

# The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

## The Heiress Revived Ch 201

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The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

Chapter 201 A Noble in Disgrace

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Regret consumed him, gnawing at his heart like a relentless fire.

“I deserve a horrible death? I am a noble of Bennett Corporation, and my parents and brother love me dearly. They’ll figure out a way to get me out soon.” Willow lifted her chin, her eyes filled with disdain.

Lucas’ face twisted at her words, but soon a mocking smile appeared.

“You think you’re some kind of Bennett Corporation noble? Dream on! You probably haven’t heard, but Bennett Corporation has tanked; your brother was hauled off by the cops, and your parents managed to tick off the boss at Brooker Corporation. They both ended up with broken legs; they’re too caught up trying to save their own skins to worry about a fallen noble like you.”

Having said this, Lucas felt a deep satisfaction in his heart.

Willow had tormented him; he intended to return the favor.

He expected her to show signs of shock or anxiety, but there was none.

Willow looked at him with a smirk that was not quite a smile and suddenly said, “Their bankruptcy is none of my concern. My real parents are worth millions; they wouldn’t just watch me rot in jail.”

Lucas’ expression froze as he stared hard at Willow, as if trying to see right through her bluffs.

“Stop pretending. If your real parents were that powerful, why did they leave you with the Bennetts for so many years?”

He gritted his teeth, a tone of resentment in his voice.

Willow's lips curved into a scornful smile. "You think I wanted to stay with the Bennetts? It was just my parents' plan."

"What plan?" Lucas pressed.

Leaning back in her chair, Willow looked at Lucas as if he were a fool. "You're overestimating yourself if you think you can trick me into revealing anything."

"All your skills went to Lauren. Do you know why you were chosen as my defense attorney back then? It was because you and Lauren were childhood friends. Only by personally sending Lauren, that vile woman, to jail would she be devastated."

Willow's voice brimmed with pride. "Otherwise, with your inexperience just out of college, do you think you'd qualify to defend a noble like me? Any lawyer could have won that case. If it were someone else, they would have become a local hero in Haverdale overnight because of that lawsuit. You really overestimated yourself. Even a broken clock is right twice a day; you just hitched a ride on the Bennett's coattails and thought you were something special! Sometimes, I even feel sorry for Lauren. Talk about bad luck—a starry-eyed mother, a scheming father, a flaky brother, and you, her treacherous childhood friend. Lauren's bullying and wrongful imprisonment aren't on me; they're on those closest to her, like you, who threw her to the wolves."

Willow never felt guilty. In her view, she was just fighting for her interests in a dog-eat-dog world. *If those people were sober and truly trusted Lauren, how could they be so easily swayed by a few provocative words from me? Willow and Lauren had no blood relation; why should I give everything up just because Lauren came back?*

She had managed to crick the true noble Lauren underfoot. If Lauren were capable, she could have done

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Chapter 201 A Noble in Disgrace

the same to her. Willow crossed her arms, enjoying the spectacle of Lucas' expressive face

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His face was filled with hatred for her and regret for Lauren, *but* notably inert was any self-reflection on his own past wrongdoings.

“Shut up! Shut up!” Lucas shouted like a madman.

His eyes bulging and bloodshot, he yelled, “Willow, you’re a demon, and I was just a tool you used. You are the real culprit!”

“A demon?” Willow scoffed coldly. “It’s a dog-eat-dog world, and I was merely looking out for my interests. Besides, didn’t you also covet my beauty and the Bennett noble status, hoping to gain advantages from me? That’s why you turned a blind eye to Lauren’s sincerity

“I did use you, but I never forced you to take Lauren’s money to buy trendy brands and pretend to *be a rich kid at school.*”

“Heh!” Her gaze filled with scorn, she stared directly at Lucas and said deliberately, “You knew all along about Lauren being slapped, forced to beg for mercy, stabbed with needles, and having her legs broken **in** prison, didn’t you? And yet, you did nothing to stop it!”

Willow’s words hit him like a hammer to the chest.

He had to admit that his vanity had clouded his judgment, leading **him** to make unforgivable mistakes. Lauren’s performance during high school had been too outstanding

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Chapter 202 A Scheme Unraveled

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Lucas was overwhelmed with jealousy because Lauren’s brilliance completely overshadowed his own light; he just wanted to dim her shine a little.

After all, Lauren was just a woman. *What good would her academic excellence do? Eventually, she’d just marry, have kids, and become a homemaker.*

As for himself, he was capable of earning money and could support her in the future. Why did she have to aim so high?

He kept these thoughts buried deep, knowing they would be unpopular if voiced.

So, he watched passively as Lauren was tormented by others, allowing her to be worn down by the world.

He thought, once everyone else had dulled her sharp edges, he would appear at just the right moment, offer her warmth, and then Lauren would have no choice but to depend on him. She wouldn't think about becoming a scholar, a mentor, or a professor ever again...

