

# The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

## The Heiress Revived Ch 261

, 5745 Views, Released

Chapter 261 He's My Boyfriend

Mia turned away and stood up, ready to leave.

Out of nowhere, Josh reached out and grabbed her wrist.

She stopped abruptly, looking back at him, confused.

Finished

"Is something going on? If you're in a tough spot, you can tell me. For Marilyn and Ms. Bennett's sake, I'm willing to help."

He looked up at her, his pale, slender neck shifting with every word, his Adam's apple moving as he talked. There was something quietly magnetic about him.

Mia stared, her gaze hardening for just a second. She forced herself to stay cool, reminding herself, No matter how gorgeous *he is, he's still gay. I'm not that desperate.*

She let out a sharp laugh and yanked her hand free. "What could I possibly be struggling with? You should take care of your own mess. My life's got nothing to do with you."

The sudden 180 in her tone threw Josh off.

A second ago she was soft and docile, like a kitten. Now she was snapping at him like he'd done something

wrong.

But honestly, he found this side of her even more entertaining.

He got up too. At well over six feet, he towered over her, his shadow practically swallowing her up.

Mia hated the heavy sense of pressure and instinctively took a step back.

But Josh, like he was playing with her, kept inching closer.

"What are you backing off for?"

"I'm not. I just don't like people getting too close."

Josh let out a sharp, bitter laugh. "Don't like people getting too close? That's funny. I remember how tight you were holding that guy around the waist back in Eastgate."

His words dripped with jealousy.

Mia stared at him, stunned. When their eyes locked, for just a split second, she thought she saw something accusatory in his expression.

*No way. I must be imagining things. Josh doesn't even like me. Why would he care if I had my arms around another*

*man?*

"That's none of your business," she shot back.

"Oh really? Not my business? You forget the first time we met, I saved your ass. The second time, I nearly had you. And now you're just gonna ditch me like I'm nothing? That's it?"

1/3

Chapter 261 He's My Boyfriend

her.

Mia wasn't used to being caught off guard.

Finished

Back at school, no one ever rattled her like this. But now, standing here with Josh, she had no clue what to

1. do.

And just when her mind was spinning, someone banged hard on the door.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Then came Kenny's voice, loud and panicked. "Mia, you in there? Did that asshole mess with you? Open the damn door!"

The second she heard Kenny, Mia shoved Josh aside and rushed over to open it.

Kenny stood outside the door, clearly on edge. As soon as he saw Mia, he rushed over, yanked her out of the room, and checked her over from head to toe. "Mia, are you okay?" he asked, practically breathless.

"I'm fine. Let's just go," Mia said quickly, grabbing his hand and trying to get out of there.

But Josh's voice cut through the air like ice. "Mia Tarvis!"

Her heart jumped.

Shit.

She felt a twinge of guilt but kept her head down and walked faster like she didn't hear him.

Then Josh grabbed her hand.

"You're one of Hoverdale Tech's best and brightest, and you're seriously gonna hang around with a guy like this?"

Kenny stepped in fast, clearly pissed. "And what's that supposed to mean? I'm Mia's boyfriend. What goes on between us is none of your damn business."

Josh turned to Mia, his expression dark. "He's your boyfriend?"

Mia hesitated for a second. "Yeah. He's my boyfriend. Let go of me."

But Josh didn't let go. His grip just tightened.

He laughed coldly. "If he's your boyfriend, then why were you working as a hostess before? And why'd you come running to me for help?"

"This has nothing to do with you," Mia said sharply, yanking her hand free.

"Mia!" Josh shouted, his voice full of anger.

Mia drew in a deep breath like she was bracing herself. "You don't believe me? Fine. I'll show you."

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12 Sat, 5 Apr

## Chapter 261 He's My Boyfriend

\*\*Finished

From where Josh stood, it looked exactly like Mia had kissed Kenny. His hands curled into tight fists.

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## The Heiress Revived Ch 262

, 6532 Views, Released

Chapter 262 You Owe Her Blood, Kenneth

Mia stood tall, turned back toward Josh and said, "You believe me now?"

Josh's expression darkened in a flash. He glared at her, jaw clenched.

Mia looked away and tugged Kenny along as she stormed off.

380%u

Finished

Josh stared at their joined hands, the anger in his chest boiling over.

Bang!

He slammed his fist into the door, shouting through clenched teeth, "Mia, you're really something else."

Kenny rode in silence, lips pressed tight, his mood clearly tanking.

That thing back there-yeah, it looked like Mia kissed him, but their lips never even touched.

Now he saw it clearly. She was using him. Just a pawn in her little game to piss off that other guy.

The more he thought about it, the more it ate at him. His chest felt like it had a cinder block sitting on it.

He didn't ask her where she wanted to go. He just pulled up to a bar, killed the engine, and parked.

Without a word, he yanked her off the bike and hauled her inside.

The place was chaos-flashing lights, booming bass, and bodies grinding on the dance floor.

Kenny shoved her down onto a couch in the corner and leaned over her.

Mia moved fast. She lifted her leg and planted her foot square on his chest, holding him back. Her voice was cold. "Wanna get hit?"

The flashing lights played across her face, making her look like danger personified.

Whatever little burst of guts Kenny had mustered up evaporated the second he met her glare.

He sighed and flopped down beside her, slouching into the cushions with a quiet, defeated energy. His head rested against her shoulder as he said, barely above a whisper, "Mia, I really do like you."

Mia gave a half-smile. "Love doesn't pay the bills."

"Who says it can't?" Kenny said quickly. "If you'd just give me a chance, I'd take care of you for life."

