

The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

The Heiress Revived

The Heiress Revived Ch 21

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Chapter 21 Don't Touch Me, Stay Away We're Done Forever

Lucas noticed the wound on her forehead, his gaze filled with concern. "You're hurt."

Lauren stared coldly at the ground, silent.

"Who did this to you? Tell me, I'll make them pay." Lucas's eyes narrowed, a dangerous glint flashing in them.

But to Lauren, his concern was laughable,

He was the one who said he'd protect her.

And he was the one who sent her to prison.

Five years ago, she had desperately hoped he would stand in court as her defense attorney.

But when the **trial** came, he sat across from her—defending Willow. Expressionless, he laid out every damning piece of evidence against her, **each** word like a blade slicing into her, pinning her to the pillar of shame. Because of him, she lost her freedom, her dignity, her education, her **future**...

She had trusted **him** once. **And** he had stabbed her in the back.

That betrayal had nearly cost her her life. How could **she** ever trust him again?

If Kenneth was the person she feared most, then Lucas was the one she despised the most

They had spent more than a decade together, relying on each other. How could he throw all of that away **so** easily!!

She envied

Willow. Willow had also **known** the Bennett family for over a decade, yet they had been

willing to sacrifice their own blood—related daughter for her. They wouldn't let Willow suffer even the slightest bit of **harm**.

Lucas's face was heavy with guilt as he watched her remain distant and indifferent...

"Lauren, you're still mad at me, aren't you?"

"Thad no choice back then. Can't you **forgive** me? I swear. I'll never let **you** suffer again."

Lauren had no interest in his excuses.

She had already suffered for things that were never hers to bear

No explanation could undo the damage.

Her leg would never heal. Her left ear was permanently deaf. The kidney they took from her was never coming back.

These weren't just scars—they were facts, etched in blood.

How could she ever forgive the one who did this to her?

Lauren tried to pull her hand away, but Lucas held on too tightly.

Finally, she lifted her gaze to him. Her eyes were cold, frozen over with an unshakable hardness,

The **look** in her eyes nearly knocked the air from his lungs, like an invisible hand squeezing his chest. For a moment, he felt like he was drowning in the sheer loathing and detachment in her stare.

"Let go," she said, her voice ice-cold.

Lucas's grip instinctively tightened, his gaze locked onto her. "Lauren, let me take you to get your wound treated, okay?"

His voice was soft, almost pleading.

To Lauren, it only made her disgust grow.

"Did you not hear me? I said, let go. There was no warmth in her voice, only raw repulsion."

Chapter 21 Don't Touch Me. Stay Away We're Done Forever

It felt like thousands of needles stabbing into Lucas's heart. His **lips** trembled, struggling to form words "Lauren.."

Finished

Her name carried all the regret and desperation he couldn't put into words. He was begging her, pleading for even a shred of

mercy

But all it did was make her loathing deepen.

Lauren had reached her limit. A flicker of madness flashed in her eyes.

Suddenly, she yanked her head back—then slammed it hard against the wall.

The wound on her forehead burst open, blood gushing out streaming down her face in a horrifying red mess.

She turned to Lucas

her bloodied face eerily calm, her voice unwavering "Are you letting go or not?"

Lucas stood frozen completely stunned by her self-destructive act

"No" Lauren lifted her head again and smashed it against the wall.

Bang Bang Bang

The sickening sound of her skull hitting the wall echoed down the hallway, each impact like a sledgehammer against Lucas's heart

His face went deathly pale. His legs nearly gave out beneath him.

"You're insane." he choked out, his voice shaking. You'd rather hurt yourself than stay near me?

Lauren seemed possessed. As long as he didn't let go, she would keep going

Blood splattered onto the floor pooling at her feet. Her face turned ghostly white from the blood loss

Lucas was in agony, his soul writhing under the sight of her self-inflicted torment

Why do you hate yourself so much? Why would you rather destroy yourself just to push **me** away His voice was hoarse, trembling

He pulled her into his arms, holding her so tightly it was as if he wanted to merge her into himself

Hate herself!

What a joke. If loving her own body had ever done her any good would she be dumb she be blind

crippled

“Either let me go, or I’ll die right in front of you”

She thrashed in his grip, trying to throw herself at the wall again.

Her strength was fading fast, but her determination was unshakable. Every struggle reopened her wounds. Blood streamed down her forehead, dripping onto Lucas’s arm—hot and scalding, like molten lava burning into his skin.

Lucas stared at her in horror. “Lauren stop—fine. I let go. I let go?”

His hands slowly loosened. But the pain of releasing her was unbearable. Like his heart was being devoured from the inside.

Lauren swayed without his support.

For a split second, Lucas instinctively reached out—

But before he could touch her, she forced herself to stand, refusing to rely on him.

“Don’t touch me. Stay away from me. We’re done. Forever”

Her voice was firm, final. Each word was a chasm between them one he would never cross again.

Then, without another glance, she turned and limped away

Finished

210 PM M

Chapter 21 Don’t Touch Me, Stay Away We’re Done Forever

Her steps were unsteady, each one like a broken drumbeat pounding against Lucas’s heart.

He didn’t dare follow, yet he couldn’t bear to leave her alone.

So he kept his distance, trailing behind **her** in silence.

Lauren didn't want to go home. If she did, she'd only be met **with** the Bennett family's endless scorn.

She found a bench outside the hospital and sat down, staring blankly at the cars passing by

Lucas stood nearby, **watching** her.

The blood on her forehead was so vivid, it hurt his eyes.

Then, suddenly, he stopped a woman passing by and whispered something to her.

The **woman** looked surprised but nodded and quickly walked away.

A few moments later, she returned with a small bag in her hands. She approached Lauren and said softly, "Miss, you're bleeding a lot. Let me help you.

Lauren glanced at the bag—disinfectant, cotton swabs, bandages.

Something stirred in her heart. She glanced over her shoulder.

Lucas quickly ducked out of sight.

Lauren scanned the **area** but didn't see him.

Only then did she give the woman a faint **smile**. Thank you,"

From a hidden **spot**, Lucas watched as Lauren quietly sat there, letting the stranger tend to her wound.

Relief washed over him—but so **did** a deeper, more agonizing pain,

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Chapter 22 If I Was Born Just to Suffer, Then You Shouldn't Have Had Me

Lauren sat on the bench for a long, long time—so long that the sky dimmed and the streetlights flickered on, one by one.

The warm **glow** spilled over her, but she remained motionless, staring blankly into the distance. Cars roared past, the gusts of wind they left **behind** tangling in her hair, just like her chaotic, broken life,

Lucas stood in the shadows nearby, silently watching her.

Her thin, lonely silhouette pierced through him like a thousand invisible needles, the **pain** spreading to every inch of his body.

He **wanted** nothing more **than** to walk up to her, pull her into his arms, and tell her how much he regretted everything—that he would do anything to make it up to her if she would just give him a chance.

But he didn't dare.

He was terrified that if he got any closer, she would recoil, disgusted. That the chasm between them would grow even wider, impossible to bridge.

So all he could do was stand behind her, keeping his distance, watching.

As the night deepened, Lauren finally got **up**, dragging her tired, heavy body forward, step by step. toward the Bennett

family's house.

Lucas snapped out of his thoughts and instinctively followed from afar...

By the time she reached the Bennett estate, it was completely **dark**.

The moment she stepped closer, she saw Marilyn standing anxiously at the villa's entrance, her eyes scanning the road.

The second Marilyn spotted her, the worry on her face disappeared, replaced by a relieved smile as she hurried up to greet

her.

Ma'am, you're **finally back**."

As she spoke. Marilyn carefully examined Lauren.

The sight of the bandages on her forehead and her pale face **made** her eyes fill with concern. "Ma'am, what happened to you?"

Lauren shook her **head** slightly. "It's nothing."

Marilyn still looked uneasy. "Are you sure?"