Breaking her wings was meant to spare her hardship; he would be her sanctuary, providing for her, loving her. *Wouldn't that be good?*

What he never anticipated was how resilient Lauren would be, even after enduring inhuman treatment in prison. Despite being worn down, she remained defiant.

Not only did she refuse to depend on him, but she also despised him to the bone.

They had spent over a decade together in the orphanage, sharing a deep bond, yet Lauren discarded him so easily, which Lucas found brutally harsh.

Now, she had taken up with some rough-looking guy who obviously had a temper, and she was pregnant. How shameless!

He hated Lauren for not seeing clearly, and he hated Willow even more for using him.

If it weren't for Willow stirring things up, he and Laurie would never have ended up like this.

Lucas' rage clouded his mind completely, and he shook the iron bars wildly.

The bars groaned under his brute force, sounding as if they might snap at any moment.

His eyes bulged like bells, his facial muscles twisted in fury, his features nearly displaced by his grotesque anger, making him look like a demon, sending chills down the spine.

"You damn wretch!" Lucas roared with all his might, "I'll kill you!"

His madness was like a rabid dog in the throes of disease.

Willow watched Lucas' deranged, cannibalistic demeanor, and her pleasure surged like a breached dam, reaching unprecedented heights.

She let out a sharp, piercing laugh, which mingled weirdly with Lucas' screams.

The crazier Lucas got, the more wildly she laughed.

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Chapter 202 A Scheme Unraveled

fool, regretting only *now*? Too late?"

While laughing, she even twisted her body provocatively as if flaunting her victory to Lucas,

The commotion quickly attracted the guards

Two officers rushed over and restrained Lucas, one *on* each side.

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Yet Lucas continued to struggle, kicking, wildly and twisting his body, trying to break free from the police to continue his charge at Willow,

"Let me go, let go of me! Lucas screamed madly, his voice hoarse and nearly breaking, "I have to kill her, I

must!"

His gaze remained fixed on Willow, the hatred seeming to burn her to ashes.

Willow watched as Lucas was dragged away by the police, her smile growing brighter. She even made a face at him, mocking, "Just keep regretting on the outside. Once I'm free, I'll go abroad and enjoy life, while you rot in endless agony here!"

"You wench-"

Lucas' cursing faded as he was dragged out of the jail, disappearing along the long corridor **until** it was no longer audible.

Outside, the night had deepened. Lucas sat despondently in a wheelchair.

The dim streetlight cast a weak glow on his face, marked by wear and fatigue.

It's over, all over.

The once—  
glorious career had shattered like a bubble; his most cherished Laurie, he had pushed i  
nto the abyss himself, never to forgive him.

Now, he had nothing left but a heart full of regret and loneliness.

Lucas'

eyes gradually moistened, and hot tears rolled down his cheeks, dropping onto his worn  
clothes.

"Laurie, I didn't mean it, I just wanted to take  
care of you." He muttered to himself, but there was no one around to hear his belated c  
onfession.

348

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The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

Chapter 203 A Light in the Dark

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At the Brooker's Villa, the warm light spilled through the windows onto the garden path,  
softening the night.

Kate looked at Lauren with a loving expression, "Lauric, you're not well, you should go b  
ack to sleep soon."

Lauren gently shook her head, "Madam Kate, I'll wait a bit longer for Mr. Brooker."

Hearing this, Kate's heart swelled with joy, and her gaze inadvertently fell on the ring  
on Lauren's middle finger. Her smile brightened, and her wrinkled face was flush with ha  
ppiness.

The ring was special, a keepsake from Felix's mother. Felix had cherished it for years.

As a child, he wore it on a string around his neck, and as he grew up, he wore it on his pinky finger, never parting with it.

Now, he had given this precious ring to Lauren, a clear sign that he truly saw a future with her, a life to be shared.

"I'll head upstairs then; don't stay up too late," Kate advised with a smile.

Lauren nodded obediently, watching Kate ascend the stairs. She then settled quietly on the living room sofa, her thoughts drifting back to her days at the Bennetts.

Back then, she would come home from school to a dark living room, the cold air seeming to swallow her whole.

Standing alone in the darkness, the chill spread slowly through her heart, the feeling of being neglected by her family, forgotten by the world, was something she could never forget.

Later, it was Marilyn who left the light on for her, a beacon of warmth in the darkness, one of the few comforts she had at the Bennetts. Having experienced the cold indifference of a family—less life, Lauren cherished the warmth she felt in the Brooker family even more.

She wanted to wait for Mr. Brooker, like she was waiting for her fifteen-year-old self, braving the snow to get home.

Time ticked by, and the villa was silent except for the ticking of the clock in the living room.

Lauren, tired from sitting, lay down on the sofa. Her health was poor, and fatigue came easily; soon, she drifted off to sleep.

She curled up slightly on the sofa, as if seeking more security in that position.

When Felix returned, he found the petite Lauren asleep on the sofa.