Mia let out a sharp, mocking laugh.

'I'll take care of you.' Yeah right. That's the biggest load of crap a man can feed you. Lucas used to promise Laurie the world-said he'd protect her forever, and once he became a lawyer, he'd make sure anyone who hurt her paid for it behind bars.

1/2

Chapter 262 You Owe Her Blood, Kenneth

Finished

Mia stood up and looked down at Kenny. "That kind of nonsense might work on some girl who's new to the world, but I've never fallen for it. You enjoy your little fantasy. I'm leaving."

She had barely taken a step when a drunk guy suddenly dropped to his knees in front of her, wrapping his arms tightly around her waist. His words came out slurred. "Laurie..." Mia froze. She looked down-and it was Kenneth.

His eyes were glassy, unfocused. He stared up at her like a lost puppy, voice cracking, tears already forming.

"Laurie... I feel like hell. Please forgive me. I messed up-I know I did. I'll change. I swear I'll change. Just come back to me. Don't fall for that Felix guy. Love me instead. I really love you. I can't live without you."

He looked completely wrecked. The tears were rolling down his cheeks and he clung to Mia like she was his last hope.

Mia's eyes went cold in a flash. Her voice was razor-sharp. "Let. Go."

"No. I'm not letting go. Please-just one more chance. I swear it's the last time."

She was done. Disgust written all over her face, she grabbed a fistful of his hair and smacked him hard across the face.

"You just realize what you did? Where the heck were you when it actually mattered? Laurie's life was wrecked by you assholes. She's permanently disabled. She'll never get better. And you think a pathetic little apology makes that go away?"

Before he could respond, she kicked him-hard. He hit the ground with a thud, and she stepped right onto his chest.

"Take a good look. I'm not Laurie. But let me spell it out for you-she'll never forgive you. If you really feel that guilty, kill yourself."

Kenneth was still completely drunk, mind foggy. He grabbed at her ankle, holding on tight. "Laurie... don't be like this. I'm serious. I wanna make it right..."

Mia's face twisted with revulsion. She jerked her foot back, the sole of her shoe scraping across his hand, leaving a harsh red streak.

"Make it right?" Her voice shook with fury. "You think a couple of sorrys and some tears can fix what you did?"

Laurie was one of the kindest people I've ever known.

If she hadn't crossed paths with the Bennetts, the Grays, or Lucas... her whole life would've been different.

"You and your crew destroyed her-and what, you thought there'd be no consequences?"

Mia's voice was tight, every word like a blade. "She was sweet. She was trusting. And you still tore her apart."

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## The Heiress Revived Ch 263

, 5990 Views, Released

## Chapter 263 Lauren's Abuser Is Free Again

3 80%#

Finished

Mia's eyes were starting to sting. Just the image of Lauren limping, half-deaf, was enough to make her chest feel like it was being stabbed over and over.

She inhaled deeply, trying to pull herself together.

"What's the point of all this now? If you really feel guilty, then go die. That's the only way you're ever making this right." And with zero hesitation, she kicked Kenneth again, hard, then turned and walked off without a second thought.

Kenny stood up from the couch and walked over to the guy crumpled on the floor. He looked down with cold indifference and said, "If you actually gave a damn about her, you should've acted like it. You brought this on yourself."

Then he hurried after Mia. "Mia, where are you going?"

"None of your business. Don't follow me," she shot back, not even turning around.

"It's not safe at night. Let me at least-"

Mia whipped around mid-stride. "I'm in a crap mood right now. If you don't wanna get punched, stay the heck away. I'll be your girlfriend again tomorrow."

And just like that, she walked out of the bar without a single ounce of hesitation.

The night breeze was cool against Mia's skin as she stood outside the bar, looking completely drained and emotionally numb.

Out of nowhere, a black luxury car rolled up and came to a stop out front.

The doors opened, and a man in a sharp suit stepped out alongside an elegant, anxious-looking woman.

The man was Kenneth's dad—Brendan. Serious and stiff as ever.

The woman was his mom, Brielle—put-together, pretty, but clearly worried.

They rushed straight toward the bar, obviously there to find Kenneth.

But just before they could get inside, a woman suddenly stepped out of nowhere and blocked their way.

"Step aside," Brendan said, voice clipped and annoyed.

The woman didn't move. Instead, she gave him a twisted half-smile, her eyes dark and cold. "Mr. Brendan, you already forgot me? That's a shame. I've been dying to see you again ever since I got out of prison."

Brendan froze. His eyes narrowed as he looked her over more closely.

She was maybe mid-thirties, dressed simple, but the long scar slashed across her face made her impossible to forget.

The look in her eyes was pure danger—this wasn't someone you crossed lightly.

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Chapter 253 Leurer's Abuser to free Age

just walked up to greet them.

She'd gone to prison not long after Lauren had.

#Friched

She couldn't hold her own in the business world, so she lashed on—days long table for her competition. One day, she snapped and stabbed someone during a heated fight. Full-on attacked a person with a knife in broad daylight. That earned her 20 years behind bars.

She wasn't supposed to be out yet.

But once she got locked up, the Gray family found her. They made her an offer—make Lauren's life a nightmare, and they'd pull strings to shave years off her sentence.

And she did exactly that. From then on, prison became hell on Earth for Lauren.

It wasn't just this woman beating her senseless. Other inmates—bought and paid for by David, Sharon, and Willow—joined in. Constant abuse, constant cruelty, Lauren never stood a chance.