Lauren nodded **again**, inhaling deeply **to** suppress the bitterness in her chest. She steadied her voice as much as she could and asked, "Marilyn, how's Mia?"

A bright smile bloomed across Marilyn's face, full of gratitude and relief. "**Thanks** to sir, the school won't expel Mia."

She sighed. "If it weren't for sir stepping in. I wouldn't have known what to do. Ma'am, sir is actually a good person. If you two could just clear up your misunderstandings, he would be a great brother to you."

Lauren said nothing. Her lips curled into a faint, almost imperceptible smirk.

Looking at the gratitude in Marilyn's eyes, she felt nothing but a deep, suffocating sense of irony.

People **like** Elliot—after hurting others, they could still **manage** to make their victims feel grateful. **How** absurd.

She didn't bother asking Marilyn what exactly had happened to Mia at school. The details didn't matter. What mattered was that the person behind it **was** Elliot

If he wanted to, he had a thousand ways to torment people. This time, he used Mia against her. Next time, it could be Marilyn

She wanted to just walk away **from** all of this.

Chapter 22 It Was Born Just to Suffer, Then You Shouldn't Have Had Me

Lauren forced a small smile. "As long as Mia's okay, **that's** all that matters"

With that, she turned and walked toward the villa, her steps dragging.

Finished

As soon as she entered, she saw the Bennett family sitting around the dining table, laughing and chatting, enjoying **a** warm, happy meal together

The table **was** covered with delicious dishes; the atmosphere lively and full of joy.

Her **arrival** shattered it instantly.

Elliot put down his chopsticks, his expression laced with open disdain. Not a word of concern, just immediate mockery

“Oh, you actually came back! I thought you ran away again.

Alice frowned, shooting him a look. “Elliot, don’t talk to your sister like that.

Then, turning to Lauren with a warm smile, she gestured for her to come over. “Lauren, don’t take it to heart. Come **have** dinner

Her smile **was** gentle, but Lauren simply replied flatly, “No, you guys go ahead.”

She had no appetite for this **family**.

Alice’s face stiffened for a second, but she quickly **recovered**. “You shouldn’t skip dinner. It’s bad for your stomach. At least eat a little.”

Lauren’s gaze swept over the table, her lips curling into a cold, mocking smile.

“Sorry. I’m not used to eating leftovers

Her words dropped like a stone into still water, making Alice’s smile freeze

The cheerful atmosphere at the table instantly turned suffocating

David frowned deeply, his expression darkening, exuding the authority of a displeased father.

Willow, sensing the tension, quickly put down her chopsticks and gave Lauren a look filled with sincere concern.

“Hey, **we** waited for you for a long time. But when you didn’t come back, we thought you’d already eaten, so we started. without you. We just barely started eating, so don’t be upset. Come sit

Alice, seizing the lifeline, quickly added.

“Yes, yes” Lauren, come eat. We made all your favorite dishes tonight.”

Elliot suddenly slammed his chopsticks onto the table, his eyes narrowing in warning

“Lauren, **Mom**, Dad, and Willow were worried about you. You came home this **late**, and we didn’t even say a word about it. Don’t act ungrateful. Stop your nonsense and sit down already. Stop acting like the whole family owes you something.”

Lauren looked at their fake, hypocritical faces, and the fire inside her blazed hotter.

She just wanted to be left alone. Why was that so hard?

Why couldn't they just pretend she didn't exist?

So she was the one "making a

e a scene"?

Fine

If they wanted **a** scene, she'd give them **one**.

Lauren inhaled sharply, then pointed at the dishes on the table. "Six dishes and **a soup**. Almost everything's gone. Willow, tell me again—this is just barely started?

Willow

d'allows expression stiffened her mouth opening **as** if to explain, but no words came out

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Chapter 22 11 Was Born Just to Suffer. Then You Shouldn't Have Had Me

Finished

Lauren turned to Alice next

"Your grace, how exactly am I supposed to eat? Lick the plates?"

Lauren, I-

Alice barely got a word in before Lauren cut her off

You said these are all my favorite dishes? Then tell me what do I like to eat?"

silence Alice averted her **eyes**

"Can't answer" Fine. I'll tell you" Lauren **sneered**. "I don't have the luxury to be picky. I e at whatever fills my stomach. The only things I **avoid** are the ones I'm allergic to

She paused, then gestared at **the** table. "And wouldn't you know it—out of six dishes, three would send me straight to the hospital. I'm allergic to seafood, so I can't eat crab or shrimp. I'm allergic to pineapple, so that **pineapple** chicken is our too

Alice's face burned red with embarrassment

But Lauren waspk done. Her gaze landed on Elliot

“You said Mom and Dad care about me! This is their version of care! Giving me food I’m allergic to and calling it my favonte? If this is care, you can keep it. Do you want it?”.

Elliot’s face turned ashen. He had never expected Lauren to turn a simple dinner into a full-blown confrontation.

He wanted to lash out, but she was right. The frustration clogged his throat, choking him .

David was trembling with rage. His face twisted with fury as he slammed his chopsticks onto the table with a loud crack, making the entire tableware shake

You ungrateful disgrace” he roared. We gave **you** life and you treat us like your enemies?”

Lauren looked at him, unflinching

“Did I ask to be born

Her voice was eerily calm.

“If bringing me into this world was only to make me suffer, then you Shouldn’t have had.

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Chapter 23 You Say You Love Me, But Where Is Your Love?

Her whole body stiffened.

It was like a bucket of ice water had been dumped over her, soaking her to the bone.

She had thought—no matter how cold this family was, they wouldn’t ignore her pain.

But she had been wrong.

They didn’t just ignore it.

They accused her of faking it.

At that moment, exhaustion crushed her completely

She didn't want to argue anymore.

There was no point.

"Think whatever you want."

Finished

She straightened her back, blinking rapidly to stop her tears from falling. She refused to show weakness in front of these people.

Then she turned and walked toward the storage room.

"Stop right there!"

Elliot shot to his feet, his voice booming with anger. His face was still twisted in contempt.

Lauren paused but didn't turn around.

She simply looked at him over her shoulder, her eyes frozen solid.

Under that gaze, Elliot's chest tightened. His mind went blank. He forgot what he had even wanted to say..

Lauren stared at them for a long time. Long enough that **the** whole family began to feel unsettled, a prickling discomfort crawling over their skin..

Then she turned away and kept walking

Willow clutched Alice's arm, her voice trembling. "Mom, did **you** see her eyes just now? They **were** terrifying."

Alice patted Willow's Hand reassuringly. But in truth, she had felt it too—that chilling sense of finality, like Lauren was ready to drag them all down with her.

"She's changed so much in the last five years, **Alice** murmured.

David scoffed. "No manners at **all**. She's nothing like Willow. If I had known she'd turn out like this, I wouldn't have had her in the first **place**."

Alice sighed. “Enough. She’s still a girl. Don’t say such harsh things—it’s bad for her pride.”

David’s patience snapped. His roar echoed through the dining room, so loud that even Lauren, already in the storage room, **could** hear it clearly..

“I’m her father! Why the hell should I care about her pride? She’s been spoiled for too long—that’s why she acts like this! If we had put her in her place from the—start, she wouldn’t be so out of control now!”

Just let it go.”

The **argument** dragged on.

Eventually, the house fell silent again.

Lauren sat on the floor, leaning against the **door**.

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Chapter 23 You Say You Love Me, But Where Is Your Love?

The room was pitch dark.

She hugged herself, burying her face against her knees.

And finally, finally, she let the tears fall.

They soaked into her clothes, but they couldn’t wash away the pain in her heart.

Finished

When she first came to this house, she had been filled with hope. She had imagined it would be her safe haven, a warm

home.

Instead, it had become a cold, inescapable prison—one that had torn her apart piece by piece.

Every wound, every scar, every moment of suffering she had endured... was all because of these so-called “family” members.

She didn’t know how long she cried.

At some point, her sobs grew weaker.