Scanning the living room and seeing neither his grandmother nor Anna, he assumed they had already gone to bed.

*Was she staying up just for me?* A trace of softness flickered across Felix's usually stern face at the sight of her.

He stepped lightly over to her, then bent down and gently lifted her, cradling her back and legs. He carried her upstairs with long strides, laid her on the bed, and carefully pulled the blanket over her, all the while taking care not to wake her.

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## Chapter 203 A Light in the Dark

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“Ms. Bennett, sweet dreams, Felix whispered softly in the quiet room, his voice carrying a tenderness he himself might not have recognized.

After speaking, he walked out, closing the door gently behind him.

Instead of going to his bedroom, Felix headed straight to his study. He sat at his desk, turned on the desk lamp, and the soft light illuminated his deep features.

He began working through a stack of documents, the only sound the scratching of his pen across the paper.

About fifteen minutes later, a ringtone broke the silence of the study,

“Hello,”

“Mr. Brooker, I saw Lucas,” Josh’s voice came through the phone.

After dropping Felix off at home, Josh had driven back to his place.

On the way, he stopped to buy cigarettes and heard faint groaning sounds.

Driven by curiosity, he followed the sounds to an alley. Under the dim streetlight, he found Lucas bloodied and in extreme misery on the ground.

Lucas’ words to Lauren at the hospital earlier in the day had already been relayed to Felix by Gael, and Josh, having been there, was aware too.

Now seeing Lucas beaten half to death, he called Felix to seek his opinion.

After a moment, Felix’s voice came back coldly, “Take him to the hospital. Make sure he doesn’t die, but don’t let him live well either.”

Josh shuddered at the reply, hesitating before asking, “So you mean to keep him barely alive?”

Felix's lips curled into a cold smile, devoid of warmth, "Since his legs are already useless, there's no need to keep them. Amputate them."

Chills ran down Josh's spine, the cold seeping from his feet to his head.

348

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Chapter 204 Bottles and Battles

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Although Lucas' legs had been broken, with proper care, they could have healed. This time, it was unclear who had left Lucas in such a terrible state that if he had been left in the alley overnight, he probably would have been close to death.

After hanging up the phone, Josh, following Felix's instructions, took Lucas to the hospital.

The person who had beaten Lucas half to death was now calmly and slowly removing blood-stained clothes and gloves. Then, they pulled out a lighter and set them on fire.

The flames surged up instantly, consuming the clothes and gloves, casting flickering light on a face that was chillingly cold. The facial features were delicate, the eyes deep like a cold pool, distant and frosty.

Beneath a prominent nose were thin, cold lips, as if touched by frost, exuding a chilling aloofness like an intricately carved jade sculpture, conveying a sense of distance. The tall, slender figure was tightly clad in black, with every movement, the lines of muscle subtly visible, combining frail beauty with a daunting sense of power.

Mia watched the ashes, feeling the anger inside her finally begin to settle.

Her sudden outbreak against Lucas stemmed from an incident an hour earlier.

It was Friday, and the weekend was just starting.

Marilyn had been devoting all her attention to taking care of Lauren recently. It had been nearly a month since she had seen her beloved daughter.

So, Marilyn called Mia to arrange a dinner together at a barbecue restaurant.

As Mia grilled slices of tender meat, she asked about Lauren's recent condition, her main concern being whether Laurie was doing well.

Marilyn's face lit up with a gentle smile as she detailed the meticulous care Felix, Mrs. Fu, and Anna had provided for Lauren.

Mia's heart, which had been in suspense, finally settled down.

However, when Marilyn relayed the findings of Gael's investigation, Mia's calm eyes instantly ignited with rage. She clenched her fork so tightly her knuckles turned white, almost snapping the fork in half.

Anyone who had bullied her sister Laurie would not be spared by Mia!

As her rage found no outlet, she accidentally spotted Lucas, in his wheelchair, slowly passing in front of the barbecue restaurant through its bright glass windows.

In that moment, time seemed to freeze. Mia's eyes locked onto Lucas' familiar figure, and a single thought grew wildly in her mind, this man must pay a painful price for his actions!

Suppressing her anger, she calmly told Marilyn, "Mom, my advisor just messaged me about an urgent matter; I need to head back to school. You should head home and rest early tonight; I'll stay at school."

After a few words of caution from Marilyn, Mia watched her mother leave hurriedly.

Mia left the barbecue restaurant and stealthily followed Lucas.

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18:05 Wed, 2 Apr●

Chapter 204 Bottles and Battles

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On a secluded stretch of road, she quickly pulled out a sack she had prepared and, without hesitation, threw it over Lucas, followed by a barrage of furious blows.

Lucas struggled desperately inside the sack, crying out in pain, but Mia showed no sign of stopping.

Afterward, she dragged the now defenseless Lucas into a dark alley nearby.