Now this woman was out. And she'd come looking for the Grays,

Brendan looked like he was about to throw up. **He** stumbled back a step like she was some wild animal

Brielle gasped and covered her mouth, terror **filling** her eyes. “Wh— what do you **want?**”

The woman’s smirk widened as she slowly closed the gap between her and Brendan, her energy radiating something dark and dangerous.

“What do I want?” she said with a sneer. “Mr. Brendan, you really are something. Forget your old friends already?” She jabbed her finger against **his** chest. “I did your dirty work while I was locked up. Now that I’m out, I think it’s time you paid up.

Brendan scowled. “We already helped you. We got your sentence reduced.”

She let out a cold laugh. Her scar twisted with her smile, making her look like something straight out of a nightmare. “A reduced sentence? That little favor doesn’t even come close. I got out with nothing—not a cent to my name. I’m not asking for much. Just 140,000 dollars and I’m gone. I’ll disappear from Hoverdale,

Back when the Gray family was still on top, 140,000 dollars would’ve been nothing to them.

But now that Felix had gutted the company, Gray Corp was falling apart. The cash flow was dead, the debts were piling up, and everything was hanging by a thread.

There was no way Brendan could just pull that kind of money out of thin air.

Brielle snapped. “This is extortion. We could call the cops on you.”

The woman threw her head back and laughed. “Go ahead. You send me back to prison, I’ll blow the lid off our whole deal. Every dirty little secret.”

Brendan went pale as a sheet. If she spilled the truth, he’d be ruined—publicly, professionally, maybe even legally.

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09:12 Sat, 5 Apr

Chapter 263 Lauren’s Abuser Is Free Again

80%

Finished

The woman's grin turned smug. "Relax. I didn't claw my way out of prison just to cause more trouble. I just want to live out the rest of my life in peace."

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## **The Heiress Revived Ch 264**

, 5757 Views, Released

Chapter 264 Revenge Is Mia's Love Language

Mia's fists tightened as she listened, nails biting into her palms.

Laurie's life was destroyed. And the one who did it thinks she gets to walk away and live peacefully?

I never agree with that.

Finished

A flash of frost-cold rage lit up in Mia's eyes. Without a word, she spun on her heel and headed into the internet café right next to the bar.

Inside, it was dim, the room lit only by the glow of screens lining each row. The hum of machines and the soft click of keyboards filled the air.

Mia scanned the space, found an open seat, and sat down. Her hands flew over the keyboard with practiced precision.

Line after line of code flew across the monitor, the flickering blue light casting sharp shadows across her face. There was something steely and cold in her expression now—she was in the zone.

After a few minutes, she stopped.

Every surveillance camera within a half-mile radius had been disabled. Their signals jammed, the footage frozen on a single frame, like time itself had been paused.

The script she just ran was set to self-delete in exactly 1 hour.

By then, the cameras would be back to normal. But one hour was more than enough for what she had in mind.

Mia stood, calm and composed, and walked out of the café.

By now, Brendan and Brielle had already scrambled into their car. The engine revved and within seconds, they'd vanished into the night.

The woman stayed behind, alone in front of the bar, her face lit up with glee.

"Hahaha!" Her laugh rang out loud and sharp in the stillness, manic and jarring.

Mia squinted slightly, her eyes locked on the woman like a hawk. Her gaze was ice-cold.

So that's the price of someone else's suffering...

"I never thought beating up one useless b\*tch in prison would make me this much money," the woman was muttering to herself, giddy with greed. "Way better than running a business. Back then, I couldn't even make 1,300 dollars a month. But this 140,000 dollars? I'd need ten years of scraping by to save that much. All I had to do was serve five years and bam—huge payday."

The more she talked, the more twisted her grin became. "Shame she got out before me. If she'd stuck around a little longer, I could've found a reason to go back inside and beat

her down again. Probably would've made even more money off it. Still... 140,000 dollars should last me a good while. And if it doesn't? I'll just knock on the Gray family's door again."

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Apr

80%

Chapter 264 Revenge Is Mia's Love Language

She whipped around, glaring. "You scared the shit out of me. Are you trying to get yourself killed?"

Finished

But Mia didn't flinch. She just stared, calm and deadly. Her eyes were locked on the woman like she was watching a pitiful act on a stage-no fear, no emotion, just cold contempt.

The woman shifted under Mia's stare, visibly unsettled. The longer Mia held her gaze, the more pissed off she got.

"The hell you lookin' at, b\*tch?" she snapped. "Keep staring and I'll rip your damn eyes out!"

Mia's response was a slow, wide grin-unnerving and out of place in the dim glow of the streetlights. It sent a chill straight through the air.

This woman had never come across someone like Mia.

She'd always been the bully-before prison, especially in prison. She'd thrived off intimidation, earned a reputation as someone you didn't mess with. People usually backed down the moment she stepped forward.

But Mia? She wasn't backing down. She wasn't even blinking.

"You really wanna die today," the woman hissed. Her face twisted with rage as she cocked her arm back and swung-aiming to slap Mia hard enough to leave a mark. It looked like she meant to tear her face off.

But Mia didn't even flinch. Her eyes stayed locked, her expression calm, almost amused.

Right before the slap landed, Mia's hand shot up-and in a flash, she pulled a knife from her pocket, driving the blade straight up into the woman's palm.

Shlick.

The blade drove clean through with deadly precision.

Blood gushed immediately. The woman screamed-raw, ragged, and gut-wrenching.

"Ah-!"

Every trace of swagger vanished.

Mia stared at her with a half-smile, still holding the knife. Then, slowly, she twisted it. The woman howled even louder, collapsing to her knees, trembling violently from the pain.