She crawled onto the bed, staring **blankly** at the dark ceiling.

Tears kept falling, slipping silently down her temples.

Eventually, exhaustion overtook her, and she drifted **into** a restless sleep.

But even in her dreams, there was no peace.

The nightmare swallowed her whole—dark, suffocating, filled with echoes of the past.

In the dream, she was back in prison.

She could feel the blows landing on her, hear the cruel laughter, taste the blood in her mouth.

She twisted **and** thrashed on the bed, her face contorted in **terror**. Her voice was hoarse, barely **above a** whisper-

“Help me. Mom Mom, please save me...”

The words were filled with pure fear and despair.

Like she **was** back in that endless nightmare, trapped with no way out.

Then, **a** gentle, wrinkled hand rested on her back, patting her rhythmically

A warm, comforting voice murmured. “Don’t be afraid.. I’m here. I’m here...”

The voice was old but full of tenderness.

Like a **small** light piercing through the darkness, trying to **chase** away her fears.

In her sleep. Lauren instinctively curled toward the warmth, her tense body slowly relaxing. The cries faded from her lips.

The storage room door was slightly open. The soft glow from the hallway spilled in, revealing the person sitting beside Lauren’s bed.

It wasn’t Alice.

It was Marilyn.

She sighed quietly, her face full of sorrow.

But there was nothing she could do.

She was **just** a servant.

She had no power in this house.

Chapter 23 You Say You Love Me, But Where is Your Love?

The **only** thing she could do.. was take care of Miss Lauren however she could.

at

Lauren woke up, staring at the ceiling in a daze.

For **a** moment, she couldn't tell what was real **and** what **wasn't**.

Had she dreamed that Alice held her, comforting her?

Lauren let out a bitter laugh

She **must have** lost her mind.

What a ridiculous fantasy.

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Chapter 24 It's Just a Small Wound; No Need to Make a Big Deal Out of It

At the dining table, David, Alice, Elliot, and Willow were already seated.

Strangely, this time, none of them had started eating yet.

The moment Lauren walked out, Alice immediately got up and took her hand, her voice unusually warm.

"Lauren, you must be hungry. Come have breakfast."

Without waiting for her response, Alice pulled her toward the table.

David sat at the head of the table. **Elliot** was to his right, Alice to his left, with Willow right beside her.

That left Lauren with two choices—sit next to Elliot or next to Willow.

She disliked them both, but if she had to choose, she'd rather sit by Elliot.

Without a word, she took the seat next to him and picked up a spoon, quietly eating the small wontons in front of her.

The Bennet family's eyes lingered on her, each expression different.

David's face was dark with barely restrained anger, held back only by Alice's insistence.

Alice looked hesitant, as if she wanted to remind Lauren to greet her elders before eating. But remembering what happened Last night, she swallowed the words.

Willow's gaze flickered with resentment before she forced a sweet smile. "Lauren, **Marilyn** made those wontons just for you. Do you like them?"

Her voice was soft, laced **with an** attempt to please..

But Lauren acted as if she hadn't heard, not sparing Willow so much **as a** glance.

Elliot took a deep **breath**, clearly struggling to contain his temper. His lips curled **into a** forced smirk.

"Lauren, after breakfast, take off that bandage. You're not even injured. Walking around with your head wrapped up like that, people might think we mistreated you."

Lauren's hand paused midair.

Then, **without** a word; she smirked faintly and continued eating as if nothing had happened.

She ate quickly finishing the bowl of wontons **in a** few bites

After dabbing her mouth with a napkin, she finally looked up. I'm done. Enjoy your meal.

Elliot's patience snapped.

"Lauren, who **the** hell do you think you're making that face at **this early in the** morning?"

Lauren met **his** glare with **cold** indifference.

Her lack of reaction only fueled his anger.

He suddenly reached out, grabbing at the bandage on her forehead. "Let's see if you're really hurt, or if you just enjoy playing the victim."

The moment he yanked it off, pain shot through Lauren's skull. The barely healed wound was ripped open, and fresh blood immediately gushed down her **face**.

"I knew **you** were faking—"

The words lodged in Elliot's thro

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Chapter 24 It's Just a Small Wound; No Need to Make a Big Deal Out of it

Alice gasped, eyes turning red with distress. "Lauren! What happened to your forehead?"

Finished

Willow's eyes flickered with satisfaction for a split second before she masked it with feigned concern. "Sis, are you okay?"

Lauren didn't react to the pain.

She sat there motionless, her empty gaze clouded over, as if blood **was all** she could see.

Her eyes swept over the four people in front of her.

At that moment, they didn't **look** like family.

They looked like demons from hell, feeding on her suffering, crushing her dignity beneath their feet.

"Well? Happy **now**?"

Her **voice** was hoarse—**not** hysterical, not shouting.

But it was like **a** hammer, slamming straight **into** their chests.

David, however, didn't even frown

He simply scoffed, his tone indifferent. "It's just **a** small wound. You're not dying. No need to **make** a big deal out of it"

A suffocating, dead silence.

Lauren's grip on the table tightened, her fingers turning white

For a second, it looked like she was about to flip it over again.

David's expression changed.

Recalling how she had overturned the table before, he quickly pressed his hands against it, his eyes locked on her every

move..

Alice, Elliot, and Willow did the same, all instinctively holding down the table, fearing an other outburst.

Alice's hands trembled, her face tense with anxiety. "Lauren, calm down. Your father did n't mean it like that. He just he just thinks the injury isn't serious. He's just concerned about you."

Even she knew how unconvincing her own excuse sounded.

Lauren turned her gaze to Alice, her eyes piercing.

Alice's face flushed under the weight of that stare. She looked away, unable to meet Lauren's eyes.

The tension in the dining room was unbearable.

Blood **still** dripped from **Lauren's** forehead, splattering onto the table.

Bright red, striking, impossible to ignore—
just like the wounds they had carved into her soul.

"Concern?"

The word slipped through her clenched teeth

"Well then, **sir**, ma'am, I appreciate your concern."

With that, she turned on her heel **and** walked **away**, not **giving** them **a** chance to respond.

Elliot scowled, suddenly losing his appetite. "Mom, Dad, I'm heading to the office."

With that, he stormed off.

Once inside his car, Elliot's gaze dropped to the bloodstained bandage in his hand.

Finished

Chapter 24 It's Just a Small Wound, No Need to Make a Big Deal Out of it

A sharp, searing pain spread through his chest.

It tightened, making it **hard** to breathe.

He leaned back against the seat, images flashing through **his** mind-

Lauren left the house yesterday morning, perfectly fine.

But by the time she came back, her forehead had been **bandaged**.

What had happened to her in those hours? Has someone hurt her?

Lauren was his sister.

No matter what mistakes she had made, no one had the right to lay a **hand** on her.

His hands clenched **into** fists, then slowly loosened.

He picked up his phone and dialed a number.

"Kenneth." Elliot's voice **was** sharp with anger. "Did you hit Lauren?"

The man on the other end was eerily calm. "Is that why you called **me**?"

I'm warning you—

whatever Lauren did, she's already paid for it. She's the eldest daughter of the Bennett family, not someone you can **just** hurt whenever you feel like it."

Beep Beep Beep.

Before he could finish, Kenneth hung up

Elliot cursed, slamming his phone onto the passenger seat. "F*ck!"

It took him a long time to calm down.

Finally, he let out a heavy **breath** and started the car, heading to work.

But no matter how hard he tried to focus, he couldn't shake the image of Lauren's bloodied face.

His mind was a mess.

After barely an hour, he gave up, grabbed his phone, and called Marilyn.

“Marilyn, how’s Lauren? Did.. did she take care of her injury?”

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Chapter 25 If I Hit Her, She Deserved It—She Owes Elaine.

“Sir, don’t worry. I’ve already taken care of Miss Lauren’s injury.”

“Good”

“Sir, should I prepare your bedroom for Miss Lauren? She really shouldn’t be staying in the storage room

Marilyn’s voice held a hint of surprise, but also relief.

anymore.”

