, no one knows the luxury of having money better than you, Mr. 'Rich Kid' Lucas Reed."

Her words were soft, but each syllable sliced straight through Lucas's pride like a sharp blade, leaving him utterly humiliated.

"N...no... I don't believe it... You're lying..." He was grasping at straws now, trying to convince himself this wasn't real.

Lauren had no intention of wasting another moment on this unreasonable person...

She shrugged. "Yeah. I'm lying to you. Whatever you say."

With that, she turned around, linking arms with Gael as she walked away without a second thought.

Her indifference felt like pouring salt in an open wound, a final confirmation that she truly did not care.

Lucas's rage exploded.

Desperate to chase after Lauren, he pushed his wheelchair forward, the wheels screeching against the floor in a frantic as he tried to chase after her.

"Lauren, stop! Don't walk away! Explain yourself—" His voice cracked, raw with desperation.

She didn't turn back.

Even if she could, she didn't want to.

Within moments, Lauren and Gael were inside the car. Gael started the car engine, and the vehicle sped

Chapter 199 A Bitter Awakening

#Finished

He sat there, watched the car disappear, his body collapsing back into his wheelchair. His vision blurred.

Muttering under his breath, he repeated, “No... It’s not true...” over and over again.”

But deep inside, he had already come to terms with this harsh reality,

The truth had been laid bare before him, undeniable and unforgiving.

He had come to the hospital for a routine check-up on his leg injury.

But now, he couldn’t care less about them, his mind was preoccupied with Lauren’s words,

There was only one thing on his mind—  
he needed to see Willow, get to the bottom of the truth.

Willow Bennett, the once—  
glamorous heiress of the Bennett family, was now promptly taken away by the police.

Her downfall had been as public as it was humiliating.

She had tried to steal a 2.8 million dollars embroidery piece at a high-profile gala.

In front of everyone.

The police had taken her away on the spot, and the scandal had been plastered all over the news that very night.

Lucas had seen the headlines. He knew where she was now.

In the dimly lit detention center, the air thick with unease, they sat facing each other.

For a moment, he barely recognized her. The once—  
proud, elegant socialite now looked like a broken doll.

Her head had been completely shaved off.

Not cleanly—the patches of scabbed—  
over wounds marked her scalp, raw and uneven, leaving her with sparse tufts of hair. The effect was grotesque.

A ridiculous, pitiful sight.

The arrogance, the self-importance—everything that had made Willow—  
had been stripped away without a

trace.

Now, she was nothing.

A peacock stripped of its feathers—  
showing vulnerability and despair, no longer dazzling, only pathetic.

When her eyes landed on Lucas, her eyes lit up with a spark of hope, yearning for this accomplished lawyer to come to her rescue.

Perhaps he could help. Perhaps he could get her out of this nightmare.

Rut then she **took** a closer look **at** him

15:33 Sun, 30 Mar N.

Chapter 199 A Bitter Awakening

The hope vanished.

His clothes were wrinkled and cheap, his face haggard and weary.

He was in a wheelchair.

He looked no better than a beggar.

63%

Finished

Reality slammed into her like a freight train—  
Lucas was no longer the successful, influential lawyer she had once toyed with.

She swallowed her disappointment.

But he was still the first person to visit her.

“No, this isn’t true. You’re lying to me-”

63%

Finished

Lucas's voice cracked as he roared at Lauren. "You were just a high school student back then! How could you have possibly sent me 13 hundred dollars a month? You think I don't know who really funded me? It was Willow! Only someone like her, a wealthy heiress, would be able to afford that kind of money. You were nothing in the Bennett family! They never give you a penny. So how could you have possibly helped me?"

So, he had always known.

He had always known how badly she was treated in the Bennett household.

Yet when she had come to him, exhausted and beaten down by their cruelty, he had dismissed her pain with a casual "You're just too sensitive."

He had known they never gave her money.

And yet, despite receiving ten grand a month, he had never once spared even a hundred dollars to help her.

*How could I have been so blind? How could I have given him everything I worked so hard for?*

A deep, hollow sorrow settled in Lauren's chest. She exhaled slowly, her voice devoid of warmth.

"You never entered any competitions. Of course, you wouldn't know that winning first place in a physics competition comes with a generous cash prize. I regret it now—spending all my winnings prize on you. If I had saved it for myself, imagine how comfortable my life would've been. Then again, no one knows the luxury of having money better than you, Mr. 'Rich Kid' Lucas Reed."