Picking up a rock, she ruthlessly smashed it against Lucas' legs, over and over. His legs quickly became a bloody mess, and he collapsed, breathing more out than in, before Mia finally stopped.

Having dealt with the situation, it was nearly 10 PM.

Mia stood under a streetlamp, its dim light elongating her figure.

She was about to call a cab on her phone.

Suddenly, a blinding car light shone unexpectedly on her, making her squint and raise her hand to shield her eyes.

Moments later, a sleek Porsche pulled up smoothly in front of her.

The car door opened, and a man in his twenties stepped out.

He was handsome, but his expression carried a hint of cynical nonchalance.

With a pleasing smile, he said, "Sister Man, looking for a ride? Going home or back to school? I'll *take* you."

Mia looked closely and recognized him immediately. It was Lu Jinian, the man she had first encountered with Josh, who had forced her to drink with him.

That night, he had been drunk, reeking of alcohol, and acting like he'd been dumped by a girlfriend, turning to the bar to drown his sorrows.

After drinking too much, he had started to act crazy, insisting she drink with him. When she refused, he had splashed a glass of red wine on her.

348

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Chapter 205 The Fear Factor of Mia

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Back then, his friends joined in, heckling as they began to get handsy with her when she refused to comply. Mia was ready to crack open their heads with a wine bottle, but then Josh appeared out of nowhere.

Seeing Josh dressed sharply and looking like he wanted to play the hero, Mia quickly acted the part of a delicate damsel in distress. It was this act that led to Josh driving her back to school, and her cleverly returning the favor by returning his umbrella and scheming against him.

She thought she wouldn't cross paths with Kenny again, but fate seemed to have other plans, and she bumped into him every time she stepped out of campus.

Kenny, perhaps too drunk to remember her that night, didn't recognize her, but his friends identified her instantly.

Embarrassed that they hadn't managed to coerce her into drinking last time, they decided to teach her a lesson. In the mall, they dragged her into the men's restroom, intent on punishing her.

Instead, she stabbed them with a butterfly knife, dunked their heads in the toilets, filling their stomachs with water, and then beat them with the mop until they were bruised and crying for their parents.

After beating them up, Mia casually walked away, leaving several disheveled men whimpering in the

restroom.

The next day, using some method, they found out her school and name and threatened her. If she didn't come to the bar to drink with them, they'd make sure she couldn't survive in Hoverdale.

So, they met again at the bar for the third time.

Inside the private room, the luxurious coffee table was covered in bottles. Kenny and his friends, pointing at the bottles with smug expressions, said, "Just finish these fifty bottles, and we'll call it even."

They thought Mia would be scared and compromise, but they didn't understand her at all. Mia was crazy.

The moment those scumbags threatened her, she was ready to go all out against them.

So, there was no way she was going to drink.

Before they could react, Mia swung a bottle at them, cracking them over the head.

She left them bleeding, then pulled out her knife, forcing them to drink the rest of the bottles.

“Remember, I’m not someone who scares easily.”

“I dare to beat you today, and I’d dare to kill you tomorrow. You can call the cops on me, but you better be prepared for me to come after your families when I get out.”

Unbeknownst to Mia, these men were sons of Haverdale’s wealthiest families, used to bullying others and never being challenged themselves—let alone being beaten senseless by a woman.

*Rich people fear nothing but death. And Mia? She feared death the least.*

After being brutally beaten twice and receiving death threats, these wealthy young men were instantly

silenced.

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Chapter 205 The Fear Factor of Mia

incredibly cool.

In private, they would pay her respect.

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Now, facing Kenny, Mia calmly pulled out her butterfly knife, spinning it elegantly on her slender fingers, and coldly asked, “Looking for trouble? Or looking for death?”

Kenny shuddered, truth be told, he both loved and hated her. He loved her ice—cold beauty; hated her fiery temper. Though her fighting style was captivating, it was undeniably overwhelming.

Yet, this bold and unique woman was unlike any he had encountered before, far stronger than any woman who had merely tried to please him.

Conquering her would definitely be thrilling! He forced a smile and said, “Mia’s really joking around. I saw you standing alone by the road and just wanted to offer you a ride.

“Really?” The knife spun faster on her fingertips, casting icy reflections.

Seeing the menacing blade, Kenny felt a chill run down his spine, “Yes, yes.”

Mia looked at him, half-smiling, “So, no more forcing me to drink?”

Kenny swallowed hard, daring not to provoke her further after witnessing her ferocity.

His family was rich, and he hadn’t had enough of his luxurious life yet; he didn’t want to die.

Seeing his fearful, cautious demeanor, Mia’s lips curled into a barely noticeable cold smile, then she slowly put away her butterfly knife.

Relieved to see the knife put away, Kenny breathed a sigh of relief, “Mia, where are you headed now?”

Mia raised an eyebrow, her gaze sharp as a knife sweeping across his face, as if assessing the truth in his words.

