

The Heiress Revived from the Ashes

The Heiress Revived Ch 271

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Chapter 271 A Troubling Drive

Finished

Josh's fingers lightly tapped the steering wheel, setting lively rhythm. The atmosphere inside the car was subtly tense, with Mia clutching the bouquet of roses in her lap, using them to shield her embarrassed

heart

Just when she thought this agonizing ride would soon end, Josh unexpectedly extended his right hand, seemingly casually placing his arm on the central armrest between the seats.

In reality, his large hand stealthily slid to Mia's slender waist, his fingers mischievously kneading her most

sensitive spot.

"Hmm...

Mia let out a soft moan, her body instantly stiffening.

She turned her head sharply, only to see Josh looking straight ahead, his expression dead serious as if nothing had happened; yet, his hand continued its mischief in the dark, clearly enjoying the thrill of this covert stimulation.

Mia's face turned beet red. She wanted to curse him out, but feared Lauren and her mother might hear.

Her breathing became rapid, her heart **pounding** wildly in her chest, but she dared not move **too** much. She bit her lower lip, silently enduring the waves of tingling sensation at her waist, trying her best not to make a sound.

However, that soft moan had still been heard by Marilyn.

“Mia, what’s wrong?” Marilyn’s concerned voice came through, making Mia’s heart nearly leap out of her

throat.

“It’s nothing: just got pricked by the roses. Mia’s frantic explanation came out.

She tilted the bouquet towards Josh, perfectly shielding his wandering hand from the three people sitting behind them. She was terrified of being caught in such a compromising position; it would be utterly humiliating.

A sly look flashed across Josh’s eyes.

For Mia, time seemed to crawl exceptionally slow on this trip; it felt like an eternity.

By the time the car finally arrived at the restaurant, Mia was sweating profusely.

As soon as the car stopped, she couldn’t wait to get out first.

“Mia, slow down.” Marilyn saw her daughter rushing and spoke with concern.

Mia dashed into the restaurant like she was fleeing, not forgetting to reassure her mother, I’m going to the

restroom.

Mia burst into the restroom, quickly turned on the tap, and splashed the cold water on her burning face.

The flush on her face gradually faded; she looked up at the mirror to see her **face** speckled with water droplets and her eyes filled with panic, silently cursing her lack of composure.

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Chapter 271 A Troubling Drive

She had never been this embarrassed before, this was a first.

Lee, **you** better not mess with me, or **else**...

Finished

It took quite a while for Mia to calm down and leave the restroom, only to run straight into **Josh’s** arms.

“Whoa! Are you throwing yourself at me now?” Josh leaned down, whispering into her ear, his warm breath cascading down her neck, causing her to shiver.

The last thing Mia wanted was to confront him; she tried to push Josh away, but found his arms tightly wrapped around her waist, making it impossible to escape,

“You’re relentless, aren’t you!” Mia hissed through clenched teeth.

Without a word, Josh pulled her into the women’s restroom stall.

The confined space was filled with their breaths.

Mia’s eyes widened, her chest heaving as she whispered fiercely, “You’re crazy! This is a ladies’ room!” Josh smirked, not only not letting go but holding her even tighter, as if trying to meld her into his body.

What are you afraid of, there’s no one here right now!

He said this while lowering his head to nuzzle against Mia’s hair, taking a deep breath as if savoring her scent greedily.

Mia felt her sanity teeter on the edge of anger and humiliation.

She pushed against Josh, her hands pounding on his chest, “Let go of me! What the heck do you want?” Josh remained unmoved, grabbing her flailing hands and pinning her against the stall’s partition.

In the cramped space, their breaths mingled, the atmosphere growing increasingly intimate.

“What do I want? Don’t you know? What, after using me last night, you plan to kick me to the curb? What am I to you?” His voice was low and husky, his warm breath seeping into her ear, making her legs involuntarily weaken.

Mia’s face burned, “Last night was an accident; can’t we just pretend it never happened?”

Josh scoffed, his eyes filled with intense possessiveness, “You used me thoroughly and now you’re just going to walk away, calling it an accident?”

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Chapter 272 Party Pooper

“Mia, do I look like someone who lets things slide after being played?” Josh’s words left Mia speechless, momentarily at a loss for words. Indeed, it had been his insistence on drinking last night, drunkenly causing chaos on top of him.

Although many details were blurred by the alcohol, the scene where she had him under her in bed, behaving recklessly, was vividly etched in her mind, embarrassingly clear.

Ah, I can’t think about that. Just thinking about it makes me want to slap myself. I was really starved, starved enough to end up sleeping with a gay guy.

Mia turned her head away, unable to look Josh in the eyes.

“I... didn’t **mean** to

Josh didn’t believe her tall tale for a second; last night, in her drunken state, she had confessed her feelings to him, claiming it was love at first sight. No wonder she had been so forward in bed; she must have been eyeing him for a long time.

