Chapter 3 FEAR

FEAR WAS THE only thing Sophia felt once The man she recognized as her parents' murderers left the room she was in.

There was nothing she could do to escape him. He was going to kill her just like he had done to her parents and her Nana. What would be of the old lady? Would he kill her too just to wipe off their family from the face of the earth?

Uncontrollable and unstoppable tears kissed her cheeks while her sobs were muffled by the tape on her lips. She couldn't even struggle against the tight ropes that had been used to tie her.

The wooden door opened with a bang against the wall, making her flinch and she watched as Lucas walked in with his fists balled at his sides, jaw hardened, and a glare right on her. Angrily, he stormed towards her and began to untie the ropes on both her hands and legs before pulling off the tape with a harsh tug.

She yelped out, and he glared at her again, making her squirm in her place." I--," another yelp left her lips when he grabbed one of her arms and made her stand up. "Where are you taking me to? "A part of her told her she was going to be killed, but she ignored it with a positive feeling.
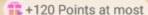
Lucas ignored her and dragged her with him out of the room while she sobbed.

There was nothing she could do to escape him. He was going to kill her just like he had done to her parents and her Nana. What would be of the old lady? Would he kill her too just to wipe off their family from the face of the earth?

Uncontrollable and unstoppable tears kissed her cheeks while her sobs were muffled by the tape on her lips. She couldn't even struggle against the tight ropes that had been used to tie her.

The wooden door opened with a bang against the wall, making her flinch and she watched as Lucas walked in with his fists balled at his sides, jaw hardened, and a glare right on her. Angrily, he stormed towards her and began to untie the ropes on both her hands and legs before pulling off the tape with a harsh tug.

She yelped out, and he glared at her again, making her squirm in her place." I--," another yelp left her lips when he grabbed one of her arms and made her stand up. "Where are you taking me to? "A part of her told her she was going to be killed, but she ignored it with a positive feeling.

Lucas ignored her and dragged her with him out of the room while she sobbed.

Sophia clutched unto his hand that was tightly holding her arm. "You-you're hurting me, please,"

Lucas stopped and raised his hand to hit her, but stopped mid-air when he saw how she flinched." Will you shut the fuck up?", He had never raised a hand to hit a lady but he was very livid. Not because of the way Chase had talked to him, but because he was willing to bend his own rules because of her. A fucking stranger.
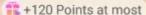
"Lucas, what's wrong with you? "Sophia was pulled away from his grip by Valerie. "Did you have to try to hit her?",

Lucas snapped at his sister, seeing as she pushed a cowering Sophia behind his back. "Maybe you should tell her to stop whining like a fucking kid if you like her so much else I'll kill her even without Don's orders",

"Lucas you-", Valerie's remaining words died at the tip of her tongue when he walked away, leaving her alone with Sophia. She turned to the girl. "Are you okay?",

Sophia wiped her tears with the back of her hand and nodded her head.

"I'm sorry for how he behaved with you. He's unusually like this. It's not in him to raise his hand on a lady,"

Sophia nodded, still looking down.

Valerie held Sophia's wrist, and she flinched in pain. When her eyes fell on the bruise there, she felt her heart tug in pain. "Uh-So sorry about that. I'm sure it was caused by the ropes. We can apply an ointment on it,"

"So you like her, then? "Luciano appeared from where Lucas disappeared to as he took long strides towards them. "Don says you should take her to one of the guest rooms,"
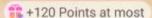
Sophia tried to ignore the intimidating look of Luciano even though he wasn't as intimidating as his brother. "I-I won't be killed then?",

Valerie passed her a smile and nodded. "You won't be killed,"

"Nana?" She whispered to only Valerie's hearing. "Can-Can I go home to her? It's late, and she might be worried about me,"

Valerie knew that was impossible. She couldn't even ask Chase to let Sophia leave the house. "I'm sorry, that's not possible,"

🎁 +120 Points at most

Sophia teared up again, and Luciano chuckled beside them. "Now I understand why Lucas got pretty upset. She cries a lot,"

Valerie faked a glare at him and pursed her lips. "Luci,"

He raised his arms in surrender. "I wasn't saying it to hurt her or anything. Lucas seemed upset, and I was just stating it out,"

Valerie zoned out for a second before returning her eyes to her brother. "I wonder what got him so riled up. It can't be only because of her",

"Maybe he argued with Don?", Luciano asked.

"That has never happened", Valerie replied.

"Maybe it did happen today. After all, Don didn't murder her like she should be, and Lucas got upset. He loves shedding blood, and he just missed an opportunity to do so,"

Sophia shuddered at Luciano's words, and Valerie turned to her. "Sorry, you heard that. Let's go and have you freshened up. While you do that, I'll get you food, and then, we'll help apply some ointment to that bruise on you,"

Sophia glanced at Luciano, fear evident in her features that he would

14:02   22,0%   ☑ 🔋 100%

hurt her.