Mia leaned in slowly, crouching until her face was just inches from the woman's.

"Feels pretty damn good, doesn't it-hurting someone? Don't you agree?"

The woman's skin turned chalk white. Her eyes were wild with fear as she shook her head frantically. "Please... please don't... I was wrong... I'm sorry..."

Mia blinked slowly. The look might've passed as innocent on anyone else—but coming from her, it was

bone-chilling

# The Heiress Revived Ch 265

, 6069 Views, Released

## Chapter 265 Revenge in Blood and Pain

80%

Finished

Mia yanked the knife out in one swift motion. Blood sprayed out like a burst pipe. The woman's whole body convulsed-she looked like she was about to black out.

Without hesitation, Mia grabbed her by the hair and dragged her toward a nearby alley swallowed in pitch- black shadows.

The woman shook uncontrollably. The terror in her eyes was overwhelming. The cocky grin she wore minutes ago was gone without a trace.

So she can be scared.

Not long ago, she was bragging about how she beat Lauren within an inch of her life in prison.

Now the tables had turned. Now she was the prey. And just like that, all that so-called toughness disappeared.

Mia rolled her eyes. And here I thought she was supposed to be tough. Just another coward who only knows how to bully people who can't fight back.

The woman sobbed, "What are you gonna do to me?"

Mia tilted her head, voice playful and deadly. "Oh, not much. Just gonna pop your eyes out, slice your tongue off, blow out your ears, and cut the tendons in your hands and feet. That's all. Hehe."

With every word, the woman shook her head harder. "No... no... please. I didn't even do anything to you. Why are you doing this?"

Mia gave a soft frown, her face all wide-eyed innocence. "Who said I need to have a reason?"

"Please... I'll give you money... just let me go..."

Mia laughed like she'd just heard a joke. "Money? I don't want your money. I just want to see you ruined."

The woman hit the ground hard, her body shaking uncontrollably. Tears and snot poured down her face in a mess of panic and regret. "I'm sorry-I swear, I'm sorry. Please don't do this. Please let me go."

Mia twirled the butterfly knife between her fingers with practiced ease. The metallic clicks rang out like gunshots in the still alley.

The woman's eyes went round with terror as she tried to crawl backward. But Mia moved fast and grabbed her by the ankle.

"What are you doing? No-don't!" she shrieked, kicking and flailing. But Mia was too strong. There was no escaping her grip.

Her expression was pure ice.

"You wanted to gouge my eyes out, remember?" Mia said flatly. "Now you get to see what that's like."

Then she drove the blade into the woman's left eye-no hesitation, no mercy.

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Chapter 265 Revenge in Blood and Pain

streamed down the woman's cheeks in rivers.

\*\* Finished

She rolled on the ground, shrieking, clutching her face in agony, her screams splitting the silence like a siren.

"Now it's your tongue's turn."

Mia forced the woman's mouth open, jammed the knife inside, and twisted hard. The blade sliced right through her tongue like it was nothing.

The woman let out a garbled, wet sob as blood exploded from her mouth, gushing onto the ground in thick, dark spurts.

Mia didn't flinch. She grabbed a sharp chunk of stone nearby and stepped over to the woman's twitching form.

"Everything you did to Lauren in prison?" Mia said coldly. "You're going to feel every bit of it."

She lifted the stone and brought it down hard on the woman's ear. Then again. And again. The flesh shredded. The blood sprayed. Her ear was reduced to a bloody mess-and silence.

The woman was already out cold from the pain. But Mia wasn't finished.

She knelt, eyes blank, and with a flash of silver, sliced through the tendons in both the woman's hands and feet.

The body convulsed violently. The pain jolted her awake—just barely-and she let out a soft, broken moan. It sounded like a ghost mourning its own death.

Mia stared down at her, chest heaving. The woman was barely breathing, her body weak and limp.

But Mia's rage was still burning.

To make sure the damage couldn't be undone, she picked up a heavy rock and started smashing.

Thud. Crack. Thud.

Each blow crushed bone and tore flesh. Her limbs turned into a horrifying mess-mangled flesh mixed with splintered bone. The sight was gruesome beyond words.

Mia rose to her feet. Her hands were dripping with blood, thick red drops sliding off her fingertips and splashing onto the pavement.

"This is what you deserved," she said coldly. "And even then-it's still nothing compared to what Laurie went through."

She turned and stepped out of the alley.

But she stopped dead in her tracks.

There was someone standing at the mouth of the alley.

The man stood with his back to the light. His face was cast in shadow. She couldn't see who he was.

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09:13 Sat, 5 Apr

Chapter 265 Revenge in Blood and Pain

He saw everything.

And if he saw it... he couldn't be allowed to leave.

Her instincts kicked in. She raised the knife without hesitation.

Then the man spoke.

"It's me."

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Finished

## **The Heiress Revived Ch 266**

, 5319 Views, Released

Chapter 266 Josh Witnesses the Real Mia

Mia froze in place, her hand slowly lowering the blade. "Josh?"

"Yeah." He nodded, his eyes shadowed with something unreadable.

Mia stayed quiet for a beat. When she finally spoke, her voice was rough. "You saw all of it?"

"Yeah." Josh didn't flinch. He just stood there, staring at her with that deep, unreadable look.

Silence settled over them like a weight.

Finished

The wind slipped through the alley, cool against Mia's face. The sharp, metallic smell of blood lingered thick in the air.

Finally, Josh broke the silence. "Mia... what you did—it's a crime."

She raised her chin. "So what? You gonna call the cops on me?"