To be honest, it was also his first time experiencing something so **wild**.

All day today, his mind had been filled with images of their entanglement from the night before, making it impossible to focus on work.

But the main culprit didn’t want to take responsibility.

He wouldn’t have it. Josh suddenly leaned down and kissed Mia on the lips.

Mia, startled by his sudden move, widened her eyes about to struggle when she heard footsteps and voices outside, clearly indicating someone was entering the restroom.

Mia panicked inside, signaling Josh with her eyes **that** someone was coming and to let her go quickly.

But Josh, intent on teasing her, not only did not let go, but his hand also slipped under her clothing, wandering freely.

Mia’s heart raced, barely daring to make a sound for fear of being discovered by the people outside.

The footsteps got closer, **turning** towards another stall, followed by a conversation.

“I think I just saw Lauren.”

“Wasn’t she in prison?”

“She must be out by now.”

“Tsk, who would **have** thought? The former top student of Hoverdale First High School, committing murder deliberately. People really aren’t what they appear to be; she seemed so quiet in high school, but it

was all an act“.

“What good **does** being a top student do? She’s nothing but a convict now.”

“Back in high school, she was so arrogant because of her good grades. **Even** the hottest guy in our class

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Chapter 272—Party Pooper

Finished

“Tomorrow’s our high school reunion. Who would have thought the class hunk is now the most successful among us, already a sales manager at Brooker Corporation.”

“If Lauren knew, wouldn’t she be regretting it to **death**?

“Definitely. With her status as a convict now, she’s not even worthy of carrying his shoes. By the way. Lauren isn’t in the group chat, she probably doesn’t know about the reunion. Should we invite her?”

“Yes, I can’t wait to see her face when she sees how successful the class hunk is now, and her regret.”

“Hahaha-”

The two girls mocked Lauren mercilessly.

Mia heard every word, clenching her fists, wanting nothing more than to storm over there and beat up those two gossiping women.

But Josh held her back, and she couldn’t break free.

Only after the two women left did Mia no longer hold back her anger. “Josh, let go of me.”

Josh did not let go, inhaling the fragrance from her hair, finding it addictive. Mia, annoyed, lifted her leg and struck him hard below the belt.

“Ugh!” Josh groaned in pain, his face contorting immediately.

“Mia, are you trying to murder your own husband?”

Mia didn’t even listen to him, flinging open the stall door and chasing after the women, shouting, “You two backstabbing wenches, stop right there, I’ll kill you.”

Josh fell silent. What a crazy woman.

However, by the time Mia burst out of the restroom, the two women were nowhere to be seen.

She strode determinedly towards the restaurant, her heart unwilling to let it go.

When she reached the restaurant, she saw two garishly dressed women standing in front of Lauren, saying something.

She wanted to stride over and slap each of them, but in front of Lauren and her mother, she had to play the good girl.

So, she suppressed her anger, straightened her disheveled clothes, and then walked towards Lauren.

But before she could get close, the two women turned and walked away.

“Laurie, what did those two say to you?”

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Chapter 273 Midnight Riders

Finished

“They were my **high** school classmates: they wanted to invite me to the reunion tomorrow, but it’s your birthday, so I declined,” Lauren explained.

Mia’s heart, which had been in her throat, finally settled. Her greatest fear was Lauren being bullied.

As long as Mia was there, no one would dare bully Laurie.

“Mia,” Lauren said, curiously **eyeing** her lips.

Mia, puzzled, responded, “What’s up?”

“Your lips, why are they so red and somewhat swollen?”

Mia fell silent. It must have been from Josh’s kissing in the restroom. She wanted to say it was from a dog bite, but obviously, Laurie wouldn’t believe that.

“Just got bitten by a mosquito in the restroom,” she lied.

Just then. Josh heard this **and** couldn’t help but chuckle, “Seems like that mosquito knew what it was doing:

both your upper and lower lips swollen, very symmetrical.”

Mia was speechless.

Lauren and Marilyn couldn’t help but laugh.

Felix, watching Josh with raised eyebrows, said nothing, but his eyes seemed to see through everything.

The five of them were sitting around the dinner table, and soon, longevity noodles were served. Mia ate the steaming noodles but they might as well have been wax for all she tasted..

Before the meal was even finished, Felix **suggested**, “Let’s have Josh take Ms. Mia back to school later.”

Mia abruptly looked up, her eyes wide, incredulously staring at him.

“Mr. Brooker, what about you guys?”

“I just called the driver; he’s coming to pick us up.”

Mia wished she could just slip away. What **is** Mr. Brooker up to? Everyone had come together, so why is Josh the one to take her back?

Feeling helpless yet trying to remain composed, Mia attempted to negotiate with Felix, “Mr. Brooker, I can just take a cab **back**; let Josh drive you all instead. After all, there are more of you.”