When Valerie felt Sophia's hesitation and saw how she was staring at Luciano, who seemed to be staring back, she tugged on Sophia's hand, making her look back at her. "It's okay, that's Luciano, my elder brother and Lucas' younger twin. He won't do anything to you unless he's ordered to do so." She then turned to Luciano. "Luci, please, can you go away? She's scared out of her wits,"
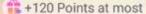
Luciano looked between his sister and Sophia before nodding, then left.

Valerie faced Sophia with a sweet smile. "Shall we?",

Sophia nodded, and they both walked toward one of the guest rooms. Once they got there, Valerie opened the door and ushered Sophia in. As they both walked in, Valerie closed the door behind her and turned to see Sophia staring at the whole room in awe.

She smiled at her. "Do you like the room?",

Sophia turned and blushed a little for being caught staring like that before nodding. Of course, she loved the room. It looked cozy and inviting, painted in a warm creamy white color. The tiles were cold beneath her feet and the furniture was mixed with vintage and modern pieces, all chosen for their comfort and style. The light illuminated by the moon peeked through the large windows and the curtains were a soft and airy linen. The room was decorated with a variety of plants, adding a touch of green and life to the space. Almost close to the walk-in closet stood a couch and at another corner of the room was a reading table while a large bed that could contain more than a person of her size stood firm in

the room. The overall serenity was very welcoming and Sophia was sure that if she wasn't kidnapped and forced to stay there, she'd have wished to stay there forever.

'Great! "Valerie chirped with a clap of her hands. "The little blush on your face tells me just how much you love the room. Why don't you freshen up? I'll go and get you dinner and an ointment with some clothes. Feel free. I'll be right back,"

When Valerie turned to leave, Sophia grabbed her wrist, and she turned to her with a questioning look." I-", Sophia began. "I-My-my bag. Please, can I get it?",

Valerie gave Sophia a sympathetic look. "I'm sorry about that too, but you can't get it. I'm sorry." With that, Valerie walked out of the room.

Sophia allowed the welled-up tears in her eyes to finally slide down her cheeks and she closed her eyes. She didn't want to be there. All she wanted was to go back home to her Nana. She didn't want to stay in the same house where murderers lived, especially that of her parents. Wouldn't she be a bad and despicable person to do that?