348

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262

The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

Chapter 206 Josh Steps Up

Moments later, Mia spoke up, her voice cool, “Then take me back to school.”

Finished

Kenny hurried to open the car door for her. Just as Mia was about to get in, a black Maitrise suddenly pulled

up

in front of them.

The car door swung open forcefully, and a man rushed down, took a few steps forward, and pulled Mia behind him. Then, without hesitation, he threw a punch at Kenny’s face.

Mia froze, not expecting Josh to suddenly appear. Her pupils dilated for a second, but she quickly regained her composed demeanor.

Before Kenny could react, Josh was on him, his fist carrying a gust of wind straight to Kenny's eye socket.

With a dull thud, the punch landed precisely on Kenny's face, the impact causing his body to lurch sideways violently; his eye area immediately swelled up, turning a bruised purple, like he'd been hit with a ton of bricks.

Staggering back a few steps from the punch,

his face a mix of anger and shock, and before Kenny almost fell to the ground. He finally steadied himself,

"Who the heck are you?"

Josh remained silent, his lips pressed into a thin line, his gaze fierce. He threw another punch, this time aiming for Kenny's stomach.

Now thoroughly enraged, Kenny, a spoiled rich kid from Hoverdale, who usually got whatever he wanted, except when dealing with Mia, this reckless madwoman, had never been humiliated like this.

He didn't know this man who had appeared out of nowhere and hadn't provoked him, yet he was inexplicably being beaten up.

Kenny gritted his teeth, blocked Josh's punch, and kicked violently towards Josh's knee.

Mia, coming back to her senses, stepped back a few paces and leaned against Josh's car, arms crossed, watching the fight with interest.

Josh's movements were startlingly fast; before Kenny's leg could land, he grabbed Kenny's ankle and flipped him onto the ground with a forceful tug.

Kenny hit the ground hard, sweat breaking out from the pain.

Josh looked down at him, his eyes cold as ice, but his tone unnervingly calm, "Stay away from Mia if you don't want your family to go bankrupt."

The night breeze lifted the wisps of hair on Mia's forehead. Watching Josh, his throat working angrily and veins on his neck bulging, she found him irresistibly powerful.

Her fingers idly twirled a strand of her hair as her eyes swept over his lean, muscular torso, internally admiring his tall, broad-shouldered, and narrow-waisted figure, paired with gold-rimmed glasses.

He looked scholarly and refined, yet surprisingly ruthless in a fight, giving off a sense of a fallen scholar.

If she hadn't known he was gay, she might have been interested in him again.

Mia sighed inwardly; she really liked this type, but she had no interest in troublemakers.

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## Chapter 206 Josh Steps Up

Just then, Josh turned around, their eyes meeting, and he saw Mia's casually scrutinizing gaze.

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Finished

In his memory, this girl was a clear-eyed college student, always appearing victimized by men, helpless and fragile. It couldn't possibly be the same expression.

He must have seen wrong. As Josh stared intently, Mia realized her lapse and quickly adopted a flustered expression.

Her whole body tensed, her hands clenching her clothes, her lips pressed tight, and her eyes full of fear, looking pitiful.

Josh breathed a sigh of relief. He knew he must have been mistaken.

He walked over, without a word, stuffed Mia into the car, then got into the driver's seat, started the car, and the tires screeched against the pavement.

Kenny lay on the ground, watching the car drive away, his heart full of resentment and bitterness.

"Mia, I'm like your little brother. I got beaten, and you just ignored it and left with the guy who hit me. That's really heartless of you," he whimpered.

The car sped down the road, Josh gripping the steering wheel tightly, Mia sitting quietly inside. For a while, neither spoke.

The air was thick with tension. Josh frowned and took a deep breath, his tone harsh, “Why are you out alone at night again? The first time at the bar, you were being dragged to drink with strangers, luckily I saved you; the second time, you almost got assaulted by thugs, luckily the police arrived in time; today’s the third time, if I hadn’t passed by, you would have been in trouble.”

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Chapter 207 Late Night Lessons

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Josh felt a shiver of fear as he spoke, thinking about how he almost didn’t run into Lucas to take him to the hospital; he would have been home by now.

After dropping Lucas off, he had come across Mia being harassed.

“You’re a college student, don’t you have any sense of safety?”

Mia listened to his endless chatter and simply responded, “Thanks.”

If she didn’t know he was friends with Jeffrey and Elliot, she might have had a good impression of him.

*Too bad. Birds of a feather flock together, and anyone who could be friends with someone like Elliot definitely wasn’t a simpleton.*

Josh frowned; he hadn’t spoken so much just to get a ‘thanks. He hoped she would avoid going out alone at night; it was too unsafe.

He wanted to say more, but a glance at Mia through the rearview mirror, looking out the window with a cold demeanor, discouraged him from continuing.

The car sped along, finally stopping at the entrance of Hoverdale Tech University.

The gate was deserted except for a few dim streetlights.

Josh said irritably, “Get out!”