Before Felix could respond, Lauren spoke up, “Mia, last night near a bar in Hoverdale, there was a brutal assault. It was on the news. The victim was found at dawn, eyes gouged out, tongue cut off, limbs disabled, taken to the hospital but didn’t survive despite the doctors best efforts.”

Lauren’s voice was gentle, her eyes full of concern as she looked at Mia, “It’s really not safe at **night**; let Josh drive you. We’ll all feel more at ease.”

Marilyn nodded repeatedly, **adding**, “Yes, Mia, I know you hate to trouble others, but we’re really worried

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Chapter 273 Midnight Riders-

Mia went quiet.

Finished

In Laurie’s **and** her mom’s eyes, she was just a harmless little girl. They had no idea that the brutal assailant they spoke of was actually her.

She felt a bit regretful; last night, she had gone too far. She hadn’t killed him directly because she didn’t want him to die too easily.

She wanted him to suffer.

Unfortunately, he couldn’t hold on and died overnight. What a pity, Mia forced a smile, then bowed her head and continued eating her longevity noodles, though her thoughts were far away.

Under the table, she stealthily sent a message to Kenny

About fifteen minutes later, Kenny replied; he was already waiting for her outside the restaurant.

Mia put down her fork and announced, ‘Mom, Laurie, I’m done eating. You guys take your time. I need to head back to school now, curfew’s **soon**.’

Lauren smiled and nodded, “Okay, go ahead. Tomorrow after school, we’ll have your birthday celebration at the Lavette Grand Hotel.”

Mia smiled back at her, then stood up and quickly walked out.

Josh, seeing this, quickly got up and followed her.

However, as Josh exited the room, he saw Mia running out of the restaurant and hopping onto Kenny’s motorcycle.

Josh’s face turned ashen; he bellowed, “Mia, stop!”

But Mia didn’t even glance at him, instead urging Kenny, “Drive, now.”

She couldn't **stand** to face Josh for another moment.

Kenny looked at Josh with a **hint** of defiance, flashed him the middle finger, then revved the engine. The motorcycle roared like a shot arrow and disappeared from the restaurant's entrance.

Josh scoffed angrily, "We'll see how far **you** can run."

Kenny sped through the night with Mia clinging tightly to his waist, leaning forward with him as the wind whooshed by their cars.

"Mia, are you feeling better tonight? If you are, how about we hit a bar?" Kenny shouted over the noise of the wind.

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Chapter 274 Road Rage Romance

Mia's response was icy, "Not interested."

"Where do you want to go then?"

Just **take** me back to school

Kenny was reluctant, "It's still early, maybe we could..

Finished

He was cut off mid-sentence by a blinding bright light from behind, quickly followed by the deep, powerful roar of an engine. The car behind them sped up rapidly, catching up with Kenny's motorcycle in a blink.

Mia turned her head just in time to **lock** eyes with Josh

Her heart sank, **and** she cursed silently. Damn! Is he like glue? I just can't shake him off.

"Drive faster, just don't let him catch up; anywhere else will do," Mia urged in haste.

Kenny sharply twisted the throttle, and the motorcycle's speed instantly surged, heading towards ring road.

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Josh's Maitrise was not to be outdone; it matched the motorcycle's speed. He clutched the steering wheel tightly, his expression steely.

The Maitrise pushed closer, its headlights nearly engulfing them in light.

Soon, Josh found an opening, swerved sharply, and the Maitrise sketched a beautiful yet oppressive arc on the road, tires screeching against the pavement, sparking a trail of bright sparks.

He managed to get his car in front of Kenny's motorcycle, forcefully bringing them to a halt at the roadside.

Kenny, furious, ripped off his helmet and stormed towards the Maitrise.

"Are **you out** of your mind?" Kenny yelled, fists clenched, ready to fight.

However, Josh didn't give Kenny a chance to react, swinging a punch that knocked him to the ground.

Before Kenny could recover from the sudden blow, Josh kicked him again.

Josh stepped over Kenny, who lay groaning in pain, and approached Mia.

Mia frowned deeply, both angry and anxious, and shouted, "What the heck do you want? I already told **you**, last night was an accident. We should just pretend it never happened. I'm not even holding it against you, why can't you, a grown man, let it go?"

She rattled off, but Josh seemed not to hear a word. He stopped in front of her, suddenly grabbed the back of her **head**, and pulled her close, then forcefully kissed her.

Mia's eyes widened **in** shock.

Once she regained her senses, Mia slapped Josh across the face and yelled, "Will you ever stop?"

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Chapter 274 Road Rage C

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Josh's head turned with the slap, but he didn't seem angry; instead, he adjusted his jaw as if savoring the thrill of her resistance.

He bent down, and hoisted Mia over his shoulder, and he screamed, pounding on his back and kicking her legs. "Let me **go**! You maniac!"

Josh was unfazed, steadily carrying her towards the Marise. The headlights of the Maitrise beamed directly on them.

Under the harsh lights, Josh's crisp suit shimmered with a harsh gleam, while Mia's fluttering skirt added a touch of chaotic beauty to the scene.