Josh looked at her, then sighed. "No."

"Then move," she said, shoving him. But he caught her wrist.

His grip was like iron. She couldn't break loose.

"Come with me," he said. Firm. No room for argument.

Mia pulled back. "Why the heck should I?"

Josh stared at her. "Are you planning to walk back to campus looking like a murder scene?"

She froze again. Looked down.

Her clothes were soaked in blood. Under the harsh glow of the streetlamp, the red looked almost fluorescent.

She didn't fight him after that. She let him take her to the car.

The car cut through the night, city lights flickering across the glass. Neon streaks danced over Mia's blank, frozen face.

Josh brought her back to his apartment.

He unlocked the door, stepped aside, and gestured for her to go in. She did without a word. He followed and shut the door quietly behind them.

"You should clean up," he said evenly.

Mia didn't say anything. She headed straight for the bathroom.

Moments later, the sound of running water filled the silence.

1/3

Chapter 266 Josh Witnesses the Real Mia

It was hard to tell how long he sat like that before the water finally stopped.

Mia emerged from the bathroom in a white robe.

Finished

Her hair was still damp, strands clinging to her cheeks. Droplets slid from the ends of her hair, catching the light. Her skin looked pale and flawless under the glow—fresh from the water, cool and untouchable

Josh looked over and paused.

His gaze darkened slightly. He didn't look away right away.

Mia didn't hesitate. She walked straight up to Josh, snatched the wine glass out of his hand, and downed it in one gulp.

Then she grabbed the bottle and tilted it back, drinking every last drop like water.

By the time it was empty, her cheeks were flushed pink and her eyes had that unfocused, dazed look

She set the bottle down and stared at Josh, her voice raspy. "Got any more?"

"No," he said.

She squinted at him. "You're lying."

Josh stayed silent.

Mia turned and stormed into the kitchen. She opened the cabinet, pulled out a bottle of whiskey, twisted the cap, and raised it to her lips.

Josh was in front of her in seconds. "What are you doing?"

"I can't take this. Just let me drink."

He looked at her, something pained in his expression. "Drinking isn't gonna help. It'll mess you up worse."

She shot him a bitter look. "Too late for that. I already am messed up."

Her voice cracked, her eyes watering.

"Do you even know who I just destroyed? She's the one who deafened Laurie. The one who shattered her leg. Laurie's whole life is wrecked—and that woman gets to walk free? Gets a second chance?"

Her voice rose, her control slipping.

"And

guess what—

she got 140,000 dollars from Kenneth's parents. She said she wants to live her best life.

Can you believe that? Isn't it sick? She hurt Laurie. My kind and sweet Laurie. So I made sure she got it all back. I didn't stop at making her deaf or crippled—

I made her blind, mute, and left her with broken hands and feet. Even if they patch her up, she won't be able to speak, see, hear, or walk again. She's done. Finished. Hahaha!"

Mia burst into loud, wild laughter. But even as she laughed, tears streamed down her face.

She tinned the bottle and took another hard drink

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Chapter 266 Josh Witnesses the Real Mia

Josh caught her just in time, both hands steadying her body before she could collapse.

#Finished

Mia leaned into his chest, muttering through heavy, slurred breaths. "It doesn't matter how much I get back at them... Laurie's never going to be the same. Why is life so damn unfair? She's one of the best people I've ever known—and look what happened to her. You have no idea what she went through living with the Bennetts. Three years of hell. She was in high school, drowning in assignments, but still had to put on a smile for those monsters. She worked through holidays just so that bastard Lucas could afford school. She even tutored me. And despite all that, she still ranked number one every year. Still earned every scholarship."

Josh had already looked into Lauren's background. He knew she'd suffered. But hearing it straight from Mia—shaking, crying—it hit differently.

"Hey," he said softly, "don't cry. It's gonna get better."

Mia shook her head hard, her tears streaming. "It's not. Laurie's not getting better. She's disabled, for life. So I'll do what she won't. She's too good for revenge—but I'm not. If the law won't punish the people who did this to her... then I will. I'll make them pay. Ten times over. A hundred. I'll make sure they never get to breathe easy again."

Josh's jaw tightened.

What Mia had done... it

she'd end up in a cell.

It wasn't just revenge anymore. It was criminal. And if the wrong person found out—

"Mia, you're wasted. Stop drinking," Josh said, reaching over and snatching the bottle out of her hand.

"Give it back!" Mia barked, eyes blazing. "I don't need your help."

Josh exhaled slowly, trying to keep calm. "Alright, enough. Go to bed."

But Mia was too far gone. The liquor had hit full force, and she was in no mood to be reasoned with.

She yanked him closer by the collar, her breath hot and heavy with whiskey. "You think you get to tell me what to do? I don't even know your full damn name. Who the heck are you to boss me around?"

Josh looked at her seriously, pausing between each word. "My name is Josh Blake. Got it? Josh Blake."

"B-Bug? Why would anyone name you Bug? That's gross... I don't like bugs..." Mia slurred, her voice trailing off in confusion, eyes glassy from the alcohol.

368

, ? Views, Released

## Chapter 267 Alcohol and Honesty

Josh's jaw tightened. His temple pulsed.

In one swift motion, he grabbed her wrist and pressed her back against the cold tile wall.

He leaned in slightly, his voice sharp. "Not Bug-Blake. Josh Blake. B-L-A-K-E."

Mia groaned in annoyance and wriggled free, pushing him off.

"I don't care if you're Bug, Beetle, or whatever the hell..."

She muttered under her breath, then reached for the bottle again and took another heavy gulp.

