

Through Rising Fog We Walk Paths Unknown Yet Comforting

Chapter 211

BELLA'S POV

Lucky **Draw**

Even as I kept eating, I felt a bit uneasy. It felt like every nerve of mine was at attention. Every part of my body was aware of Kane's eyes on me. He was watching me intensely.

It wasn't the first time someone looked at me. Even while going on medical rounds in the hospital as a doctor, all eyes would be on me. Perhaps his gaze was too direct, too calm, and too unguarded. I couldn't ignore it anymore. I lifted my head and met Kane's eyes.

I noticed that he wasn't eating. He was just watching me.

"Aren't you going to eat?" I asked.

"I am," he replied. "I just want to watch you eat for a while first."

I paused, my chopsticks hovering in midair. I was confused. Why would he do that?

"Why?" I asked.

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Lucky Draw

He leaned back slightly. "When I watch you eat, the food looks better. More real."

I had no idea what to say. Was he trying to make fun of

me? His words didn't sound like a joke, nor like teasing. They sounded... sincere, in a strange way.

"You say strange things," I said after a moment.

He smiled faintly. "I'm just telling the truth."

"That's because you've never been truly hungry," I said with a light smile. "If you haven't eaten for days, even plain rice soaked in water tastes like a feast."

His eyes froze for a second. His eyes went dark a bit. He looked into space, like he was having a bad memory. It seemed like my words triggered something in him.

I looked at him in surprise. I regretted those words. Maybe I shouldn't have said them.

"Have you been hungry before?" he asked.

"Yes," I answered calmly.

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His jaw tightened slightly. "In prison?"

"Yes."

Lucky Draw

I said it lightly, as if it were nothing. But the table fell silent. I lowered my head and continued eating, pretending nothing had changed. Still, I could feel his eyes on me, heavier now, deeper.

I was wearing cheap clothes that day, the kind people barely noticed. A few strands of hair had slipped loose beside my cheek. My neck felt thin, fragile even. I knew I had lost weight. I could feel it myself. Compared to the old photos from before prison, I looked like a shadow of who I used to be.

There was nothing appealing about me that someone should watch me eat. I wondered why Kane kept looking at me. It made me want to shrink deeper into the seat.

I ate seriously, carefully, finishing each bite. Hunger had taught me respect. Food was not something to waste.

Kane still looked at me. He watched me as if every movement mattered, as if something unseen was going

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on in front of us.

Lucky **Draw**

After the meal, I put my chopsticks down and said, "I'm going to the washroom."

"I'll go with you," he said immediately.

I stared at him in shock. "There's no need for that."

"I'll wait outside," he added, as if that settled it.

I let out a deep breath. There was no need
arguing with Kane. People like him weren't used to the word 'no'.

We walked together. When we reached the entrance, he stopped a few meters away. Only then did I relax. I went inside, washed my hands, and took a breath.

That was when a familiar voice sounded beside me.

"Bella? Is that really you?"

I looked up and saw someone I never expect to see in a million years – Julia West.

My eyes widened in surprise at the sight of her. She Rad43

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Lucky **Draw**

been my colleague
once. We joined the hospital in the same year. Back then, she was friendly, attentive, always smiling. After the poisoning incident, she vanished from my life as if I had never existed.

I guess we weren't really friends, just co workers.

She looked amazing. She wore a pink dress that fit her perfectly with matching heels. Her hand bag looked like it cost more than my salary of a few months. Her hair was curled to perfection. I could smell her perfume from here.

"Yes," I said. "It's me."

She smiled brightly, her eyes scanning me from head to toe. "What a coincidence. It's good to see you"

I forced a smile. I saw the way she looked at me. She was judging me.

"It's been so long" I muttered.

"Hasn't it? Funny I saw you here. I saw some news recently. Gina and Damien visited sanitation workers at the hospital, didn't they? I think I even saw pictures of Fou in uniform."

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Lucky Draw

She paused deliberately. "Are you working as a sanitation worker now?"

Her tone sounded concerned, but I could tell she was

mocking me. She already knew the answer. She just wanted to hear me say it.