At that moment, it seemed as if they were the only two people in the world, everything else blurred out.

Josh reached the Maitrise, opened the rear door, and tossed Mia in forcefully.

Before **Mia** could adjust, Josh was on top of her, quickly locking the door behind him.

In the cramped space of the car, Mia was pinned down her breathing fast and erratic, her voice stammered, "**What**, what do you want?"

Josh looked at her, his eyes deep, "Can't you feel what I want?"

His voice was low and husky, filled with restrained desire.

Mia turned her head away, refusing to look at him.

"Ha!" Josh scoffed, "Still disobedient, huh? Then I'll just have to keep going until you comply."

His hands began to roam over Mia's body, and she twisted in terror, trying to escape his grip, but it was

futile.

The temperature inside the car soared, filled with a tense and suggestive atmosphere.

Mia realized what Josh intended to do and shook in fear. "Stop, you're crazy, Kenny is still outside."

Panic filled her eyes as she pushed against Josh, trying to stop his next move.

Josh paused briefly, looking down at Mia, who lay on the seat, her face flushed and chest heaving, "Good, if he wants to watch, let him watch enough to give up bothering you for good."

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Chapter 275 Tied Up in Knots

“You have no shame, but I still do,” Mia snapped, glaring at him furiously.

Josh chuckled lightly, teasingly asking, “Scared?”

Finished

His fingers gently traced **Mia’s** check, settling on her alluring collarbone. As he caressed her, it felt like electric currents were traveling through her body, causing her face to flush a deep red that spread over her entire body, like a ripening cherry.

Her coy demeanor undoubtedly pleased Josh.

“Feeling it now?” Josh raised an eyebrow, a wicked **smile** playing on his lips.

Mia inwardly cursed. She hadn’t expected Josh, who looked so refined on the surface, to be rotten on the inside. This guy is a complete scoundrel behind his polished facade.

“Josh, that’s enough, Mia gritted her teeth. I’m not a man; why are you relentlessly pursuing me like this?”

Josh was bewildered by her words.

“Of course you’re not a man. If you were, I definitely wouldn’t touch you.”

Mia looked at him incredulously, “Stop pretending. I saw you hugging a guy very intimately last time; you were so close. Are you telling me you’re not gay? Or are you bisexual, **swinging** both ways?”

As if she **had** uncovered the truth, Mia cursed, “Damn! That’s disgusting!”

Josh nearly burst **into** laughter at Mia’s wild accusations “We’ve been together, and you still can’t tell I’m straight? Looks like I didn’t try hard enough last night. Maybe we should continue here?” he suggested, his hot **hand** sneaking under her skirt.

Mia was horrified and quickly pushed his hand away, her voice tinged with desperation, “Don’t do this.”

Just then, Kenny scrambled up from the ground, banging furiously on the car window and shouting. "Josh, let Mia go! If you touch her, I won't let you off!"

Josh paused, ignoring Kenny, and said to **Mia**, "You don't like it here? Then let's go home and continue."

With that, he efficiently tore off his tie and swiftly tied Mia's hands.

"Behave, or I'll take you right here," Josh whispered threateningly into her ear.

Mia turned her face away, trying not to look at his infuriatingly smug expression.

Great, I've entangled myself with a real psycho. She thought despairingly.

Josh gently patted her head, "That's better."

He then confidently opened the car door.

Seeing him emerge, Kenny's eyes reddened as he shouted, "What did you do to Mia?"

Josh, with a hint of scorn, replied, "What I do with my woman is none of your business."

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Chapter 275 Tied Up in Knots

The words "my woman" stung Kenny deeply.

He raised **his** hand to strike Josh again.

Josh glanced at him coldly, his eyes venomous. "Wasn't he beating earlier enough for you?"

Finished

Kenny froze, unable to move. He watched helplessly as Josh got into the Maitrise, which quickly started up and sped away with a burst of exhaust,

Mia adjusted herself and sat up straight.

Take me back to school."

"We're going home to finish **what** we started," Josh declared.

Mia was left speechless.

Meanwhile, Lauren and Felix walked shoulder to shoulder along the road.

Marilyn had already been driven home. Lauren, seizing the chance to get some fresh air and digest her meal, walked silently with Felix until they reached a bridge.

Agentle breeze fluttered through Lauren's hair as she stood by the bridge, looking down at the flowing

river below, her mood very different from the last time she stood there.

That day, she had been utterly despondent, almost jumping off the bridge.

"Mr. Brooker, do you remember this place?" Lauren asked with a hint of emotion. "If it hadn't been for meeting **you** here that day, "I might have been dead."

She turned **to** Felix, her expression sincere, "I really can't thank you enough. You've been a lifesaver."

Felix looked at her tenderly, 'Do you remember what I told you that day?'

Lauren thought for a moment, "You said life is like a play, **and** sometimes adding an audience can change the plot. I wanted to see what your life would turn out to be if you didn't end it that day."