Elliot hesitated for only a moment before nodding slightly, even though Marilyn couldn’t see him. “Yes. Get my room ready for her.

Marilyn’s tone instantly brightened. “Understood, sir! I’ll clean it right **away**. Miss Lauren has been through enough—she should have a better place to **stay**.”

Elliot let out a small grunt of approval before hanging up

She was his sister. No matter how unreasonable she was, blood was blood. That was something:

g no one could erase.

This time, she would see that he truly cared for her.

He **could** already imagine her reaction—surprise, maybe even a little touched. The thought of it filled him with warmth, and before he knew it, he was looking forward to going home. Maybe, just maybe, she’d be in a better mood. Maybe she’d even bring him lunch at work, just like before.

His lips curved slightly, and the tension on his face eased.

Finally, the end of the workday arrived. Employees packed up and left, their chatter fading into the hallways.

Michael knocked lightly before stepping inside, placing a file on the desk. "Sir, it's late. Aren't **you** heading out for dinner?"

Elliot's lips curled into a confident smile. "My sister's bringing me food."

Michael chuckled. "Must be nice to have a caring sister. I wouldn't know,"

He walked out, leaving Elliot in an even better mood.

But as the minutes ticked by, **that** mood started to sour.

One hour.

Two.

By the time employees started coming back in for the next shift, Lauren was still nowhere to be seen.

A frown crept onto Elliot's face

Did something happen to her on the way?

He immediately grabbed his phone and called home.

It rang several times before Marilyn finally answered.

"**Sir?**"

Elliot wasted no time. "When did Lauren leave the house?"

Marilyn sounded confused. "Miss Lauren never left. She's been home all day."

Elliot's grip on the phone tightened.

She never left? She didn't bring him lunch?

Lauren used to love bringing him meals. It was something she did without fail.

Chapter 25 If I Hit Her, She Deserved It—She Owes Elaine

So why **had** she stopped?

He had **already** compromised, even made an effort to **show** her kindness. Why was she still being so difficult?

Then it hit him.

He had been fooling himself.

Finished

All the things he had imagined—her being moved, her bringing him lunch again—they were nothing but wishful **thinking**.

Why **had** he been so sure she would forgive him? That she would go back to being the sister who doted on him?

Marilyn hesitated. “Sir, do you want me to bring Miss Lauren to the phone?”

Elliot’s jaw **clenched**. “No.”

He ended the call abruptly.

His mood **had** completely soured.

Right on cue, Michael strolled in with the worst possible timing. “So, sir, what did Miss Lauren bring for lunch today?”

He glanced around the office. “Huh? Where’s the food?”

Elliot’s icy glare could’ve frozen **a** man solid.

Michael instantly regretted opening his mouth. He let out **an** awkward laugh, quickly changing the subject. “Sir, this is the file you asked for about the East District land. Reliable sources say it’ll be up for auction in two weeks.”

“Leave it

Michael placed the file on the desk and retreated, relieved to escape unscathed.

Elliot barely glanced at the document, his mind elsewhere.

The city’s policies were set to turn East District into a commercial hub. As long as that didn’t **change**, winning the bid would be **a** guaranteed profit.

The only issue!

Bennett Corporation wasn’t the only one eyeing the land.

Gray Corporation was in the **game**, and even investors from Balewood were **showing** interest.

If Balewood's elite decided to claim the land for themselves, neither Bennett nor Gray Corporation would stand a chance.

Nothing was going right. Not work. Not family. His head throbbed.

By the time he finished work, it **was** late.

But instead of heading home, he drove straight to Empire Bar,

Inside, dim lights flickered against the dance floor, casting shifting shadows over the writhing bodies of men and women **lost** in the music.

Elliot headed straight for the bar, **taking** a seat.

He gestured to the bartender. "Something strong

The bartender nodded, quickly preparing a drink and setting it in front of him.

Elliot took it in one gulp, the burn sliding down his throat. He grimaced slightly, but the sting helped dull the mess in his

head.

One drink turned into two,

Chapter 25 If Hit Her, She Deserved It—She Owes Elaine

Then three.

Then four.

Damn Lauren. She was getting more stubborn by the day.

Five years **ago**, she wasn't like this.

All **she** did was spend **five** years in prison—
was that really a reason to act like she was too good to talk to him now?

She was the one who pushed Elaine down those stairs.

She was the one who turned Elaine into a vegetable

She was the one who deserved prison.

It wasn't like he had wronged her.

Finished

If anything, **she was** lucky. If she hadn't been a Bennett, **the** Gray family would have made sure she never **saw** daylight again.

Ungrateful Absolutely ungrateful.

Elliot threw back **another** drink, the alcohol heavy on his breath.

The bartender slid another glass across the counter. Just as he reached for it, a larger **h** **and** snatched it first.

Elliot snapped his head up. fury flashing in his bleary eyes. "Who the fuck-"

The man downed the drink in one go.

Elliot blinked, his vision swimming. He forced himself to focus-

Kenneth.

The moment recognition set in, his anger surged.

Drunken, reckless rage..

He jabbed a finger at Kenneth's chest. "You bastard. You beat my sister till she was bleeding all over the damn place, and you still have the nerve to sit here?"

Without waiting for an answer, he swung his fist

Kenneth barely moved.

He stepped aside, effortlessly dodging the sloppy punch.

Elliot lurched forward, thrown off balance. He crashed into the bar, knocking over drinks.

Kenneth sighed, rubbing his temples. "I don't have time for this."

Elliot **wasn't** done. He turned back, seething, ready to take another swing

Kenneth caught **his** wrist midair and slammed it onto the **bar counter**.

"If you want to throw a tantrum, do it at home," Kenneth **said**, voice **low and** cold. "Don't bring it to my bar."

Elliot struggled, but Kenneth didn't let go.

"You hit my sister—"

Kenneth's expression darkened. "Listen carefully, Elliot."

His voice dropped even lower, dangerously steady,

—+—fall. I didn't **touch** hant

Chapter 25 If I Hit Her, She Deserved It—She Owes Elaine

Finished

Elliot stiffened.

"Second," Kenneth continued, tightening his grip and continuing, "even if I had, she would've deserved it. She owes Elaine."

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Chapter 26 Willow Pulls the Same Trick Again, Framing Lauren

"You're full of sh*t!" Elliot roared. The law already sentenced Lauren to five years. She paid her debt a long time **ago**!"

Kenneth's expression remained cold. "**Paid** She spent five years in prison and still walked out alive, but my sister is trapped in a hospital bed for the rest of her life. And you're telling me that's fair?"

"As long as Elaine doesn't wake up, Lauren will never be done paying for what **she** did."

"Shut up!" Elliot's voice was hoarse with anger, his eyes red. "Lauren was beaten, humiliated, stabbed with needles, forced to kneel, and had her leg broken **in** prison. She used to laugh all the time, and now she barely speaks. She's not even the same person anymore. After everything she's suffered, how is that not enough!"

He staggered back, knocking over a stool behind him, but he didn't even notice. He just kept staring at Kenneth, his chest heaving.

"**My** sister is crippled now, he spat through gritted teeth. "Is that enough for **you**?"

Kenneth felt a sharp, inexplicable pain in his chest, like an invisible **hand** was squeezing his heart.

Lauren had turned Elaine into a vegetable. He had no reason to pity her

He shoved down the unwelcome feeling. She got exactly **what** she deserved. Whatever she went through in prison is nothing compared to what Elaine lost. My sister had a bright future ahead of her, and Lauren destroyed it

He let out a cold laugh. "And don't forget, Elliot—**you** were the one who testified against Lauren when she tried to frame Willow. You helped **send** her to prison. Now you suddenly care about her She probably hates you more than

anyone."

Elliot's heart clenched painfully.

He never wanted Lauren to suffer in prison. He just wanted her to learn from her mistakes and come out **as** a better person

Rage burned through his veins. He swung at Kenneth again.