Finished

Before Mia could swallow the shot, Josh grabbed her shoulders and snapped, "That's enough. Spit it out and go to bed."

Mia wasn't about to listen. She jerked away, fighting him.

They started shoving each other in the tiny kitchen, bumping into counters and stumbling in tight spaces. In the scuffle, Mia tripped and fell forward-right on top of Josh, pinning him against the counter.

Their lips collided.

And just like that, the alcohol in Mia's mouth poured straight into his.

Josh's eyes went wide like he'd been hit by lightning. His throat worked instinctively, and before he could stop himself, he'd swallowed the liquor.

His face turned bright red, like a tomato about to burst.

He shoved Mia away, shaking, pointing a finger at her with zero control. "What the heck is wrong with you?"

Then he doubled over, coughing violently.

Mia's lip trembled as Josh yelled. Tears welled in her eyes, and her voice came out thick and shaky, on the edge of a full breakdown.

"You hate me. I knew it. Nobody ever likes me. That asshole Elliot spread all this garbage at school-telling people I was some rich guy's side piece. Now the whole damn school calls me a homewrecker. They trash me every day. Laurie's sweet, but she won't even talk about what she's been through. She just keeps it all bottled up. And now even you... even you can't stand me..."

The tears fell hard, splashing down her cheeks like she couldn't hold anything in anymore.

Josh stood frozen. Watching her break down like that made something twist hard in his chest. It hurt just to look at her.

He opened his mouth to say something-to fix it—but before he could, Mia looked up. Her eyes were red and glossy. She was drunk, wrecked, and clinging to something raw and real.

“You know...” Mia looked up at him, eyes glassy, voice wobbling with drunken honesty, “...the first time I saw

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Chapter 267 Alcohol and Honesty

Josh's heart stopped for a beat-then slammed hard in his chest.

She liked me From the very first time?

His face warmed instantly. He took a breath, trying to steady himself. “I never thought you ever-

But he didn't get to finish.

Mia broke into sobs again, blurting out through the crying, “I'm a woman... so why won't you...!”

Josh blinked, completely lost.

What was she even saying?

He stood there, stunned, no idea what she meant.

Finished

“Hey, stop crying.” Josh reached out and gently patted Mia's head. “I'll get you some water. You need to sober up.”

But Mia wasn't listening. Her blurry gaze fixated on the smooth curve of his neck.

Then out of nowhere, she lunged forward and grabbed him by the throat-tight.

Josh stumbled, crashing back into the kitchen counter.

His breath caught instantly. He tried to push her off, but she was stronger than he expected. Her grip didn't budge.

Then her mouth was on him-her lips landing on his neck, her teeth lightly grazing his Adam's apple.

Electricity tore through his body. It was raw, unfamiliar, intense-and dangerously addictive.

Josh snapped.

Before he could think, he flipped her over and pinned her beneath him on the counter.

Her hands slid up along his throat.

His breathing grew erratic, chest heaving. But he still had just enough control left to pull himself upright.

He backed off, fighting to settle his pounding heart.

One glance down and-God help him-Mia was laid out beneath him. Hair a mess.

Cheeks flushed. Completely defenseless.

He looked away fast, terrified that if he looked again, he'd lose it.

That moment had nearly shattered every bit of restraint he had.

She's drunk. She's not thinking straight. I can't... I won't take advantage, Josh repeated silently to himself like a

mantra.

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## Chapter 268 Is Josh Really Not Into Women?

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Finished

Mia thought she'd finally found a face she loved—a guy who was exactly her type—and yet, he had to be into guys. Not girls.

She wanted to say something like, *Why can't you want a woman? Why do you only like men?*

But the alcohol had turned her brain into mush. She couldn't string it together. All she could do was keep repeating the same three words to Josh.

"You don't work... you don't work..."

If there was one thing no guy wanted to hear, it was that.

Josh held on as long as he could. But after the fifth time, something in him snapped.

He looked at her, tight-lipped, barely keeping it together. "You haven't even tried. How the heck would you know if I work or not?"

But Mia just kept going, not realizing how deep she was cutting. "I saw it. You... with a woman. You weren't working."

Josh let out a short, sharp laugh—more disbelief than humor. "You didn't see anything."

That only made her pout harder. "You don't work... you just don't..."

And that was it.

Josh completely lost it.

"You really wanna find out? Fine. I'll show you."

Before she could say another word, he scooped her up roughly, tossed her over his shoulder, and marched straight to the bedroom—then dropped her onto the bed with zero ceremony.

Mia's robe was barely hanging on after all the chaos. The hem had slipped high up her thighs, leaving smooth, pale skin exposed—glowing under the dim light like a magnet pulling Josh in.

Josh's gaze darkened, and he leaned over her, every muscle tensed with restraint.

"Say the word," he said quietly. "Just ask me... and I'll stop."

But Mia didn't ask him to stop. She pulled him closer.

Her arms wrapped around his neck, and she kissed the hollow of his throat—hard. Her mouth lingered, sucking until a deep red hickey marked his skin.

That was it.

Whatever control Josh had left evaporated.

His breath turned ragged. His hand found the edge of her robe and pulled it open without resistance.

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Chapter 268 is Josh Really Not Into Women?

#Finished

moved slowly down to her ear, pressing soft kisses against her earlobe, a wet sound from her lips.

The tension in the room crackled like electricity.

The air was thick with heat and the sound of two hearts racing wildly in sync. In the stillness of the night, everything else faded away—except the storm building between them.

Sunlight streamed through the crack in the curtains, scattering broken rays across the bed.