She paused, then continued, "I didn't believe you then. I said my play was already ruined, nothing left to watch."

Felix's normally stern face broke into a gentle smile, his expression warm in the night. That's not necessarily true. The best parts often come at the end. Look, you've survived the hardest times; now you can enjoy a happy life."

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Chapter 276 **Exes** and Ohs

Lauren nodded, "Yes, I still need to **thank** Mr. Brooker for saving my life back then.

Finished

Her face wore a grateful smile, but her heart ached in waves. If only my *body* were intact, but alas, I won't live much longer.

She bowed her head, hiding her sorrow,

Felix, ever perceptive, noticed the shift in her mood. His lips parted to offer comfort **but** were interrupted. by an untimely voice.

“Laurie?”

Hearing this, Lauren abruptly looked up and met Luca surprised eyes.

At **that** moment, Lucas, seated in a wheelchair in a sharp black suit, was a far cry from the beggar rummaging through trash bins not long ago. His legs were covered with a blanket, and his hands rested on a file holder atop **it**.

His hair was slicked back, and he looked revitalized.

Felix squinted at him, surprised that Lucas, having lost his job and now disabled, had somehow managed a comeback.

Lucas' gaze fixed on Lauren, filled with possessiveness.

“Laurie, you have no idea how hard I've been searching for you these past days.”

Seeing him spoiled her mood entirely. She was finally out with Mr. Brooker, and now she had run into the **last** person she wanted to see.

Lauren ignored Lucas and took Felix's hand, turning to leave.

Lucas wheeled in front of her swiftly, blocking her path

“Laurie, aren't you happy to see me?”

Lauren scoffed, “Lucas, you framed me for Willow, and ended up serving five years for nothing. I can't stand you.”

His smile stiffened, but he quickly recovered.

“Laurie, that's all in the past, and I didn't know the truth back then. We grew up together, you know how I feel about you.”

“Exactly because we grew up together, I was blind to your true, deceitful nature,” Lauren retorted sarcastically. “Otherwise, I would never have wasted a dime on you.”

Lauren's repeated cold remarks visibly twisted Lucas' expression.

Despite his outwardly decent appearance, his psyche had been warped by his trials.

He glanced at Felix, standing tall and handsome beside Lauren, and spat out bitterly. Is it because of him

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Chapter 276 Exes and Ohs

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the hospital for a pregnancy test, and now, not much later, you're with another man. What, did you abort the bastard child and ditch that man for **someone** better?"

At Lucas' baseless accusations, a fierce chill flashed in Felix's eyes.

He was about **to** confront **Lucas** when Lauren wrapped her arms around him first.

She shook her head slightly, signaling Felix to stay calm, then looked straight at Lucas, a faint smile of contentment on her face, "Whatever you say."

Lucas thought his accusations would leave Lauren speechless and ashamed, but instead, she responded with indifference, as if to say, "You're right, I am promiscuous, and I do want to rise to the top."

Her nonchalant demeanor infuriated him, his anger flaring so intensely he almost wished he could shake her awake and demand why she had sunk so low,

Unfortunately, now wheelchair-bound and without the use of his legs, he could only watch helplessly as Lauren affectionately embraced Felix in front of him.

Shaking with anger, Lucas gripped the wheelchair's armrests so tightly his knuckles turned white, as if trying to crush them.

Lauren thought, seeing Lucas act like a buffoon, she didn't need to explain herself. He could think whatever he wanted; in her heart, Lucas had become insignificant, stirring not even a ripple..

The less she explained, the more indifferent she appeared to Lucas, the more intolerable it became for him.

He had grown accustomed to Lauren's undivided attention.

Used to her struggling and sacrificing for him, sending him all her hard-earned money without reservation, that feeling of being wholeheartedly devoted to made him immensely satisfied, even smug. believing himself to be irresistibly charming.

But now, all the **genuine** affection that **used** to come **so** easily was mercilessly withdrawn by Lauren. Her tenderness was now bestowed upon another man, and Lucas could not accept **that**.

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Chapter 277 Backs and Backstories

finished

He suppressed the rage churning inside him, striving appear **calm**, and tried to persuade her with gentle

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Lauren, you won't find happiness with someone like him. You've never had to fend for yourself out in the world, you don't know how cruel people can be. Men like him, with their money, they never take women seriously. In their eyes, women are just playthings

He paused, his eyes sweeping critically over Lauren. "Look at yourself—you're an ex-con with a criminal record and a **limp**. **What** makes you think a **wealthy** man would ever care about you? He's just curious (because he's never been close to someone with a disability before; it's merely a novelty for him. Once he tires of it, he'll drop you like yesterday's news."

Lancas tone softened, his gaze deepening. "We grew up together, both unwanted orphans. You have your disability, and I've lost my legs; we really are perfect for each other. Have you forgotten everything I've done for you?"