Her butt landed on the soft mattress, and she buried her face in her palms while her shoulders shook violently as the tears kissed her cheeks faster than normal. Life was so cruel to her. Why did she even have to be born if the people who birthed her left her alone just when she was eight? She suddenly felt angry at her parents for birthing her because they dumped her in the world to become miserable.
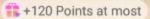
~~~

Sophia clutched the tray where the plate of her barely-eaten food sat. She didn't have any appetite to eat, and she was grateful Valerie listened to her and didn't stay back with her in her room after dropping her dinner and helping her apply ointment to the bruises on her wrists and ankles.

She stared at her legs which were barely covered by the mid-thigh pajama shorts Valerie left for her with a pajama shirt. Valerie didn't know what clothes to give her to wear, so she gave her one of hers' before the next day when she'd go shopping for some clothes for Sophia.

With a huge sigh, she opened her room door and looked around the silent and empty hallway as the cold wind blew past her bare legs. She then walked towards the same way she remembered passing through with Valerie earlier and admired the paintings and photo frames across the walls.

Once she got to the staircase, she stared at the large living room. The walls were painted white, which offered a clean, therapeutic, and comfortable feeling. Soft, expensive, black sofas contradicting the white color of the wall and ceiling, sat proudly in the room with a long coffee table in their middle, and beneath it, laid a black and expensive rug. Everything screamed money, including the large 85-inch Samsung television hanging on the wall.

Sophia was in too much awe that she didn't realize when her legs, with a mind of their own, took her down the stairs, and she mistakenly bumped into a warm, hard chest.

A small yelp left her lips, the moment she hit her forehead on the person's chest, and the tray in her hand slipped to the floor, but not

before leaving a food stain on the person's white shirt when the food poured. "Ouch!", She rubbed her forehead.

The person scoffed loudly. "Of course, it had to be the fucking foolish teenager. Do you normally stare at people's houses like that? Now look the fuck what you've done to my shirt",

Sophia raised her eyes and they met with Lucas' dark, angry ones. "I-I'm sorry", She stuttered. "I-I didn't mean to bump into you like that",

"Yeah, you didn't", He sneered, sarcasm dripping from every single word that left his lips. "Just the same way you didn't mean to fucking poke nose in someone else's business",

Tears welled up in Sophia's eyes and she looked down at her feet. "I'm sorry",

"You better be" " he said, glaring at her. "Move", He growled and shoved her aside a little too harshly before walking up the stairs, mumbling under his breath. "I don't even understand why the fuck Don let her live",

Sophia heard his words clearly and a tear rolled down her cheeks as she bent down to pick up the plate and tray, mentally noting to look for a broom and pack up the food she had spilled on the ground unintentionally.

She couldn't understand why Lucas hated her so much. It wasn't like she chose to be there in the house. She hadn't even done anything to upset him so much so it hurt her that he treated her like that.

"What are you doing down here alone?",

Sophia felt the shivers run down her spine and she froze the moment she heard that deep, seductive, Italian-accented voice that only belonged to the man behind her nightmares.

Sophia didn't move from her spot, till she saw his feet just where she was and looked up at him. He was staring at her, without an ounce of emotion in his dark, mysterious eyes.

"I asked you a question", He said. "What are you doing here alone? Shouldn't you be sleeping?",

Sophia blinked her eyes and stood up, Ignoring the butterflies suddenly dancing in her stomach." I-", She gulped lowly as she felt her sweat trickling down her forehead. "I-I wanted to drop the plates in the-in the kitchen. I-sorry for the mess", She motioned to the food on the ground.

"Weren't you looking your way when you were walking? This place isn't some dump or anywhere that you would just throw food", Chase said.

Sophia dropped her head and stared at her feet. "I-I'm sorry",

Chase replied immediately. "Sorry, won't clean off the mess you just made. You have to clean it off. Dammit, why did you even have to come out of your room to drop off the plate? Where the fuck is Valerie?",

🎁 +120 Points at most

Sophia panicked. "I-I'm sorry, please. It wasn't her fault. I-I asked her to leave me alone",

"You wanted time to escape?", He asked.

Sophia's eyes widened. "N-No. I-I do want to go ho-home bu-",

"Sophia?", A familiar female voice called from the top stairs, and Sophia looked up towards the direction. Valerie walked down the stairs to them on noticing how upset Chase was about the food on the ground, for he was someone who loved neatness. "Is everything okay?",
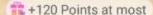
"I-", Sophia glanced towards Chase, only to find him concentrated on something else. There was a cigar between his lips and a lighter in his hands which he was using to light up the cigar. She looked back at Valerie. "I-I tripped and made a mess of this place. I'm sorry", She lied.

"It's okay", Valerie turned to Chase but found the space he was standing on empty. She then spotted him walking up the stairs. "Don",

Chase stopped but didn't turn.

Valerie walked up towards him. "Sorry about the mess. It won't repeat itself",

Chase returned his cigar to his lips and made to walk away without saying a word.

"Don", Valerie called again.

Chase stopped and stared ahead before pulling out the cigar from his lips and blowing out smoke from his lips."cosa?",

{"What?"}

Valerie was unsure whether she should say it or not. Her cousin was an unpredictable and closed man. She wouldn't be able to understand what he was thinking or what his next actions might be or even his reaction to what she was about to say."Uhh-I-I-",

Chase still stood there in his spot, unmoving, unblinking, and still staring ahead of him, with his cigar between his lips. He then pulled it out from his mouth. "non ricordo che a nessuno di voi sia stato insegnato a balbettare", He turned to her with dead calculative eyes. He could read people very well and their next actions no one could do to him and he liked it that way, he knew exactly what Valerie wanted to say to him but he had to hear it from her mouth. "se hai qualcosa di meglio della balbuzie a dire, allora fallo, mi stai facendo perdere tempo",

{"I don't remember any of you being taught to stutter."} {"If you have something better than stuttering to say, then do so, you're wasting my time."}

"Actually, I wanted to say thank you," Valerie replied. When Chase lifted

one of his perfectly arched brows, she flushed, then continued. "Grazie per averla lasciata vivere,"

{"Thanks for letting her live."}

Chase only nodded his head and walked away.

Valerie breathed out in relief before rushing back to Sophia and smiled at her. "You don't need to be so scared. He's not upset,"

"He didn't look so," Sophia let out. "His facial expression and body movements contradict what you're saying,"

"That's how Chase is," Valerie said. "You'll get used to it soon. We all have,"

"Chase? "Sophia whispered.

"Yeah, that's his name," Valerie replied. "Don't let anyone know I called him that. I can't be beheaded at this young age" " she giggled.

"Of course, I won't," Sophia said."Th-Thanks for saving my life,"

"It's okay, really," Valerie smiled wider. "Let's get this mess packed up and have you go to bed,"

Sophia nodded, a part of her scared out of its wits of what was to come of her in her sleep.