Mia, unfazed by his tone, silently opened the door and walked toward the gate.

Only then did she realize that the gate was locked for the night, and the guardhouse light was off.

She stood at the gate, frowning slightly at the closed door.

*Well, time to head home.* She turned and started walking down the road toward her house.

Josh watched her figure from the car, laughing to himself in frustration.

She wouldn't even ask for his help. He had just scolded her a bit, all for her own good, and now she was holding a grudge.

He was tempted to leave her be, but it was already past eleven at night. If she ran into trouble again, he'd never forgive himself.

Josh sighed, started the car, and slowly pulled up beside her. He rolled down the window, "Get in!"

Mia kept walking, her tone cold, "I don't need your help."

Josh, frustrated, honked the horn sharply, startling Mia.

She turned and glared at him, "What's your problem?"

Josh's voice carried a hint of helplessness, "I'd like to ask you the same. You're a young woman; do you have to go out at night? What if you were harassed by that guy earlier today? Even if you made it back to school, the gates are closed. Are you planning to walk the streets alone?"

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Chapter 207 Late Night Lessons

Mia met his gaze, her eyes cold yet defiant.

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Finished

Josh softened his voice, "Come on, I'll take you wherever you need to go."

She couldn't let pride hurt her feet; her house was 18 miles from the school. If she walked, she'd surely end up with blisters.

Once Mia was in the car, the ride was mostly silent, except for the occasional directions he gave.

The car drove through the night and soon arrived at Mia's house.

Mia lived in the countryside, in a house surrounded by quiet, with only the occasional dog barking in the distance.

But when they reached the front door  
they found it locked.

Mia was stunned; she hadn't expected her mom to not be home and to have gone back to the Brooker's Villa instead.

And because she had rushed out of her dorm, she didn't bring her house keys. Now her only option was a hotel, but there were none nearby.

Mia looked up at the sky in exasperation.

Sitting in the car, Josh couldn't help but chuckle at her predicament.

"Hey! You're not pretending you can't get in, planning to go home with me, are you?"

Mia looked at him expressionlessly.

Josh immediately regretted his joke, remembering how close he'd come to crossing a line with her before. She'd probably avoid him at all costs; why would she go home with him?

He quickly sobered up, "I'll take you to a hotel."

Mia didn't refuse. Inside the car, the atmosphere was tense.

Mia stared out the window, the passing streetlights casting mottled shadows on her face.

Josh watched her from the rearview mirror, sighing at her icy expression.

It seemed his actions last time had really scared her.

He understood that; after all, Mia was just a college student with a naive mind and a timid nature. He resolved to stop making such boundary-less jokes in the future, fearing he might really scare her off.

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## Chapter 208 Breakfast with a Side of Secrets

Finished

Josh had no idea that Mia had mistakenly thought he was gay; otherwise, she might have made a move on him a long time ago. They quickly arrived at the hotel, where Josh parked the car and got out first to open the door for Mia,

He then went into the hotel, handled the check—in procedures for her, and after everything was settled, he pulled out a bank card from his pocket that he hadn't been able to give her before, and handed it to Mia.

"I was wrong about last time," Josh said in a low, sincere voice, tinged with a bit of guilt. "I truly want to apologize. This card is a small token of my sincerity; I hope you'll accept it."

He tried to sound as gentle as possible and forcibly placed the bank card in Mia's hand.

Mia was taken aback, her gaze falling on the bank card. She hadn't expected Josh to actually hand her the

card.

"I... I don't need this," she said slowly, her voice still cool. *Only* I know how much I could use this money.

But, she had to maintain her image and couldn't break character now.

"Take it back," she handed the bank card back to Josh.

Josh knew she would refuse. This girl was stubborn and not very compliant, but she still had the naive and clear conscience of a college student.

140,000 dollars – not just anyone could refuse that.

Josh felt even better about Mia, and it made all his efforts back and forth tonight worthwhile.

Josh firmly pushed her hand away. "I'm giving it to you, and if you don't want it, throw it in the trash."

His tone was indisputable, his eyes carrying a mix of firmness and dominance.

“Alright, it’s getting late. You should get some rest; I should head back too.” Josh turned to leave, and *at that* moment, he raised his eyebrows, secretly pleased with himself. *My domineering act just now must have looked so cool, maybe it even dazzled her a bit.*

Little did he know, Mia was watching his retreating figure with a playful look on her face, a slight smile tugging at her lips and a hint of mockery in her eyes. *He’s so silly and clueless; it’s really quite amusing.*

Just for being so agreeable, she would temporarily forgive him for being friends with scum like Elliot and Jeffrey.

As long as he didn’t mess with Sister Laurie, she promised not to target him.

Mia was in a great mood, tucking the bank card safely into her pocket.

Tomorrow she would meet with Lauren to discuss studying abroad.

Although her mom said the Brooker family was very kind to Lauren, it’s better to rely on oneself, especially with men who might be charming today and heartless tomorrow, demanding back everything they had given and more.