Mia's head was pounding like a drum, and her body felt wrecked—like someone had taken her apart and reassembled her all wrong. Every inch ached, but the worst was down there—a deep soreness that made her suck in a breath.

She forced her eyes open.

The first thing she saw was Josh's face—  
unfairly handsome and so close it made her heart lurch.

She froze,

*Why* is he here?

No... wait. This wasn't even my room.

What the heck is going on? Am I dreaming? Did I really just have a steamy dream about  
Josh because I'm that obsessed *with* his face?

But then the ache in her head and body reminded her—no dream felt **this** real.

Her gaze drifted lower.

Both of them—half-naked. No shirts. Nothing.

And Josh's chest and neck? Covered in bruises and bite marks. The kind that only came  
from one kind of night.

Her heart nearly stopped.

No. Nope. No way. This *cannot* be *real*.

She swallowed hard, hand trembling as she lifted the corner of the blanket.

And there it was—the proof. Josh's very clear and very unmistakable anatomy.

Her entire face flushed red in an instant.

*Oh my God...* did I *really* sleep with Josh?

Mia's eyes darted toward Josh.

He was still fast asleep, his face annoyingly gorgeous in the morning light—  
but right now, she wasn't admiring anything.

All L. old LiLb..

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Chapter 268 Is Josh Really Not Into Women?

Her clothes from last night were ruined—  
streaked with blood. No way she could put those back on.

With no better option, she reached for something from Josh's wardrobe.

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Finished

The shirt drowned her—baggy and oversized—  
but she didn't care. She threw it on and slipped out of the apartment like a ghost.

It wasn't until about half an hour later that Josh finally woke up.

He opened his eyes slowly, stretching slightly.

Then paused.

The bed beside him was empty.

And just like that, a knot of confusion curled tight in his chest.

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Chapter 269 Mia Vanishes Before He Wakes

80%

Finished

Josh pulled back the blanket lazily—and froze for a second when he saw the deep red stain against the white sheets. It looked like a rose had bloomed overnight. His eyes narrowed instinctively.

That sight brought everything rushing back—  
last night's heat, her breathless gasps, the chaos between  
them.

A sly smile crept across his lips.

He reached for his phone, dialing Mia with a light mood, already planning the kind of teasing he'd lay on her.

But the call didn't go through.

He frowned. Tried again. Still nothing.

Then a third time.

Still blocked.

His mood shifted. Fast.

That teasing smirk turned sharp.

"Really, Mia?" he muttered under his breath. "Ghost me after last night? That's what we're doing now?"

His jaw tensed. There was a cold edge in his voice as he said to himself, "You think you're done with me? Marilyn's still at the Brooker Villa. Let's see just how far you think you can run."

At the Brooker villa.

The past few days had been peaceful—and honestly, pretty wonderful—for Lauren.

Her days were simple, spent quietly working on her embroidery, her heart set on finishing it soon.

At first, she used to wake up early just to make Felix a nutritious breakfast—especially his favorite chicken and rice soup packed with fresh cilantro.

But Felix wouldn't let her. Every time, he insisted she rest, his firm but caring eyes making it impossible for her to argue. Eventually, she gave up trying.

Since then, she'd been sleeping in every morning without guilt.

By the time she woke up today, Felix had already left for work.

She sat alone at the dining table, enjoying her breakfast slowly.

A moment later, Marilyn walked in with a cheerful bounce in her step and a kind smile. "Ms. Bennett, I'm planning to take a day off tomorrow."

## Chapter 269 Mia Vanishes Before He Wakes

together.”

Finished

Lauren’s eyes lit up. “Mia’s birthday? Then let me join you two. We should get her a birthday cake. Let’s pick her up after school and surprise her with dinner—what do you think?”

Marilyn nodded with a smile. “Sounds perfect.”

She grabbed her phone. “I’ll text Mia now.”

At that moment, Mia was sprawled out on her dorm bed, doing absolutely nothing and drowning in regret.

God. *Why... why did I sleep with Josh?*

Yeah, sure, the guy looked like a walking ad for heartbreak—but that didn’t mean she had to go full chaos and jump him.

Just thinking about the way she drunkenly wrapped herself around him last night made her want to scream into a pillow. Or vanish off the face of the earth.

Right then, her phone buzzed with a ding.

It was a message from Lauren, “Mia, Marilyn and I are picking you up after school today.”

*Wait... what?*

*Lauren and mom?*

Mia stared at the screen, eyebrows scrunching, nerves twisting in her stomach.

Were they planning to take her to the Brooker Villa?

*Oh hell no.*

*If Josh is there, I’ll die. I’ll actually die of embarrassment right there in the foyer.*

Mia replied, “Where exactly are we going? What’s the plan?”

Lauren replied, “Out to eat. And of course, birthday cake.”

Mia replied, "Birthday cake? Wait—didn't *you* already have your birthday?"

Lauren read the message and burst out laughing. She turned to Marilyn with a grin. "Look at this—Mia's so buried in schoolwork she forgot it's her own birthday."

Marilyn leaned over, read it, and laughed too.

"She takes after you. Always in study mode. She's such a sweet girl—never causes any trouble, always respectful. Makes my life easy."

Lauren nodded, completely agreeing.

Mia really was something special. Beautiful, smart, hard-working. Ever since she got into Hoverdale Tech,

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5 Apr

Chapter 269 Mia Vanishes Before He Wakes

Lauren replied, "Dummy. It's your birthday tomorrow. Did you really forget?"

Mia blinked.

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Finished

Oh, I had forgotten.