"Yes," I said simply.

"Oh..." She nodded slowly. "That must be hard."

I met her eyes and suddenly understood everything. She remembered too. This was a moment for her to gloat.

I knew she remembered how everyone once compared her to me. How I had been praised, how she had been told to learn from me when we were both working at the hospital. I was always the star doctor, the one everyone looked up to. Julia hated it. Every time she made a mistake, the director would tell her to be more like Bella.

When I went to prison, that mountain disappeared.

"I'm just worried about you," she said softly. "Sanitation work is tiring. People say you start to smell after doing it 6/9

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for a long time."

Lucky **Draw**

"If you think I smell, you can keep your distance," I replied calmly.

Her smile stiffened. "How could I despise you? We're colleagues. Or at least, we used to be"

She leaned closer. "You can come back to the hospital anytime, you know. Everyone misses you."

Her words cut deeper than she realized. That hospital had been my dream. I even wanted to be a surgeon. Medicine had been my life. That door had closed long ago.

She noticed the change in my eyes and seemed pleased.

"By the way," she added, "I have a boyfriend now. He's a doctor. He's waiting outside. Do you want to meet him?"

"No," I said. "I have someone waiting for me too."

She followed me out of the washroom. A man of average build stood nearby. He looked older, more serious.

Brandon," she called. "This is Bella, my ex-colleague20:44

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Lucky Draw

She held the man's arm and smiled "My boyfriend is the head professor at a prestigious university"

"I'm an associate professor," the man corrected politely. "It's nice to meet you, Bella"

"He'll be a professor soon," Julia said proudly. She then looked at me. "Where's your friend?"

I glanced around. Kane was not in sight.

Julia smiled knowingly. "Why don't we sit somewhere? Brandon knows many people. He could introduce you to

someone."

She hesitated, then said, "Logistics workers

maybe. They're honest, hardworking. Less picky about background. Maybe you could go on a date with....someone more on your level."

I almost laughed.

"I'm not interested in blind dates," I said.

Her eyes widened. "Bella, you're not who you used to be. 8/9

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Lucky Draw

You should lower your expectations. How do you expect to find a man like this?"

Before I could respond, a calm, deep voice cut in beside

1. me.

"Who's lowering expectations?"

I froze. Julia's voice died in her throat.

I turned slowly.

Kane was standing there.

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BELLA'S POV

In that moment, Kane walked over to me.

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Lucky Draw

He was wearing a dark trench coat. He looked confident, tall and calm, as if the noise of the place had nothing to do with him. He stopped beside me and placed a warm cup into my hands.

"I heard you say you wanted to try this brand," he said quietly. "I saw the shop just now, so I went to get it. Try it. If you don't like it, we'll get another one."

I lowered my head and looked at the milk tea in my hands. I felt the warmth of the cup in my palms and slowly spread up my arms. I saw the brand name and remembered mentioning it casually after seeing it online. I never expected him to remember something so small.

The fact that he remembered shocked me. The thought warmed something inside me.

“...Thank you,” I said softly. 1/10

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For a moment, my chest felt tight.

Lucky Draw

“Bella,” Julia said, staring at Kane in disbelief. “Who...

who is he?”

Her eyes moved between us, filled with shock and suspicion. She looked at Kane in awe. Even with her boyfriend standing beside her, I could see the admiration in her eyes. Her lips parted a bit.

I knew what she was thinking. The man standing beside me didn't look like someone who belonged in my world anymore. He was too handsome, too dominant. Even someone who didn't know who Kane was could tell he was powerful and rich.

Even while he pretended to be poor, there was something about him. Even Tara said it.

Before I could answer, Kane spoke first.

“Was she trying to set you up on a blind date?” he asked calmly. “Didn't you tell her you already had me?”

Julia sucked in a sharp breath.

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Lucky Draw

Her face went pale, then red. She looked at Kane again, as if trying to confirm whether what she heard was real. I could tell she was wondering who he was to me. Friend? Boyfriend? Her mind was clearly racing.

I felt my heart skip.

Julia glanced at Brandon, and suddenly her confidence cracked. Compared to Kane, Brandon looked ordinary in every way. For the first time, I saw hesitation in her eyes.