Kenneth easily dodged, stepping aside as Elliot's punch hit nothing but air

Elliot lurched forward, slamming **into** the bar. He gripped the counter, panting **heavily**.

"Give me another drink, he slurred at the bartender.

Without a word, the bartender poured him another glass

Elliot grabbed it and downed it in one go. Alcohol dripped from his lips, soaking into his collar.

Kenneth sat beside him, gripping **his** own glass so tightly his knuckles turned white.

He looked calm on the outside, but inside, his emotions churned violently

Lauren, you were supposed to have a brilliant future ahead of you. But you had to ruin Elaine's life. You're despicable.

Inside the bar, the flashing lights and pounding music drowned out everything else. People danced, laughed, drank without a care.

Meanwhile, at the Bennett estate, chaos was unfolding

Willow clung to Alice, sobbing uncontrollably.

Her cries filled the silent living room, each one a sharp, pitiful accusation against Lauren .

Alice held Willow tightly, saying nothing, but her eyes were full of disappointment and blame as she looked at Lauren.

❧

David's face was **dark** with fury. He pointed a trembling finger at her.

"You pushed Willow down the stairs. Were you trying to turn her into a vegetable too?" he bellowed. "You were already a heartless monster five years ago when you did it to Elaine! You spent five years in prison and still haven't changed! Now

Chapter 26 Willow Pulls the Same Trick Again, Framing Lauren

Lauren met David's gaze, cold **and** emotionless. A deep, unshakable sense of despair filled her chest.

Finished

She couldn't understand why her own father treated her with such cruelty,

Her heart had been shattered beyond repair, but even now, she couldn't suppress the burning fury inside her.

"Mr. David, you of all people should know the truth," she said icily. "You were standing right there when **Willow** pushed Elaine down the stairs. You saw it with your own eyes. What, did you lie so much that even you started believing it?"

David's body trembled, his face turning an ugly shade of red.

"Shut your mouth!"

Lauren smirked. "Hit a nerve, did it? Five years ago, Willow framed me for pushing Elaine. Now, five years later, she throws herself down the stairs just to pin it on me again. And you still defend her. You know exactly how vicious she is, but you'd rather frame me **than** admit the truth"

Her voice turned sharp. "Sometimes I wonder—am I really your daughter? Or am I your enemy? Because you're more than willing to destroy me for your precious adopted daughter"

She narrowed her eyes. "Willow isn't your illegitimate child, is she? Is **that** why you treat her like gold and treat me like trash?"

David's face twisted with rage.

"You ungrateful brat! I'll beat some respect into **you** today if it's the last thing I **do**."

In a blind fury, he yanked off **his** leather belt and swung it down on her

The crack of the belt echoed through the room as it struck Lauren's arm, instantly leaving a deep red welt.

Pain shot through her body like a knife slicing through her skin, digging straight into her bones.

She let out a muffled groan, instinctively curling in on herself, trying to shield herself from the blows

But David did

not stop. He was **lost** in his rage, striking her over and over. The belt lashed across her back, her shoulders, her legs—each hit more vicious than the last.

Alice stood frozen, **hesitation flickering** in her eyes.

Her hands twitched as if she wanted to stop David.

But then she **glanced** at Willow, who sat trembling in her arms, looking **fragile** and pitiful.

Any trace of sympathy for Lauren vanished.

She pressed her lips together and stayed silent.

Marilyn, however, couldn't **take** it anymore.

"Sir, please stop!" she begged. "Miss Lauren is already injured. If you keep hitting her, you'll-

David didn't **even** hear her. His fury only intensified.

The belt snapped through the air again and again, the sound sickening.

Lauren's body trembled violently. Blood seeped through the **thin** fabric of her clothes, staining them red.

Her face was pale as a sheet, lips drained of color. She tried to move, but her crippled leg made it impossible to escape

She wanted to fight back, but against a man like David, she was completely powerless.

For the first time, despite all the suffering she had endured, **tears** slipped from her eyes.

Marilyn's Heart **broke** at the sight

coming and for her carried those 1 suran

1 suran would rack Willow

→Finished

Chapter 26 Willow Pulls the Same Trick Again, Framing Lauren

But Willow! That girl was devious. If anyone was framing someone, it was her

Biting her lip, Marilyn made a split-second decision.

She lunged forward, shielding Lauren with her own body

The belt landed hard on Marilyn's back with a sickening smack,

But she didn't flinch. She just held Lauren tightly, whispering. "Miss Lauren, don't be afraid!"

Lauren's eyes widened in horror. "Marilyn-"

Marilyn forced a **weak** smile. "It's okay, Miss Lauren. Don't cry."

But Lauren couldn't stop.

Marilyn was just a housekeeper. She didn't have to get involved.

She could've turned a blind eye, and no one would have blamed her.

But instead, she took the beating meant for Lauren

It hurt more than anything else.

David's face twisted in rage. "Move, Marilyn! No one is going to stop me from punishing this ungrateful disgrace!"

Lauren slowly lifted her head.

Her eyes, filled with unshed tears, had turned ice—cold.

For the first time, her gaze held something more than hatred.

It held the unmistakable glint of murder.

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Chapter 27 If Birth Alone Is a Debt, Then Let Me Repay It With a Finger

Jack, if you touch Marilyn again. I'll **kill** you."

Finished

Lauren called David by name, her voice sharp as a blade, her eyes filled with the kind of desperation **that** left no room for negotiation

For a moment, David froze, startled by the sheer intensity of her gaze

But then rage flooded over his hesitation, hotter, stronger, and uncontrollable. "You little bitch, you dare threaten me now? Let's see if I don't beat you to death today!"

He lunged at her again, swinging **wildly**.

Marilyn immediately threw herself in front of **Lauren**, shielding her once more.

The leather belt lashed across Marilyn's back, her body swaying from the force of the blow. But she didn't fall

She **stayed** standing, stubborn and unyielding.

Lauren's tears spilled over, streaming down her face.

Kill him. Kill him. Kill him,

That was the only thought in her mind.

Her life was already in ruins. When she got out of prison, she had planned to disappear, to find a quiet place where no one knew her name and live the rest of her days in peace.

But the Bennett family wouldn't let her go.

They **had** to keep tormenting her.

She was so tired. Every second of her existence was suffering. There was no point in going on

If she had to die—then fine.

But she'd take them with her

Let's all die together!

With a sudden burst of strength, she shoved Marilyn aside. Marilyn stumbled backward, barely managing to stay on her feet.

Ignoring the pain in her leg, Lauren ran toward the kitchen.

When she came back out, she was holding **a** knife.

Her gaze locked onto David like a predator tracking its prey, and she **walked** straight toward him.

David's eyes flickered with fear when he saw the blade in her hands. But his pride refused to let **him** back down. "Lauren. what the hell do you think you're doing? Are you out of your **damn** mind?"

"Crazy?" Lauren let out a wild, hollow **laugh**. "Yeah, I lost my mind. And **you're** the one **who** drove me to it!"

With a scream, she raised the **knife** and swung,

There was no hesitation.

No second-guessing

Only pure, unfiltered hatred.

David's face drained of color as he instinctively ducked to the side

The knife missed him by inches, slicing through the air with a sharp **whoosh-**

Chapter 27 If Birth Alone Is a Debt, Then Let Me Repay It With a Finger

And buried itself into the massive porcelain vase behind him.

Crash!

The vase shattered instantly, shards flying in every direction.

Everyone in the room froze, eyes wide in **shock**.

There was no doubt—Lauren **hadn't** been bluffing.

She had every intention of killing him.

For the first time, David was truly afraid. His legs trembled as he stumbled backward.

Finished

He never thought that the daughter he used to beat and humiliate without consequence would one day be ready to take his life.

It was true what they said. The poor feared the ruthless, and the ruthless feared those who had nothing left to **lose**.

“Lauren, this is a crime!” David stammered.