But the idea of spending her birthday with Lauren? That made her smile.

Mia replied, "Okay. See you tonight."

That little text exchange completely turned Mia's mood around. She instantly tossed the whole sleeping- with—Josh debacle to the back of her mind.

So what *if I slept* with a gay guy? *Big whoop.*

It wasn't like she was the only one acting wild. Josh had been into it—more than into it. Honestly, he was the one doing the heavy lifting last night.

Her lower back still hadn't forgiven her.

When she thought about it that way, neither of them owed the other anything. If anything, she should get a medal for not freaking out about hooking up with someone who stirs up drama like it's a personality trait.

But as soon as the word drama—stirrer crossed her mind, she suddenly felt itchy. Like she'd rolled around in something dirty.

She threw off the covers, grabbed her bathroom stuff, and made a beeline for the shower.

She needed to scrub the night off her skin. Fast.

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, ? Views, Released

Chapter 270 Flowers From the One She Slept With

Evening.

Finished

Lauren had taken her time getting ready—hair done, outfit carefully picked—and now she and Marilyn were just heading out the door.

But they hadn't made it far when Felix and Josh came walking up the driveway.

Felix stopped cold when his eyes landed on Lauren.

She was wearing a chic jacket over a pair of soft blue jeans, white sneakers on her feet, her hair styled in a cute messy bun. A little makeup gave her cheeks just the right glow. She looked fresh and confident—honestly, glowing.

Felix's gaze didn't move from her.

"It's getting dark. Where are you going?"

Lauren smiled easily. "Tomorrow's Mia's birthday. Marilyn and I are taking her out tonight to celebrate— with dinner and cake."

Josh raised an eyebrow.

"Ms. Bennett, Marilyn—why don't I drive you?"

*Mia, he thought, bet you didn't see this coming.*

*After last night? I can't wait to see how you try to explain yourself.*

With fall settling in, the air had turned cool, and the sun dipped down earlier than before.

Streetlights blinked to life along the sidewalk, casting a soft yellow glow across Mia's face as she stood waiting outside the gates of Hoverdale Tech.

She kept glancing down the street, eyes scanning for Lauren and Marilyn.

About ten minutes passed before a black luxury car eased to a stop right in front of her.

The second it did, her stomach dropped.

She knew that car way too well. Josh's.

In that instant, last night came crashing back—hot, messy, and impossible to forget.

Even this morning, in the dorm shower, she'd seen it—her collarbone and everything below it was covered in marks. Josh's marks. Faint bruises, bites, evidence of just how out of control things had gotten.

She'd been grateful for one thing—he hadn't left anything on her neck. If he had, there'd be no hiding it. No facing anyone.

She didn't want to deal with Josh. Not now. Not here.

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80%

Chapter 270 Flowers From the One She Slept With

"Mia."

Mia froze in place.

Finished

She turned slowly and saw the window of the black car had rolled down. In the backseat, Lauren and her mom were smiling and waving like nothing was out of the ordinary.

Her eyes flicked toward the front.

Josh.

He leaned back in the driver's seat like he owned the moment, lips tugged into that infuriating half-smile, eyes full of mischief.

"So you're Marilyn's daughter," he said smoothly. "Nice to officially meet you."

The second their eyes met, Mia's stomach flipped. She quickly looked down, flustered, avoiding his face like it might set her on fire.

She'd expected Lauren and her mom to roll up in a regular cab—not *his* car.

*Seriously, what is this guy trying to pull?*

The last thing she wanted was to get in the same car as him. Her feet stayed glued to the ground.

Josh tilted his head slightly, eyebrow raised. "Ms. Mia. Come on in."

Marilyn, completely unaware of the tension, called out with a smile, "Mia, don't just stand there—hop in!"

Mia clenched her jaw, mentally groaning, but there was no way out.

So she walked toward the car, each step echoing one thought—*this is a bad idea*.

Mia grabbed the door handle, planning to slide into the backseat to avoid Josh altogether—only to see that plan crash instantly.

The backseat was packed.

Lauren and her mom were already seated, and to her surprise, Felix was there too.

She wanted to blurt out, *Mr. Brooker, would it kill you to ride up front for once?*

But Felix just glanced at her coolly, then closed his eyes like she didn't exist.

Mia sighed silently.

*Yeah. He's not moving.*

Before she could argue, Marilyn and Lauren chimed in together, "Mia, sit up front."

She didn't have a choice. With a heavy sigh, she walked toward the front passenger door.

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Chapter 270 Flowers From the One She Slept With

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\* Finished

Fresh, with tiny droplets still clinging to the petals. They looked perfect. They smelled even better.

Josh smirked slightly, eyes locked on her like he was enjoying every second of her squirming.

“Since Ms.

Mia is having a birthday dinner tonight,” he said slowly, “I thought I’d bring a little something special. Picked these out just for you.”

He made sure to emphasize just for you.

The second Mia locked eyes with Josh and saw that completely unfiltered look he was giving her, she felt a wave of heat rush straight to her ears. Her whole face flushed in an instant.

Panicking, she clutched the bouquet against her chest like a shield, burying half her face in the petals. It was the only way she could breathe.

“Y—

yeah... I like them...” she mumbled, barely audible, then quickly slid into the front seat and turned to face the window like he didn’t exist.

The car was silent as it moved, streetlights and buildings blurring by outside.

Josh glanced sideways. Her ears were still burning red.

His smirk deepened.

He was clearly loving how flustered she was—but he kept it classy, saying nothing more. No teasing. No pushing.

Just sitting there, smug and quiet.

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