As he spoke, Lucas watched Lauren intently, his expression one of sincere concern. However, in reality, he was just trying to demean Lauren as a way to keep exerting control over her mentally.

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Hearing this. Lauren let out **a** cold laugh, filled with scorn and disdain, "Your version of being good was sending me to prison for a crime I didn't commit? Your idea of caring for me was constantly berating me over Willow, refusing to hear my

side of the story, and smearing my reputation despite knowing my character? Lucas, don't compare yourself to me. I'm not an ungrateful wretch like you. I'm disabled, and I still don't see anything in you."

Lauren's ruthless retort hit Lucas hard, deeply wounding him.

Lucas felt his blood pressure skyrocket, darkness swirling before his eyes, his breathing quickening.

"Lauren, how can you be so ungrateful? I'm only saying this for your good. If it were someone else, I wouldn't even bother."

Lauren's eyes were filled with pity, as if looking at a pitiful and laughable clown.

"If it were someone else, they would have slapped you for such insults. The only reason I don't bother with you is because I don't want to dirty my hands. Lucas, I hope **this** is the last time we meet. If we cross paths again, **you** better not **talk** to me because just speaking to you makes me sick. Believe me, I really do despise you. Just one more glance at you feels like I'm sullyng my eyes."

Lauren dropped these cold **words** and, without looking back, walked away with Felix.

Lucas clenched the armrests of his wheelchair, his body trembling as he watched Lauren and Felix's figures receding into the distance, filled with resentment

He knew he had lost Lauren, but his intense possessiveness wouldn't allow him to let go. How could the girl who once adored me just walk away so easily and throw herself into another man's arms?

Even if Lauren had been **pregnant** with another man's child, even if her past was complicated, he was unwilling to let her **go**.

Lucas clenched the document bag in his **hand tightly**, a crucial piece for his comeback.

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Chapter 277 Backs and Backstories

Finished

Winning the **case and** securing his client's sole possession of his estranged wife's fortune would net him at least 140,000 dollars in fees.

And it could also win him a powerful ally in the sales manager. The pretty boy by Lauren's side.

didn't believe he couldn't shake the

"Lauren, wait **and** see, I won't let you leave me that easily," he murmured lowly, his **voice** filled with

madness.

Lauren and Felix **walked** side by side down the street, their shadows elongating under the streetlights.

Suddenly, Felix stopped, his hands gently gripping Lauren's shoulders, turning her to face him.

Lauren looked up slightly, the streetlight casting a golden glow over Felix, softening his usually stern face.

"Don't listen to him. You've always been fine in my eyes **and** I'm not just playing around with **you.**"

Recalling his initial approach to Lauren, it had been because Kate liked her, **and** he was tired of the relentless pursuit of other women, so he had thought of ways to keep her by his side.

But over time, spending days and nights together, he had come to find a profound peace and comfort in her company.

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Chapter 278 Opulence and Awkward Encounters

Fostered:

Lauren was **quiet**, gentle, kind, and sincere in her interactions, exuding a unique charm that made people naturally want to be near her.

Upon hearing his words, Lauren was momentarily stunned, a warm feeling rising in her heart. Is he trying to comfort me!

She smiled. "I didn't really take Lucas' words to heart"

She had grown accustomed to such insults; they no longer stirred any emotional response in her. However, Lucas is right about one thing, my current situation doesn't really match up to Mr. Brooker.

A wave of bitterness washed over Lauren, and she lowered her gaze to hide the emotions welling up in her

eyes.

It seems I need to speed up my embroidery, retrieve my kidney soon, and **then** take Mia and Marilyn abroad. *The* more time I spent with Mr. Brooker, the harder it was to let go. A short pain is better than a long one. Ending this relationship sooner rather than later might be the best outcome for both of us.

At least if she left soon, by the time he forgot about her and she died, he wouldn't be too heartbroken.

Felix noticed Lauren's despondency and furrowed his brow slightly.

He crouched down and said softly, "We've been walking a long time: your leg must be hurting. Here, let me carry you."

His offer nearly brought tears to her eyes.

Anyone could see how severely she limped. After her release from prison, her own family never asked about her leg or sought medical treatment for her. Even her own brother, Elliot, had mocked her limp on the day of her release.

Only the people at the Brooker's Villa had always considered her needs thoughtfully.

Kate had hired a professional masseuse to relieve the discomfort in her legs with daily massages; Anna prepared nourishing meals for her, never missing a meal.

Now, even Felix was paying such close attention to her leg condition, softening her heart completely. Her nose tingled, and her eyes reddened.

In a low voice, she started, "Mr. Brooker, I...

Felix cut her off, his **voice** gentle yet firm, "No need to say anything, just come on."

Lauren hesitated, but eventually, she leaned into his broad back.

Felix easily lifted her up and began walking, his strong back serving as a warm haven **that** made Lauren feel an unprecedented sense of security.

