

Crushed Affections

Chapter 15 Hidden Love Letter

Among the items, Bella found a photograph of Dorothy with a handsome man whom she had never seen before. But instinct told her that this man was her father.

Most of the letters were written by Dorothy to her father, but they were never sent. As she carefully sorted through the contents, she noticed a single sheet of paper at the bottom without an envelope.

Curiosity got the best of her, and she unfolded it. The moment she saw Richard's name, her heart sank.

This was the only letter written by Richard to Dorothy. The handwriting was strong and bold, and every word expressed a deep and enduring love.

Bella was stunned. Did this mean that Dorothy and Richard weren't as innocent as she had believed?

At the very least, Richard had feelings for Dorothy. It was possible that when Dorothy was at her most desperate, trying to secure Bella's future with the Miller family, she had spent her final days with Richard.

For years, Bella had avoided seeking the truth, but it seemed like the answers had been hidden in this small box all along. The years of coldness and resentment from Dominic suddenly didn't seem unwarranted.

At the same time, she felt a strange sense of relief that Dominic hadn't opened the box and uncovered these painful secrets himself.

Guilt flooded her, along with a deep sense of unease. She had no idea how she could ever face him again.

Suddenly, she heard the sound of a car outside. Was Dominic leaving?

She walked to the window and watched as his car drove away. The guilt gnawing at her heart made her want to reach out to him, to make up for everything, but she didn't know how.

She pulled out her phone and sent a message. "Where are you going this late?"

To her surprise, Dominic replied, though his message was brief. "Business trip."

She carefully typed out another message. "You just had a drink. Get someone to drive you. Be careful on the road."

Her concern was unusual, and Dominic didn't bother to respond again.

It was destined to be a sleepless night. As Bella looked around the vast manor, her feelings were a tangled mess.

She shouldn't have been there in the first place. It was her presence that had destroyed everything Dominic once had. If it weren't for her, Dorothy might never have entered Miller Manor.

Consumed by sorrow, Bella desperately needed someone to talk to. She called Lia. "Lia, where are you? Can you come out?"

Lia's initial reaction was one of playful irritation. "Well, look who it is! The elusive Bella finally remembers she has friends. You think I have nothing better to do than wait around for your rare calls? You pick the place."

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They met up outside Zero Bar.

Lia was dressed casually in a white hoodie, looking effortlessly chic. Her pretty face was partially hidden under her hood.

When she saw the bar sign, she was taken aback. "I was so sure you wouldn't actually go into a bar. I thought you were just using it as a landmark. Are you seriously going in? Look at me—do I look like I'm dressed for this?"

Bella tugged at her own simple outfit. "We're dressed the same, aren't we? I'm just in a bad mood and want to drink. You're the only one I could think of to keep me company."

Lia pretended to be annoyed but obediently offered her arm. Bella naturally linked her arm with Lia's, and the two of them walked in together.

Bella wasn't in the mood to have fun, so they headed straight for a booth in a quiet corner.

After they ordered their drinks, Lia got straight to the point. "What happened? Did that nemesis of yours upset you again? I keep telling you to ditch him. Why put yourself through the misery of being treated like that?"