Lauren took another step forward, the knife still clutched tightly in her hand. “I’m already dead inside. You think I give a shit about the law?”

David was terrified. His false bravado crumbled.

Alice finally snapped out of her daze, her protective instincts kicking in as she ran to block Lauren. Lauren, put the knife down! We’re family. We can talk this through!”

“Talk?” Lauren laughed again, her voice broken. I tried talking. You never listened. But now that I’ve had enough and I’m ready to kill, suddenly you **want** to talk!”

“You’re telling me I deserved to be bullied and beaten because I didn’t fight back?”

Alice shook her head frantically, “No, no, that’s not what I meant-

Lauren’s eyes filled with cold amusement. “Isn’t it?”

Alice’s heart clenched painfully. She reached for Lauren, pleading. Lauren, **please**, listen to your mother. I know you’re hurting. Tell me what’s wrong, and I’ll listen, I promise.”

Lauren’s face twisted. “Too late.”

“Madam Alice,” **she** said mockingly,

“I won’t touch you. You gave birth to me, so I’ll **spare** you. But Jack and Willow—one of them is dying tonight. And after that. I’ll turn myself in.”

Alice’s face went deathly pale. “Lauren, **no!**”

“Why not?” Lauren sneered. “Murderers should pay with their lives. **That’s** what you taught me, isn’t it?”

Alice was trembling. “Lauren, if **you** do this, you’ll regret it for the rest of your life. You’re still young. You still have a future.”

Lauren’s lips curled into something resembling a smile, but it was cold, empty. “Regret? My only regret is coming back to this

house”

“Tell me something. **Madam Alice**. Her voice was eerily **calm** now. “In the five years I spent in prison, did you ever regret what **you** did to me? When I was being beaten, when they broke my leg, when I had to fight just to stay alive—where were you thinking about me?”

Alice opened her mouth, but no words came out.

“**You** weren’t, were you? Lauren’s voice sharpened. “Because in your eyes, I **was** nothing. Only Willow mattered. Even though she’s the one **who** framed me. She’s the one who should’ve gone to prison. But you all stood by and let it happen.”

“Tell me, Alice. Her voice cracked. “Why was I the only one who had to suffer?”

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Chapter 27 If Birth Alone Is a Debt. Then Let Me Repay It With a Finger

Finished

Alice couldn’t answer.

Lauren

let out a breathless laugh. “You can’t even lie your way out of it, huh! That’s how you know it’s true. Fine, then. Let’s end this tonight”

She raised the **knife** high, its blade glinting under the chandelier’s light-

And swung it straight at Willow.

Alice screamed, lunging forward and wrapping her arms around Lauren to stop her, “Willow, run! Go find your brother

Lauren thrashed against her. Let go of me, Madam **Alice!**”

Alice sobbed, her grip tightening. “Lauren, I’m not **Madam Alice!** I’m your mother!”

“You’re not“

“I am! I gave birth to your Alice’s voice **cracked** with desperation “Please, **my** baby, listen to me—don’t do this!

Lauren suddenly stopped struggling.

Hope flickered in Alice’s eyes

But then-

Lauren laughed.

Not the kind of laugh that came from amusement.

It was the kind that chilled the bones.

“You gave birth to me?” Lauren whispered. “And you think that means **you** own me? That I owe you for simply existing?”

Alice flinched. A horrible feeling spread through her chest.

Lauren met her gaze

Fine”

“If birth alone is a debt, then let me repay it

Alice’s breath caught, Lauren, what are you-

Lauren pulled herself free, stepping **back**.

She placed her left hand flat on the dining **table**, her fingers spread **out**

She looked Alice dead in the eye.

“Birth without raising warrants a severed finger”

“Raising without birth warrants a severed head?”

“Without birth and without raising the debt is never owed

“Madam Alice, Lauren said softly, the life **you** gave me is worth only one finger”

Without hesitation, she raised the knife-

And brought it down.

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Chapter 28 If You Want to Die. Do It Alone We Owe You Nothing.

Willow yanked open the door and bolted out, only to slam straight into a solid chest

She looked up saw Elliot, and immediately burst into tears. "Help me! Lauren is trying to kill me!"

The stench of alcohol still clung to Elliot, but most of the drunken haze had cleared from his mind. His brows furrowed at Willow's words, and he was about to lash out at Lauren-

But before he could say anything Lauren let out a sharp, terrified scream

Elliot turned his head just in time to see Lauren's knife come down, slicing clean through the pinky finger of her left hand.

Blood gushed out instantly, splattering onto the floor in a gruesome red bloom

Elliot's pupils shrank. His entire body went rigid. He couldn't believe what he was seeing

Lauren had actually cut off her own finger

A sharp pain tore through his chest, sobering him completely

"Lauren" he bellowed. What the hell are you doing?

He tried to rush toward her, but Willow clung onto him desperately, sobbing. "Brother. Lauren's gone crazy! I'm scared!"

Irritation surged through him. He wrenched free from her grasp without hesitation, shoving her aside.

Caught off guard. Willow stumbled back nearly falling to the floor.

Her eyes widened in shock, filled with disbelief as she watched Elliot rush past her without a second thought.

down

Elliot reached Lauren in seconds. He grabbed her wrist staring at the blood streaming down her hand. His voice shook Lauren are you insane? How could you do this to yourself?"

But Lauren didn't even seem to hear him.

She didn't even flinch from the pain

Her hollow, emotionless gaze remained locked onto Alice. I've repaid the debt of birth. From now on you and I owe each other nothing"

Alice's face was as white as a sheet. Her entire body trembled violently as she shook her head in disbelief. "No, no, that's

not

But Lauren didn't stop!

Her voice remained eerily calm. As for **Jack** and Willow, they framed me. They ruined my life. That's a debt I will settle

tonight"

They must die. They all have to die."

Her grip on the bloodstained knife tightened.

She stepped forward, her gaze **dark** and unwavering as she stared straight at **David**.

David's entire body went cold. A shiver crawled up his **spine**, spreading through every limb

His legs, once firm and steady, turned **weak**, trembling uncontrollably. His teeth chattered, fear gripping him like an icy fist

"Lauren, I—

I was wrong! I swear, I won't hit **you** again. I'll treat **you** well from now on, okay? His voice wavered with panic.

Lauren let out a quiet laugh. "You're not sorry. You're just afraid of dying"

"Jack, you beat me until I was covered in bruises, until my body barely functioned. You made my life hell. But now, there's no reason for me to keep living. So why don't you die with me?"

Chapter 28 If You Want to Die, Do It Alone We Owe You Nothing

The **moment** she finished speaking, she lunged at him.

David screamed.

Pure, unfiltered terror flashed across his face as he stumbled backward, nearly collapsing.

“Elliot he shrieked. What the hell are you standing there for? Restrain that lunatic already!”

Elliot’s heart pounded in his chest.

Lauren had completely lost it

Finished

He didn’t hesitate—
he surged forward, grabbing her arms in a vice grip, locking her in place before she could bring the knife down again.

“Lauren, stop

Lauren thrashed violently, fighting against his hold with all the strength she had left.

Her eyes, bloodshot and filled with pure hatred, bored into him.

It was as if her soul had already shattered, leaving behind only vengeance.

And then-

Alice stepped forward.

Her **face** was no longer filled with remorse or grief.

Only fury.

She raised her hand-

And slapped Lauren across the face.

Hard

The sound echoed through the room like a whip cracking in the air.

For a brief moment, everything fell into complete silence.

“How long are you going to keep acting like this?” Alice’s voice was sharp, ice—cold, laced with venom. Each word was a dagger straight into Lauren’s heart

“Ever since you came back, this house has known no peace. We’ve had to tiptoe around your tantrums and put up with your endless drama. And for what? Haven’t you caused enough chaos already!”

“You want to die!” Her voice rose into a furious shriek. Then go ahead and die! But don’t **drag us down** with you! We owe you nothing!”