I'm sure she had been very satisfied with Brandon as her boyfriend. He was an associate professor, stable, respectable. But now, standing beside Kane, Brandon looked dim and small.

Brandon was the first to recover. He lowered his head slightly and spoke respectfully.

"It's nice to meet you" Brandon said.

Julia followed awkwardly. "Good evening..."

I was stunned.

Brandon quickly explained, "My girlfriend didn't know"

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your relationship with Bella. I apologize for the misunderstanding. My name is Brandon. This *is* my girlfriend, Julia."

"Stonewood," Kane replied. He only gave his last name/

Brandon smiled politely. "Mr. Stonewood, why don't we all sit down and talk?"

"Sure," Kane said without hesitation. Then he turned to me. "Let's find somewhere you can sit and drink your milk tea."

I was confused. Kane was never one for unnecessary socializing. I was surprised that he agreed to stay with us. He didn't like groups of people. Yet his hand closed naturally around mine, firm and warm, leaving no room for refusal.

We walked together into a nearby café.

Brandon handed over the menu politely. "Please, order whatever you like."

"The coffee here is famous," Julia said quickly, trying to regain control. "Especially the Kona coffee. The Deans are

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rare. Bella, you used to love coffee. Want to try it?"

I lowered my eyes. "I'm fine with milk tea."

Kane glanced at me thoughtfully.

Lucky Draw

Julia smiled and said, "If it's too expensive, don't worry. Brandon and I will treat you. It's just coffee."

Her words sounded generous, but the intention behind them was clear.

Kane smiled "Bella likes milk tea. I'll have the Kona instead."

Julia froze for a second before nodding quickly. "Of course."

She stared at him openly now. I could see her analyzing everything about him – his posture, his calm movements, even the way he spoke made him look like someone far above them. Jealousy flickered across her face before she

masked it.

After ordering, Julia steered the conversation back to me. 5/10

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Lucky Draw

"Bella, how is your current job?" she asked. "Still doing sanitation work?"

"Yes," I replied.

Kane's expression did not change. He already knew what she was trying to do. Typical.

"Why don't I talk to the hospital where we used to work?" Julia continued. "You could go back. Even as a cleaner, it's better than working outside."

I looked at her coldly. "I don't plan to change my job."

“Oh?” She curled her lips. “You’d earn more inside. Are you sure?”

“I’m sure,” I said firmly.

Brandon gently interrupted her, sensing the tension.

Julia didn’t stop.

“You know, I’ve achieved a lot over the years” she said, flipping her hair

“I’m at the top of the hospital now. I’m thinking of going back to school to study another
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of medicine. Brandon too has been awarded many times in his university. Isn’t that right, honey?”

She kept talking about her future plans. Each sentence was meant to press me down, to remind me of where I stood now.

I listened quietly, keeping my fingers wrapped around my cup. Finally, the waiter arrived with the coffee.

“Drink it while it’s hot,” Julia said brightly.

Kane lifted the cup, inhaled the aroma, and took a slow sip. Even that simple action drew attention. Julia watched him, clearly dazzled.

“If you don’t mind me asking, Mr Stonewood,” she asked, “how did you meet Bella?”

“When it snowed,” Kane replied calmly. “She spoke to me first.”

Julia blinked. “That’s it?”

“I guess so.”

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Lucky Draw

“So Bella pursued you?” she asked, half joking, half serious.

Kane glanced at me. “You could say that.”

I almost choked on my milk tea. When did that happen? What was Kane doing? That wasn’t true. But I stayed silent. Let her misunderstand.

“How long have you known each other?” Julia pressed.

“A few months,” Kane replied briefly.

Julia smiled and then said softly, “Ever since Bella came out of prison, I hoped she could find someone to rely on. After all, prison must have been... devastating. It’s really

She stopped abruptly. Kane was looking at her, smiling a bit.

“Go on,” he said. “It’s really what?”

Julia forced a laugh. “Really... generous. Many men would mind a woman’s past.”

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“I don’t,” Kane said.