She believed that after all her hardships, Sister Laurie had given up on men long ago.

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18:06 Wed, 2 Apr

Chapter 208 Breakfast with a side of Secrets

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Mia had a dreamless night, and as the sky began to lighten outside her window, she got up early, quickly freshened up, and headed out to the Fu family’s place,

She had learned the Brooker family’s address from her mom the day before.

Mia and Lauren’s close relationship wasn’t without reason.

For Lauren, in the entire Bennetts family, only Marilyn had been kind to her,

Mia had once braved the rain on her bike to deliver Lauren’s SAT admission ticket, even breaking her right hand in the process. The injury slowed her down during the High School Placement Test, causing her to miss out on a key high school spot and end up in a regular high school instead.

Lauren had felt guilty about this for a long time. Neither Marilyn nor Mia owed her anything, yet they had always treated her with genuine kindness.

So, after she got out of jail, when the Bennetts used Marilyn and Mia to manipulate her, she kept her grievances to herself, not wanting them to get hurt because of her.

For Mia, Lauren was not only a sister but also a teacher. When Lauren was a freshman in high school, Mia was just starting middle school.

Before meeting Lauren, Mia's grades had been mediocre.

Thanks to Lauren's one-on-one tutoring, she became the top student in her grade.

For three years, she maintained her top spot, won scholarships every year, and significantly relieved her mother's financial burden.

Even after the High School Placement Test, where she struggled with her right hand and couldn't finish the big questions at the end of the exam, resulting in her attending a regular high school, Sister Lauren, even from jail, never forgot about her.

When her mom visited the prison, Lauren made sure she took all her high school notes to Mia, which was a major reason why Mia was able to attend the prestigious Hoverdale Tech University.

348

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The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

Chapter 209 Silent Cries in a Loud Kitchen

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Finished

Lauren was such a good person; she didn't deserve to be mistreated by scum. Mia was determined to take Lauren away from that toxic environment.

At the Brooker's villa, when Lauren opened her eyes, she was a bit disoriented. She remembered waiting in the living room for Felix to return last night, and

because she was so tired,  
she decided to take a quick nap. How had it suddenly become *morning*?

Looking around, she found herself in her own room and knew Felix must have carried her there.

She couldn't help but blush a little. Since arriving at the Brooker's villa, it seemed she was always causing trouble for him.

Lauren felt a bit guilty; she really wanted to do something for Felix, but he lacked nothing.

After some thought, she decided to make breakfast for Felix.

After washing up, she went downstairs and before entering the kitchen, opened the villa's door to prevent missing Josh and Gael ringing the doorbell if they came by.

At that moment, Mia had just arrived at the Brooker's villa. She looked up at the palace-like mansion. The milky white marble facade gleamed under the sunlight, radiating a soft yet noble sheen, each corner adorned with exquisite carvings that displayed unmatched luxury.

Tall pillars supported the imposing porch, decorated with delicate wrought-iron carvings.

The front yard of the villa was filled with various blooming flowers, their rich fragrance wafting through the air, each petal seeming like a meticulously crafted work of art.

Mia admired the luxurious setting and wondered, How *well* is *Laurie actually living here*?

She took a deep breath, approached the door, and rang the bell.

However, no one came to answer for quite some time. Mia frowned, puzzled. *Is everyone still asleep?*

Hesitantly, she pushed the door and, to her surprise, it opened.

With a moment of hesitation, she walked in and headed towards the living room, immediately smelling the rich scent of food.

As Mia approached the kitchen, she saw Lauren busy at work.

Her eyes moistened slightly as she softly called out, "Laurie."

Her voice echoed quietly in the serene kitchen but sank like a stone, stirring no response.

Mia paused, confusion rippling through her. *Didn't Laurie hear me?*

Her brows furrowed, she spoke again, emphasizing her tone with a mix of affection and urgency, "Laurie?"

But the only reply was the bubbling sound of porridge in the pot. Lauren continued stirring the thick porridge, which had been simmering for over an hour, filling the kitchen with the aroma of cooked rice and

steam.

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## Chapter 209 Silent Cries in a Loud Kitchen

Her voice was almost a shout now, echoing in the kitchen, but Lauren seemed isolated in the room with no reaction.

Mia's pupils narrowed, a chill running from her feet to her head. She finally realized Lauren couldn't hear her.

When she had seen Lauren at the hospital last time, she was fine. How could she have lost her hearing so quickly?

Mia clenched her fists tightly, her nails almost digging into her palms. The Bennetts, Kenneth, and Lucas, what *have those scumbags done to her!*

Mia's eyes brimmed with unprecedented fury, as if ready to exact vengeance on those who had harmed

Lauren.

Just then, Lauren turned around.

Seeing Mia, her eyes instantly brightened with surprise and joy, her lips curving into a gentle **umile**, Ma, what brings you here?"