For a while, neither spoke. Lauren's **nose** was filled with the scent of cedar from Felix, a fresh and subtle fragrance. Breathing in his scent, all her worries seemed to evaporate, and her eyelids grew heavy, eventually closing.

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Sat, Apr

Chapter 278 Opulence and Awkward Encounters

body relax.

By the time Gael drove up with the Phantom, Lauren had fallen asleep on his back.

Felix gently placed her in the back seat, carefully adjusting her position to avoid waking her.

Finished

The next day was sunny, marking Mia's birthday. Laure and Marilyn got into Felix's car early and headed. to the Lavette Grand Hotel.

This hotel
was the most luxurious in Hoverdale, both architectural grandeur and interior design.

Upon arriving at the Lavette Grand Hotel, Felix told Lauren, "Laurie, you and Marilyn go ahead to Suite 101. I have a client here at the hotel. **Once** I'm done, I'll join you!"

Lauren nodded,
"You go ahead with your work, Mr. Brooker. It's still early: Marilyn and I will wait for you i
n Suite 101"

With that, they parted ways and headed in different directions.

Guided warmly by a server down a carpeted corridor, Tauren and Marilyn reached Suite 101.

As they pushed open the **door**, the sight that greeted them left both in awe. A large mahogany round table, polished to a mirror finish under the light, was set with exquisite dinnerware and vibrant flowers, every **detail** exuding elegance.

Famous paintings adorned the walls, adding a rich artistic atmosphere to the suite.

A large crystal chandelier hung from the **ceiling**, casting a soft and warm light that made the suite feel like a palace.

Lauren **and** Marilyn had never seen such opulence.

Marilyn felt out of her element for a moment, unsure how to react. Even though she **had** worked in lavish Bennett estates for many years, she had never seen such a luxurious dining setting.

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, ? Views, Released

Chapter 279 Unwelcome Reunion

“This place is so beautiful, I’m almost **afraid** to sit down Marilyn admitted shyly.

Finished

Lauren smiled reassuringly. “Marilyn, don’t worry. Mr. Brooker arranged this especially for us. Let’s just relax and enjoy it.”

Lauren herself felt a similar **awe**; if not for Felix, she doubted she’d ever have stepped foot in such a high-

end venue.

Lauren and Marilyn carefully took their seats, quietly waiting for Felix’s arrival. After about five minutes, a burst of noisy footsteps **and** loud voices came from outside the suite.

“Did he say Suite 101 or 107?”

“It’s definitely 101! He’s not just anyone now; right after **graduation**, he became the sales manager at Brooker Corporation. That just shows how capable he is.”

“Wow, that’s Brooker Corporation, the top-tier family in the capital, Corwynale. And now he’s the sales manager here in Hoverdale. That’s really impressive.

“Back in high school, I could tell he was no ordinary guy. Not only good-looking but also exceptionally – talented.”

“Right, and now even the most luxurious suite at the Lavette Grand Hotel, a super VIP room, **is** available to him. He must be highly valued by Mr. Brooker at Brooker Corporation.”

“That’s right, we’re all riding on his coattails. Otherwise, we’d never be able to step foot in here in our whole lives of work.”

As they spoke, the door to the suite was pushed open, and a group of men and women entered in a file.

The men, some in suits and **others** in casual attire, all dressed with a sense of confidence. Big gold chains and fancy watches adorned them..

Their **hair** was meticulously styled, slick with gel to **the** point that a mosquito would slip if it landed on them. The women, each dressed in fashionable, revealing outfits, had thick makeup on their faces.

As they entered the suite, a strong mix of perfumes hit Lauren, the overpowering scents from various brands mingling into a pungent odor that made her head spin.

Lauren stared at them blankly, utterly confused about why this **group** had suddenly appeared in their reserved suite.

Clearly, the men and women were just as surprised to see Lauren and an older lady: they **paused**. momentarily in shock.

After a brief moment of surprise, a woman in a red dress spoke up first.

“Lauren? What are you doing here? Last night at the restaurant you said you were busy and couldn’t come, yet here you are before us.”

Indeed, this w

woman in red was Kelly, one of the women who **had** mocked Lauren in the restroom at the restaurant the previous night.

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Chapter 279 Unwelcome Reunion

Finished

After Kelly spoke, another in yellow chimed in, her tongue dripping with disdain, “Some people, even though they’re dying to come, love to act all superior, like they something special. And here she is, couldn’t wait to show up knowing our classmate, now a manager at Brooker Corporation, would be here.”

With that, she rolled her eyes openly at Lauren.

The other women looked at Lauren with scorn and disdain.

The men brightened when they saw Lauren; she had been the prettiest girl in their high school class.

Even back then, despite her thin, frail appearance and dull hair, her stunning beauty couldn't be masked.

Lauren, a classic beauty with a striking presence, stood out whenever she was in a crowd. Now, after months of careful recuperation, her body had filled out and her complexion glowed with health.