Each word was harsher than the last, each one cutting deeper than any **blade**.

Lauren stood frozen.

The madness in her eyes dimmed, replaced by something far worse.

Emptiness.

Her lips trembled as if she wanted to say something, but no sound came out.

For the first time in her life, she truly felt like she had been abandoned by the entire **world**.

A mother’s words **could** be the sharpest knife of all.

Alice had just proven that.

Chapter 28 If You Want to Die, Do It Alone We Owe You Nothing

The light drained from Lauren’s eyes. Her limbs went limp

Her vision blurred

The room spun

And then-

Everything faded to black

She collapsed

Elliot barely caught her in time. His panic flared as he lifted her into his arms.

Finished

Marilyn's eyes filled with horror. She knelt beside Lauren's unconscious body: her hands shaking. She looked at her bloodied hand and clenched it into a fist.

"Sir, we need to get her to a hospital. Now"

She bent down and picked up Lauren's severed finger, holding it tightly as if that alone could somehow fix **this** nightmare.

Elliot didn't waste another second.

He turned and rushed out of the house.

Behind him, David let out a cold, dismissive snort "Why take her to the hospital Just dump her outside. Ungrateful brats like her deserve to die."

Alice flinched

The weight of her own words came crashing down on her

She had told her own daughter to die

She had actually said that.

Her hands trembled violently as guilt clawed at her chest, suffocating her.

What **had** she done?

David's cruel indifference only made her snap

Fury overtook her regret.

She turned on him with a scream. "Jack, you bastard!"

She slapped him.

Harder than she had ever slapped anyone in her life.

David's head whipped to the side. He stared at her in shock, his eyes wide with disbelief. "What the hell is wrong with you"

Alice's tears wouldn't stop

If **you** hadn't beaten Lauren, none of this would have happened!"

Beste

David scoffed. “Oh, shut up. You didn’t stop me before, did you? Don’t act all high and mighty now.

Alice choked on her own **sobs**. Her knees buckled, and she crumpled to the **floor**, her face buried in her hands.

Meanwhile, Willow stood quietly in the corner, her expression unreadable

Her fingers curled slightly

No one knew what she was thinking

Chapter 28 If You Want to Die. Do It Alone We Owe You Nothing

The hospital’s bright lights pierced through the night

Elliot barged into the emergency room, his heart pounding as doctors rushed to take Lauren from his arms.

They placed her on a stretcher, working quickly to stop the bleeding and stabilize her condition

Elliot stood frozen outside the ER, his hands clenched into fists

His mind was a complete mess

Marilyn sat beside him, her face full of concern. She kept glancing at him, as if debating whether to speak.

Finally, he turned to her, his voice hoarse.

“Marilyn What the hell happened: How did Lauren end up like this.

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Chapter 29 My Sister... They Took One of Her Kidneys.

Finished

Marilyn glanced at the operating room, her **eyes** full of sorrow and helplessness. “Miss Lauren was beaten by Mr. Bennett Elliot had already noticed the bruises covering Lauren’s body. The deep red wells from the belt stood out starkly against her pale, fragile skin

.

But all of his focus had been on her severed finger. Compared to that, the bruises hadn't seemed as urgent.

He closed his eyes and took a deep breath, trying to steady himself. "Why did my father hit her?"

Marilyn hesitated.

It wasn't that she didn't want to tell him. She just wasn't sure he would believe her.

But if she didn't say anything now, Willow would twist the truth and feed Elliot a version that suited her.

Finally, she spoke. "Miss Willow claimed **that** Miss Lauren pushed her **down** the stairs. Mr. Bennett was furious and beat Miss Lauren with a belt"

She noticed Elliot's brows furrowing a sign that he was about to blame Lauren. Marilyn quickly added, "Sir, forgive me for speaking out of turn, but I don't believe Miss Lauren would do something like that."

Think about it. She knew both Mr. and Mrs. Bennett were home. Does she look like someone who's stupid enough to throw herself into danger like **that**! Willow doesn't even have a scratch, but look at Miss Lauren—covered in bruises, beaten so badly that it hurts just to look at her"

Marilyn's eyes turned **red** as she wiped at the corners of them.

Elliot clenched his fists tightly. Lauren was hurt so badly **that** even he couldn't deny feeling distressed. But Willow **had** always been obedient and well-behaved. He couldn't imagine her lying.

And Lauren did have a history

As if sensing his hesitation. Marilyn sighed. "Sir, you and Madam seem to have already made up your minds about Miss

Lauren...

Before she could finish, Elliot shot her a cold **glare**.

"Marilyn, you're overstepping

His gaze was sharp enough to make Marilyn's heart tremble. She immediately fell silent.

She had let her emotions get the better of her. She should have known better than to speak against her employers.

But tonight was too cruel

Even as an outsider, watching Lauren suffer like that had made her heart ache.

And yet, the Bennett family they were completely heartless.

Elliot was too restless to sit still. He stood up and paced **back** and forth outside the emergency room.

Time dragged on

Eventually, the doors finally swung open, and a doctor walked out.

Elliot rushed forward. "Jeffrey, how is my sister!"

Jeffrey **removed** his mask, his expression unreadable. He turned to **Marilyn**. "**Take** her to the recovery ward."

Marilyn nodded and carefully wheeled Lauren away,

Now, it was just Jeffrey and Elliot

Chapter 29 My Sister. They Took One of Her Kidneys

Finished

Jeffrey's brows furrowed deeply. "Her injuries look worse than they are. The wounds are mostly superficial, and her finger has been reattached. It'll take time, but she should recover

Elliot exhaled sharply, relief flooding through him.

But Jeffrey's expression **didn't** ease.

That uneasy look on his face made Elliot's heart tighten again. "Why do you look like that? What aren't you telling me?"

Jeffrey hesitated.

Elliot's patience snapped. "Spit it out!"

Jeffrey took a deep breath. His tone was heavy, as if the words themselves were too **much** to bear

“When I was treating **her** injuries, I **noticed** an old **scar** on her lower back.”

Elliot’s gaze sharpened instantly.

to **say** wasn’t simple.

He knew Jeffrey too **well**. If he was hesitating this much, then whatever he was about to say w

“Just say it”

Jeffrey swallowed. “Elliot. Her left kidney is missing. Based on the scarring, I’d estimate it was removed about a year ago- when she was still in prison.”

Elliot felt as if his head had just exploded.

His ears rang, his vision blurred, and for a moment, he forgot how to breathe.

His entire body turned rigid as he stared at Jeffrey, his face frozen in shock.

“That’s that’s not possible. His voice was **hoarse**.

Jeffrey remained silent.

Elliot clenched his jaw. That’s impossible. She was in prison—how the hell could she have lost a kidney? That doesn’t make

any sense!”

Jeffrey didn’t argue

Instead, he **took** out his phone and pulled up a photo.

He handed it to Elliot.

The image **on** the screen showed Lauren’s lower **back**; the jagged scar stretched across where her kidney should have been.

The skin around it was rough and discolored, the scar tissue thick and uneven.

The sight **of** it sent a violent shudder through Elliot’s body.

His sister.

His sister had been cut open and had her kidney stolen.

Elliot's knees nearly buckled.

His body swayed as he stumbled back, barely catching himself against the wall.

Jeffrey quickly reached out to steady him. "Elliot, breathe."

But Elliot couldn't

It felt like Something had wrapped around his throat, squeezing tighter and tighter.

Chapter 29 My Sister They Took One of Her Kidneys

He had thought she would suffer.

But he never imagined.

Never in his worst nightmares did he think **she** would be mutilated.

His hands curled into trembling fists, his knuckles turning bone-white.

Rage so deep, **so** all-consuming, it nearly choked him.

Someone had done this to his sister.

Someone **had** taken her kidney.

And they had done it right under his nose.

He gritted his teeth. his voice like ice. "Jeffrey. go check on my sister."

Jeffrey hesitated. "And you?"