Mia quickly masked her murderous intent, her face breaking into a pure, harmless **smile** as **warm** as a ray of sunshine, "I missed you, so I came."

But her eyes stayed intently on Lauren's face, not missing any subtle shifts in her expression, trying to detect any hidden pain.

Lauren stepped forward, affectionately grabbing Mia's hand, her touch soft and warm, "Mia, come sit down! The porridge will be ready soon."

As she started to lead Mia toward the living room, Mia scrutinized Lauren, her doubts not yet cleared, "I'll help you in the kitchen."

Lauren's smile deepened, her expression filled with indulgence, "The kitchen is all greasy; I can manage."

Mia paused, surprised by the response. *Did I misunderstand? Can Laurie actually hear?*

She casually replied, "It's no problem."

Seeing Mia's insistence, Lauren didn't press further. She turned back to the porridge, slowly stirring, and added, "Then Mia, why don't you fry some eggs?"

348

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Chapter 210 Chaos at the Villa

Mia took a step back, standing behind Lauren, and said, "I don't like fried eggs."

59%

Finished

Based on her past experiences with Lauren, Mia expected a concerned inquiry about what she would prefer to eat. However, Lauren simply responded, "The eggs are in the fridge."

This curt reply hit Mia like a hammer, confirming her fears that Lauren couldn't hear; her previous responses were likely just good guesses or lip-reading. *Lauren must have* suffered a lot in prison.

A sharp pain pierced Mia's heart, fueling the flames of rage within her. *Everyone who hurt Laurie deserves to die!*

Mia's eyes closely followed Lauren's every move. She noticed Lauren's limp as she walked; each step seemed to press directly on Mia's heart, causing her eyes to redden and her heart to ache with bitterness and sympathy.

Suppressing her distress, Mia took a deep breath, opened the fridge, and retrieved the eggs.

She heated the pan, poured in the oil, and with a sizzle, the egg hit the hot surface, crackling loudly.

Soon, the kitchen filled with the aroma of cooking eggs, and the porridge was ready.

Lauren carefully ladled the thick porridge into a large bowl and, with a slightly unsteady gait, carried it toward the dining table.

But just as she reached the dining area, a shrill scream erupted, "What is this wench doing here!"

Following that, a loud crash resounded as the bowl fell to the floor, scattering shards of porcelain and splashing porridge all over.

Lauren

stood out in shock.

Mia, who had just come out with the fried eggs, saw a garishly made-up woman raising her hand to strike Lauren.

In a panic, Lauren dodged, but some of the hot porridge spilled on her hand, eliciting a pained gasp as the bowl crashed to the ground.

Mia's gaze turned icy and sharp, her eyes like twin blades fixed on the older woman who had suddenly appeared.

In her mind, a firm resolution took hold—to protect Lauren at all costs.

To Mia, Lauren was one of the most important people in her life, a sister she would guard with her life, and she would not allow this ignorant woman to harm her.

Fury burning, Mia didn't hesitate. She stormed over and slammed the hot fried egg right onto the woman's heavily made-up face.

“Ahh!” The woman screamed in agony, her voice as grating as nails on a chalkboard, the heat causing her skin to redden and swell instantly. She frantically tried to push Mia away, her face contorted in pain and

anger.

But Mia didn't back down. She charged again, grabbed the woman by the hair, and kicked her knee. The

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18:06 Wed, 2 Apr N

Chapter 210 Chaos at the Villa

Mia pressed her head against the floor, covered in broken porcelain and porridge.

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Finished

The shards cut into the woman's face, mixing blood with the scalding porridge in a chaotic mess. The woman struggled hysterically, crying out, but Mia stood firm, her eyes filled with endless disgust and anger.

The man who had come with the woman finally reacted, his eyes wide with fury as he raised his foot to kick Mia away.

Lauren's heart tightened, and without hesitation, she stepped in front of Mia, shouting, “Mr. Brendan, this is the Brooker's villa, not the Gray family!”

The man, Brendan, Kenneth's father, glared at Lauren, his eyes nearly spitting fire.

He and his wife had been vacationing abroad and had just returned last night, only to learn that their beloved son had been sent to jail by Felix. This news was like a bombshell, leaving the couple sleepless all night.

At dawn, they rushed to the Fu family, hoping Felix would show mercy for the sake of their relationship and spare Kenneth.

But they had never expected to encounter Lauren here.

Lauren had caused their daughter Elaine to become a vegetative state, a perpetual agony in their hearts.

During Lauren's five years in prison, they had covertly made her life a living hell, ensuring she suffered greatly.

Seeing Lauren, whom she blamed for her daughter's condition, Brielle lost control and lashed out.

She could never have anticipated Mia's fierce response. A lady of her stature was humiliated, lying in a disgraceful pose among hot porridge and shattered porcelain, beaten by a wild girl.

Brendan stared, his eyes wide, fixed on Lauren in front of him.

348

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