Her skin was rosy white, and her luscious black hair, never permed or dyed, fell smoothly over her shoulders like satin.

She wore no jewelry, and her makeup was minimal, yet her beauty was breathtaking and captivating.

"Lauren, you're even prettier than you were in high school."

"Big deal! What's the use of being pretty? She's still an ex-con"

"As for women, so **what** if she's an ex-con? Even if she were a fool or a beggar, there are plenty of men who would take her home to continue their family line, don't you think?"

This provoked a burst of loud, mocking laughter from the group.

Marilyn, seeing them insult Lauren, was furious.

She stood up abruptly and shouted, "Get out! You are not welcome in our suite."

The laughter slowly died down as everyone turned to look at Marilyn with utter contempt.

"Your suite? A super VIP suite at the Lavette Grand Hotel is not open to the public. Just how do you two nobodies think you have the right to dine here?"

"**And** don't even look at yourselves. Lauren was a nobody in high school, too poor to afford a meal. We ate in the cafeteria while she filled her stomach with cold water like a starving ghost. We kindly offered her leftovers, and she was too proud to accept them. I've never seen anyone who can play the victim better than her."

, ? Views, Released

Chapter 280 Ring Toss and Loss

"She's nothing **special**, we've always known that. Now she's pretending to be some big shot, as if someone spat disdainfully,

“Lauren, if you came to this reunion to suck up to our successful classmate, just admit it. We all went to school together; we know what everyone’s worth. Why pretend to be something you’re not?”

“Being a good student didn’t help her character, did it? Now she’s an ex-con, still trying to act all high and mighty.”

Their comments swirled around Lauren like a relentless storm, continuously insulting her.

As they spoke, they swaggered over and sat down at the table. One of the men, settling next to Lauren, placed an unwelcome hand on her shoulder, his face twisted into a nauseating smirk. “Tell me what you want to **eat**: I’ll treat you. After all, you’re so poor you can’t even afford **a** meal, and fresh out of jail, **you’ve** never tasted good food in your life.

Lauren abruptly shook off his arm.

“Show some respect,” she said icily.

The man in the suit, humiliated in front of everyone, turned an ugly shade of red.

He stood up abruptly, pointing a chubby finger at Lauren, and yelled, “Don’t bite the hand that feeds you, Lauren. I’m telling you, miss this chance **today**, and you’ll never step foot in the Lavette Grand Hotel again

Others joined in, egging him on.

“Seriously, Timothy is doing you a favor by offering to **pay**. What’s with you acting all high and mighty?”

“Don’t look down on Timothy because he used to get bad grades; he’s a construction site foreman now, **making** at least 140,000 dollars **a** year, which is more than any of us here.”

Timothy, the man in the suit, basked in their flattery, swelling with pride.

He smugly rolled up his sleeves and flaunted his hands covered in gold rings in front of Lauren, the light glinting off them so brightly it was dizzying. He wanted everyone to know he was wealthy.

Then, he pulled out an iPhone and a BMW car key from his pocket and slammed them on the **table with**: showy gesture, aiming to flaunt his wealth.

Marilyn **watched**, dumbfounded by the ostentatious display, while Lauren looked on with disgust, her eyebrows furrowed.

She didn't want to waste her breath explaining anything to these mindless people. She knew even if she tried, they wouldn't believe her; they'd just think she was putting on an act.

So, she reached for her phone, intending to call Felix.

But as soon as she took out her phone, it triggered another round of laughter.

"See, she's so broke she can't even afford an iPhone. She dares to claim a super VIP suite is hers."

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13:30 Sat, Apr 5

Chapter 280 Ring Toss and Loan

Finishing

"Who still uses an Android? We all have iPhones," they said, pulling out their phones as if competing in a

show-off

Lauren ignored their taunts, unlocked her phone, and opened her contacts

Felix's number was the first one listed..

Just as she was about to dial, Timothy snatched the phone from her hands and, with a flourish, smashed it

on the floor.

"What a piece of junk. Don't bother with it anymore. I've got several old phones you can have after the reunion. They're way better than whatever trash you have

Her phone shattered on impact, scattering pieces across the floor.

"Look at that, I told you it was trash. I barely touched it and it broke. Did you pick that up from a junkyard?"

Their laughter erupted again, mocking Lauren, treating her as their entertainment.

When Lauren saw her phone destroyed, she lost her composure.

That phone had been a gift from Felix, and although she didn't know the brand, she treasured it because it was from him.

Watching her phone break into pieces, her anger surged.

Without thinking, she slapped Timothy hard across the face, the sound echoing sharply in the

the suite.

"Who do you think you are? Look in the mirror; you look like a fat pig. I wouldn't use your trash phones if you paid me."

Lauren continued her tirade, slapping him repeatedly, turning his greasy face bright red, almost like a ripe

tomato.

Timothy was shocked, never expecting to be slapped. Everyone else was too, their jaws dropping in disbelief.