Her words were soft, but each syllable sliced straight through Lucas's pride like a sharp blade, leaving him utterly humiliated.

"N...no... I don't believe it... You're lying..." He was grasping at straws now, trying to convince himself this wasn't real.

Lauren had no intention of wasting another moment on this unreasonable person...

She shrugged. "Yeah. I'm lying to you. Whatever you say."

With that, she turned around, linking arms with Gael as she walked away without a second thought.

Her indifference felt like pouring salt in an open wound, a final confirmation that she truly did not care.



Lucas's rage exploded.

Desperate to chase after Lauren, he pushed his wheelchair forward, the wheels screeching against the floor in a frantic as he tried to chase after her.

"Lauren, stop! Don't walk away! Explain yourself—"  
His voice cracked, raw with desperation.

She didn't turn back.

Even if she could, she didn't want to.

Within moments, Lauren and Gael were inside the car. Gael started the car engine, and the vehicle sped

Chapter 199 A Bitter Awakening

#Finished

He sat there, watched the car disappear, his body collapsing back into his wheelchair. His vision blurred.

Muttering under his breath, he repeated, "No... It's not true..." over and over again."

But deep inside, he had already come to terms with this harsh reality,

The truth had been laid bare before him, undeniable and unforgiving.

He had come to the hospital for a routine check-up on his leg injury.

But now, he couldn't care less about them, his mind was preoccupied with Lauren's words,

There was only one thing on his mind—  
he needed to see Willow, get to the bottom of the truth.

Willow Bennett, the once—  
glamorous heiress of the Bennett family, was now promptly taken away by the police.

Her downfall had been as public as it was humiliating.

She had tried to steal a 2.8 million dollars embroidery piece at a high-profile gala.

In front of everyone.

The police had taken her away on the spot, and the scandal had been plastered all over the news that very night.

Lucas had seen the headlines. He knew where she was now.

In the dimly lit detention center, the air thick with unease, they sat facing each other.

For a moment, he barely recognized her. The once—proud, elegant socialite now looked like a broken doll.

Her head had been completely shaved off.

Not cleanly—the patches of scabbed—over wounds marked her scalp, raw and uneven, leaving her with sparse tufts of hair. The effect was grotesque.

A ridiculous, pitiful sight.

The arrogance, the self-importance—everything that had made Willow—had been stripped away without a

trace.

Now, she was nothing.

A peacock stripped of its feathers—showing vulnerability and despair, no longer dazzling, only pathetic.

When her eyes landed on Lucas, her eyes lit up with a spark of hope, yearning for this accomplished lawyer to come to her rescue.

Perhaps he could help. Perhaps he could get her out of this nightmare.

But then she **took** a closer look **at** him

15:33 Sun, 30 Mar N.

Chapter 199 A Bitter Awakening

The hope vanished.

His clothes were wrinkled and cheap, his face haggard and weary.

He was in a wheelchair.

He looked no better than a beggar.

63%

Finished

Reality slammed into her like a freight train—  
Lucas was no longer the successful, influential lawyer she had once toyed with.

She swallowed her disappointment.

But he was still the first person to visit her.

Even though he didn't seem to be doing well himself, but maybe... just maybe, he could *do* something.

Willow forcing herself to look as pitiful as possible, she spoke in a soft, trembling voice.

"Lucas... help me."

Once, she was as elegant and pure as a daffodil, truly exuded a sense of delicate vulnerability when she tried to appear pitiful.

But now?

280

Even though he didn't seem to be doing well himself, but maybe... just maybe, he could *do* something.

Willow forcing herself to look as pitiful as possible, she spoke in a soft, trembling voice.

"Lucas... help me."

Once, she was as elegant and pure as a daffodil, truly exuded a sense of delicate vulnerability when she tried to appear pitiful.

But now?

280

Even though he didn't seem to be doing well himself, but maybe... just maybe, he could *do* something.

Willow forcing herself to look as pitiful as possible, she spoke in a soft, trembling voice.

"Lucas... help me."

Once, she was as elegant and pure as a daffodil, truly exuded a sense of delicate vulnerability when she tried to appear pitiful.

But now?

280

, ? Views, Released

Chapter 200 The Truth Unleashed

Finished

Now, however, Willow's head was bare, the patchy remnants of her shaved scalp giving her a bizarre, almost comical "balding" look.

Her once-flawless skin was now dull and lifeless, her face gaunt and weary—strikingly different from the person she once was.

Looking at her now, Laicas felt... nothing.

No sympathy. No affection. Only disgust.