Lucky Draw

He looked at me then, looking straight into my eyes as he spoke “No matter her past, I only care if she’s willing to stay with me.”

My heart trembled violently. I raised my head and looked into his eyes. There was so much sincerity there. For a moment, I couldn’t breathe.

As we looked at each other, it felt like the world had disappeared. In that moment, it was just us. Nobody else mattered.

Julia’s face turned white.

“Do you plan to marry her?” she blurted.

“If she’s willing,” Kane replied calmly, “I’ll marry her.”

I felt dizzy.

Julia stared at us in disbelief. “That’s impossible!”

Kane’s gaze turned cold. “What’s impossible?”

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Fear crept into her eyes.

Lucky Draw

Kane stood and pulled me up gently. “I think we’ve had enough. Let’s go.”

I followed him without hesitation.

The café faded behind us as his hand held mine firmly, as if that was where I belonged.

Coin Package: get more free bonus

Chapter 213

JULIA’S POV

I stood frozen for a long moment after Bella and Mr Stonewood left.

The café suddenly felt too quiet. The smell of coffee lingered in the air, but it no longer felt pleasant. My fingers clenched unconsciously, and my nails dug into my palm. My chest felt tight, as if something heavy was on top on it.

I couldn’t believe what I had just witnessed. Bella... that Bella... had a man like that by her side.

My mind drifted backward without warning. I remembered the hospital corridors clearly.

White walls. The smell of disinfectant. The sound of footsteps and pagers ringing.

Bella and I had entered the hospital together, in the same batch. On the first day, we wore the same white coats.

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I remembered feeling hopeful back then. I thought we would grow together.

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But reality was cruel.

Lucky Draw

"Bella handled that case very well," the managing director had said once during a departmental meeting. Julia, you should learn from her."

I remembered sitting stiffly in my chair, feeling my face burning.

Another time, when I made a mistake during rounds, my supervisor sighed and said, "You're capable, but you lack Bella's calm judgment."

Again and again, it was Bella.

"Bella's diagnosis was accurate."

"Bella reacted fast."

"Bella has the hands of a surgeon."

I remembered watching Bella from behind as she walked confidently through the ward, nurses greeting her

warmly, patients trusting her without question.

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Lucky **Draw**

Bella was brilliant. Bella was kind. Bella was everything I was told to be but never quite managed to become.

At night, I would lie in bed, staring at the ceiling, replaying those words in my head.

Why does it always have to be Bella?

Then came the poisoning incident.

The day Bella was arrested, I stood in the hospital lobby and watched the news flash across the screen.

At first, I was shocked. Then, slowly, something ugly spread in my chest.

Relief.

Finally, Bella fell.

I remembered whispering to myself that night, It serves her right. For the first time, no one compared me to Bella anymore. No one told me to learn from Bella.

I thought Bella was finished. And yet.

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Lucky Draw

Now Bella stood beside a man who was calm, handsome, and dominant. A man who did not hesitate, didn't explain, did not shrink.

A man who said he would marry her.

My fingers shook.

Brandon frowned beside me. "Julia, why did you bring up her prison past like that? What if that man didn't know? You could've embarrassed them both. They might even break up."

I lowered my head slightly, like I was sorry. But inside, my thoughts were bitter.

I did it on purpose.

I looked at Kane's coffee cup on the table. The Kona coffee was barely touched. He had taken only one sip.

I sneered inwardly.

So what if he looks good? He probably doesn't even know how to enjoy real coffee.

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Lucky **Draw**

A man who didn't mind a woman who had been to prison.

A man who would marry a sanitation worker.

He must be a nobody, I thought. Just a pretty face.

"Don't talk about people like that," Brandon said quietly. "Bella was your friend."

I ignored him. I waved the waiter over and reached for my purse. "I'll pay."

The waiter smiled politely. "I'm sorry, miss. The bill has already been settled."

I froze. "Settled?"

"Yes," the waiter replied. "The other gentleman paid earlier."

I blinked hard. Mr Stonewood?

"He... paid already?" I asked slowly.

"Yes."

The waiter left. I stared at the empty table.