Elhot's face was devoid of emotion

I'm going to find out who the hell did this to her."

Jeffrey patted his shoulder before walking off.

Elliot stayed rooted in place, his mind a chaotic mess.

After what felt like an eternity, he turned on his heel and left the hospital.

He got into his car and sat there in the dark, gripping the steering wheel so tightly that his fingers ached.

A cigarette dangled from his lips, the tiny ember glowing in the darkness.

The memories started piecing together.

Michael had once found records that Lauren had been taken to a hospital a year ago.

And shortly after that, she was transferred to another prison cell

Finished

If she had been forced to undergo an organ removal, it made sense. She would **have** been too weak to endure more beatings. That was why they **had** moved her.

It all made sense now.

And it made Elliot feel sick

His breath came out ragged. He yanked out his phone and dialed Michael.

“Michael. I need you to dig deeper into Lauren’s medical records from a year ago. Find out which hospital she was taken to, who took her, who she interacted with—everything. I **want** every single detail.”

He ended the call.

Another cigarette. Then another.

He had **no** idea **how** long he sat there, just smoking, his thoughts running wild.

Finally, he forced himself out of the car and went **back** into the hospital.

Standing outside Lauren’s room, he hesitated.

Then-

He heard d Jeffrey’s voice.

Chapter 29 My Sister. They Took One of Her Kidneys

“You’re awake? How are you feeling

A long silence.

Then Jeffrey sighed.

“Every time I see you, you’re covered in wounds.”

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? Views, Released on March 26, 2025

Chapter 30 Willow Is the Bennett Family's Real Daughter Lauren's Just a Convict

After **Jeffrey** spoke, the hospital room remained silent.

Elliot hesitated, debating whether to enter, but before he could push the door open, Jeffrey spoke again.

"It's your body. You should take better care of it."

Elliot expected Lauren to remain silent as she had before.

But this time, she spoke.

Her voice was quiet, but cold. Jack insisted on beating me. What's the point of taking care of my body if he can destroy it whenever he wants?"

Jeffrey hadn't expected that answer. He frowned. "If he was going to hit you, why didn't you dodge? You just stood there **and** let it happen."

Lauren stared at him.

A long, deep staré

It made Jeffrey uncomfortable.

"What?" he asked, shifting slightly under her gaze.

Lauren didn't answer.

He made it sound like he cared.

But he didn't

It was just like when someone was sick—people who truly cared would take them to the doctor, get them medicine, and stay up all night looking after them. People who didn't really care would just say, "Get some rest and you'll be fine."

She could **have** ignored him, but Jeffrey was frowning, looking at her like he was the one being wronged.

Like she was being ungrateful for his so-called concern.

Lauren's voice remained weak. "How do you know I **just** stood there and let him hit me? I can barely walk, much less run. How was I supposed to dodge?"

Her words **hit** Jeffrey like **a** slap

To be fair, Lauren wasn't trying to challenge him. She was simply stating a fact.

But men like Jeffrey—rich young masters who had never suffered a day in their lives—hated being challenged.

His face darkened. His response was sharp. "Mr. Bennett is usually a reasonable man. If he beat you, **you** must've done something to deserve it. Instead of blaming others, maybe you should reflect on yourself."

Lauren's heart clenched in pain.

So, she was beaten, and was it her fault?

She had no power. No way to fight back.

She wasn't a privileged daughter. She was a woman at the very bottom, someone who had been beaten into submission.

She **was** the one being hurt.

Yet, she was the one being scolded.

She suddenly felt exhausted.

Chapter 30 Willow is the Bennett Family's Real Daughter Lauren's Just a Convict

Finished

"Get out she und fady

Jeffrey blinked, caught off guard "What did you say?"

"I said get out

Her voice was weak but firm

Jeffrey had never been thrown out of a room before

His face twisted in irritation. "You're really ungrateful you know that?"

He turned on his heel and stalked toward the door

But before he left, he couldn't help adding one final jab "You deserve everything that's happened to you."

The words hit her like a knife straight to the chest

Lauren's face drained of color.

Her body went cold

She bit down on her lip so hard that she tasted blood. The metallic tang spread

She had known for a long time-

in this world truly cared about her

No one would stand up for her

„And worse-

To them her suffering was her own fault

was her tongue, but she didn't notice..

straight into Elliot as he stepped out. He swore would stop

there if I were you. She's in a mood All you'll get

is a scolding"

Elliot barely acknowledged him.

His gaze was locked on Lauren through the glass window,

She was so thin her body was covered in injuries

His heart clenched

How is she?" he asked

Jeffrey scoffed "She's got enough energy to argue with me, so the fine"

Then with a smirk he added. By the way, why did your father beat her so badly: Did she do something to Willow?

Don't lose Elliot snapped, his tone sharp.

Jeffrey raised a teow "So she didn't hurt Willow?"

"Hah" Jedney shrugged "Wright, whatever you say. I have work to do. You should go home and rest."

Elliot didn't respond

He just staring at Lauren through the glass.

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Chapter 30 Willow is the Bennett Family's Real Daughter Lauren's Just a Convict

Sunlight streamed through the Bennett family's kitchen, casting a warm glow over the room.

Finished

Marilyn stood by the counter, carefully **placing** the food she **had** made for Lauren into a thermal container.

She had woken up early to prepare it, hoping that if Lauren ate something warm and comforting, she might feel a little better.

Just as she reached for a bowl of bird's nest soup-

A delicate, fair hand snatched it up.

Marilyn looked up and saw Willow lifting the bowl to her lips.

Panicked, Marilyn quickly reached out. "Miss, that's for Miss Lauren

Willow's eyes narrowed, her tone dripping with arrogance. "**Marilyn**, you better remember your place. You're a servant. You don't get to tell me what to do."

Marilyn froze

She knew she had no right to lecture Willow

But Willow had never recognized her own place either.

Marilyn sighed. "Miss, Miss Lauren is injured. Please let her have it to help her recover

Willow's face twisted into a sneer. "Oh! So only she deserves to be taken care of? And I don't?"

"That's not what I

bowl left. I though, Miss Marilyn tried to explain. It's just that Miss Lauren is very weak right now, and this is the last

bowl left. I thought it **would** help her get some strength back-

"So you are saying I don't deserve it" Willow's voice shot up

"Miss. I swear that's not-

Willow's eyes **turned** red, her voice trembling with fake hurt. "You're just looking down on me because I'm not their biological daughter, aren't you?"

Marilyn's heart dropped. "Miss, I would never-

Before she could finish, Willow's tears spilled over, falling down her cheeks like raindrops.

Right at that **moment**

David and Alice came downstairs.

They frowned as they heard the commotion.

What's all this shouting?" David demanded, his voice full of authority

Alice hurried forward, When she saw Willow crying, her face darkened with concern. Willow, what happened? Why are you crying?"

Seeing her mother, Willow immediately threw herself into Alice's arms, sobbing dramatically.

"Mom! Marilyn said, I'm not your real daughter, so I don't deserve to eat the bird's nest soup!"

Alice's face turned cold.

Her sharp gaze snapped to Marilyn. "Is that true?"

Marilyn **was** stunned.

She had never said **anything** like **that**!

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Chapter 30 Willow Is the Bennett Family's Real Daughter Lauren's Just a Convict

"Ma'am, I never said that! I only meant that Miss Lauren needed it more because of her injuries!"

But Alice wasn't convinced.

"So, what you're saying is **that** Willow is lying!"

"I—I didn't mean **that**..."

Before Marilyn could explain further, **David's** furious voice rang out.

"Marilyn, you've clearly forgotten your place."

His expression was cold, his tone dripping with disdain.

Finished

"Willow is the real daughter of the Bennett family. As for Lauren? That disgrace has no class, no morals. Last night, she even tried to kill me with a knife"

He sneered

That ungrateful convict doesn't deserve bird's nest soup. Hell, she doesn't even deserve to be out of prison."

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