Gripping the cold steel bars between them, he glared at her and demanded, "Tell me the truth, Willow. Who really funded my education?"

She hadn't expected that he came here for this question. Her eyes flickered, betraying a brief moment of panic. But within seconds, she regained her composure and calmly lie,

"Of course, it was me," she lied smoothly.

"Stop pretending!" Lucas roared, his patience snapping. "Lauren told me she was the one who sent me that money. Did you trick me? Why?!"

His eyes bore into her, searching for the truth.

The truth he had been too blind to see for years.

Willow's heart pounded.

*He knows.*

For the first time, she saw true hatred in Lucas's eyes.

She knew she could no longer keep up the façade., she let out a sudden, sharp laugh—a sound laced with cruelty and madness.

“Five years! It took you five damn years to figure it out? You are really a foolish idiot!”

Her words were dripping with mockery.

“That’s right! Lauren was the one who funded you. She worked herself to the bone, sent you every penny she earned, while she herself could barely afford to eat! And what did you do with her money? Buy designer clothes? Strut around campus pretending to be rich?”

She laughed even harder, her frail body shaking with mirth.

“God, you should’ve seen yourself! Every time you used her money to buy me gifts, trying to impress me, I nearly died laughing! You really thought you were some kind of prince charming? Please! Lauren was nothing but a pitiful, naive fool. She deserved to suffer!”

Her voice trembled with a bitter edge.

“The contemptible woman, how can she compare to me? She was betrayed by her own parents, her brother, and her childhood friend—she deserves it. She was born into luxury while I...” Willow’s voice hitched, rage flashing in her eyes.

1/3

## Chapter 200 The Truth Unleashed

She had spent her entire life resenting Lauren for having what she never could.

A prestigious last name. A future paved in gold. A life meant for her.

\*\* Finished

Stealing Lauren’s identity, watching her struggle, seeing her thrown into prison—reveling in the sight of the wealthy heiress struggling beneath her heel.

Her insane and venomous words struck him like a knife to the heart, sending waves of pain through him. His face contorted in agony as he gritted his teeth and roared

“Willow Bennett ! You vile woman!” His voice was hoarse, filled with a deep-seated rage that made him resemble a feral beast.

The betrayal. The deceit.

In contrast, Willow lifted her chin and laughed even more recklessly, her disheveled appearance making her look like a malevolent spirit.

Once, Lucas was one of Hollanale's most renowned lawyers, ambitious and full of promise. Back then, he held significant value for her. He had been nothing more than a tool to her. Naturally, she had played her of a caring woman.

part well-sweet, gentle, the perfect image

But now?

Lucas found himself confined to a wheelchair, his legs broken, draped in wrinkled, cheap clothing, his complexion sickly and pale. He reeked of filth, the unmistakable stench of someone who hadn't bathed in far too long.

To someone as selfish as Willow, he was no longer of any use. Why would she bother to flatter him or maintain their facade?

And Lauren-

He had destroyed the only person who had ever truly cared about him.

Veins bulged in his arms as he slammed his fists against the steel, his entire body shaking.

"You devil!" His scream was guttural, animalistic.

But Willow?

She only smirked, her hollowed-out eyes glinting with sick pleasure.

"Oh, come on, Lucas," she cooed, voice dripping with venom. "You were so blinded by your obsession with me, so desperate to be my lapdog, that you never once questioned anything. Pathetic. Let me guess the reason you know that it was Lauren, who supported you back then and not me is because she told you herself, isn't it?"

She paused for a moment, a malicious smile spreading across her face before she continued

"You finally begged Lauren for forgiveness, didn't you? No matter how much you beg, she won't forgive you anymore?"

She burst into cruel laughter, clutching her stomach as if it physically hurt from amusement.

Willow had always been a selfish, calculating woman. Now that she had fallen to rock bottom, she couldn't

## Chapter 200 The Truth Unleashed

stand suffering alone.

And Lucas—useless, discarded, stripped of any worth—  
was the perfect target for her misery.

Finished

She unleashed every ounce of her frustration on him, spewing venom with reckless abandon. Watching his face contort with fury, guilt, and regret filled her with a sick, twisted satisfaction.

Lucas violently shook the iron bars, his expression savage, as if he wanted nothing more than to tear her

apart.

“You vile witch—filthy snake—you deserve to rot in hell!”

Memories flooded his mind.

Years of lies.

Using Lauren’s hard-earned money to please Willow.

Sending Lauren to prison for five years—all for this woman.

19

280