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Lucky Draw

It wasn't a small bill. We had several cups of specialty coffee, desserts. The bill was almost a thousand dollars.

Who pays without saying a word? I thought.

My heart sank slightly. I felt my stomach twist.

Was he actually rich?

Suddenly, I didn't feel so certain about him anymore. My thoughts became tangled. The more I thought about it, the more unsettled I felt.

My lips pressed into a thin line. Something was wrong.

Very wrong.

BELLA'S POV

Once Kane and I walked out of the building, the noise faded behind us. The night air was cool, and the lights reflected softly on the pavement.

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I broke the silence.

Lucky Draw

"I won't take what you said earlier to heart," I said calmly. "I know you said it on purpose. It was for Julia to hear."

Kane walked beside me.

"Your former colleague isn't worth caring about," he said flatly.

I didn't reply. If he and I were truly lovers, Julia's words had clearly been meant to stir trouble.

Then Kane spoke again.

"However," he said, his voice lower, "you'd better take everything I said seriously."

I stopped walking. My heart skipped.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

He didn't answer immediately. He opened the car door for me, and I sat down in silence. My mind was in chaos the entire drive.

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Lucky Draw

When the car reached the Stonewood Residence, I followed him inside. Just as I was about to step forward, he stopped.

“Bella,” he said suddenly, turning back.

“Yes?”

“It’s not that I’ve never been hungry,” he said quietly. “There were times when I was so hungry I thought I

would die.”

I looked at him in surprise.

He didn’t look at me. His gaze was fixed somewhere distant.

FLASHBACK – KANE’S MEMORY

As he spoke, the scene unfolded clearly in my mind.

He described a small, shabby house that had dim light, cracked walls and a cold floor.

A young Kane sat alone, thin and pale, holding an urn tightly in his arms. Inside were his mother’s ashes. 20:47

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Lucky Draw

His stomach cramped violently. He was so hungry. His stomach had been rumbling and twisting in pain for days. His limbs felt weak. His head spun.

He remembered his father’s fists. His mother’s cries. The final silence.

The house was too quiet. He had no strength left to cry.

Just as darkness closed in, someone knocked on the door.

It was a neighbor. An old woman holding a bowl of food.

“Child,” she said gently, “eat.”

The smell of food brought him back from the edge. He ate slowly, desperately. His tears kept falling into the bowl.

That single meal saved his life.

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The image faded.

Lucky Draw

I stared at Kane, stunned. I didn't know that. I had.....I

had no idea.

He spoke as if it was nothing. As he told me what happened, his tone was light, almost indifferent. But my chest hurt listening to him.

I thought of the fragments he had shared before. His father. His mother. The Stonewood family.

No wonder he understood hunger. No wonder his eyes changed when I talked about prison. He knew pain too well. Just like me.

I folded my hands unconsciously. Earlier, when he spoke, I had almost reached out to pat his head, the way I used to comfort him without thinking.

I felt a dull ache in my heart. Without thinking further, I took his hands.

"They're over now," I said softly. "You survived."

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Lucky **Draw**

His hands were cold and tense beneath mine.

He looked away. "I don't like remembering it."

"I know," I said. "You don't have to talk if you don't want

to.”

He remained silent, his jaw tight.

I held his hands firmly. “But you don’t have to carry it alone.”

He looked into my eyes. For once, I saw vulnerability in Kane’s eyes. In that moment, I could see the little boy who was neglected and hungry. I felt his pain. I understood what that was like more than ever,

I squeezed his palm softly.

He didn’t pull away. And neither did I

Chapter 214

THIRD PERSON POV

At the Jameson family house, the living room lights were bright, but the atmosphere was heavy.

Kathy sat on the sofa, her face buried in her hands as she cried loudly. Her shoulders shook, and her voice broke as she spoke. Yolanda sat beside her, holding her arm, while Alex Jameson stood near the coffee table. His expression was tense and unsettled.

“I was humiliated,” Kathy cried. “Dad, Mom, you have no idea what I went through at the filming site.”

Alex frowned deeply. “Slow down. Tell us properly. What happened?”

Kathy lifted her head. Her eyes were red and swollen. “Bella was there. She was on set the whole time. Everyone listened to her. And then... then they made me kneel.”

Her words stunned the room.

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Kneel?” Yolanda shot up from her seat. “What do you

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mean kneel?”

Lucky **Draw**

"In front of everyone," Kathy sobbed. "The director, the crew, the actors. I knelt in front of Bella like a criminal being punished. Dad, do you know how many people were watching? I wanted to die right there."

Alex's face went dark "Why would they make you kneel before her?"

"Why else?" Kathy cried bitterly. "Because she knows Kane Stonewood. She didn't tell anyone. She hid it on purpose. She wanted to embarrass me. She wanted everyone to see me make a fool of myself."

"What?" Alex was visibly shaken. "She knows Kane Stonewood? Which Kane?"

His voice grew excited. He couldn't even hide it. "It can't be the Kane from the Stonewood pack... right?"

Kathy immediately understood what her father was thinking. Her heart sank, and she felt jealous instantly.

"Dad," she said quickly, "even if Bella knows Kane now, do you think he's serious about her? Don't forget when he..."

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Lucky Draw

1. is. Don't forget that it was Kane's fiancée who Bella poisoned and killed. Who knows what he's planning?"

Yolanda quickly added, "That's right. I bet it's revenge. Wealthy people like them love to play tricks. He's probably lifting her up just to destroy her later. Haven't you seen those kinds of stories on TV?"

Their words poured cold water over Alex's brief excitement. His expression slowly hardened.

They were right.

Bella was an ex-convict. She was nothing but a sanitation service worker. Someone who had fallen from grace.

Who was Kane Stonewood? He was powerful, the most powerful Alpha alive.

How could a man like that truly want someone like Bella?

Alex sighed heavily. He felt conflicted but he was gradually convinced.

Kathy continued. "And that's not all. Bella was deliberately nice to Eric. She smiled at him. She talked to

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Lucky Draw

him. She made him misunderstand me and think I had something against her. Eric even supported her"

She clenched her fists. "Dad, what kind of older sister does that? Other people's sisters support them. Mine only holds me back."

Alex frowned deeper as he listened.

"What if Eric breaks up with me because of her?" Kathy cried. "I really love him, Dad. I don't know what I'll do if I lose him."

"Exactly!" Yolanda said angrily. "Now that Bella can't have a good life, she doesn't want Kathy to be happy either. If she ruins Kathy's relationship with Eric, I'll kill her!"

Alex raised a hand. "Enough. Is there really no misunderstanding here?"

No matter what, Bella was still his daughter. And in his mind, it didn't matter which daughter married Eric. The important thing was becoming the Simpson family's

in-law.

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Lucky Draw

"What misunderstanding?" Yolanda snapped. "She's just trying to climb higher. How else would she know Kane? Doesn't she know who she is? An ex-convict. Who would take her seriously?"

She leaned closer to Alex. "Kathy is different. Kathy is innocent. She's Eric's official girlfriend. It's only natural for her to become the best actress and marry into their family."

Her tone made it sound as if Kathy's future was already decided.

Alex nodded slowly. "Alright. I'll ask Bella to come home. I'll talk to her. I'll tell her to stay away from Eric and stop interfering in Kathy's affairs."

Kathy and Yolanda looked at each other. As soon as he said that, their eyes lit up.

"Thank you, Dad," Kathy said softly. Then she hesitated, pretending to worry. "But what if Bella won't listen?"

Alex's face hardened. "I'm her father. As long as her last name is Jameson, she'll do what I say."

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Lucky Draw

Kathy lowered her head, hiding the smile that tugged at her lips.

That night, Bella's phone rang. She was surprised when she saw the caller ID.

Alex Jameson. Why was her dad calling? She thought he wanted nothing to do with her again.

She hesitated briefly before answering. "Hello?"

"Bella," Alex said. His tone was unusually gentle. "You haven't been home in a long time. Why don't you come back tomorrow? We need to talk about moving your mother's grave."

Bella froze. "Moving her grave?"

"Yes," Alex replied. "She was buried in the village cemetery, but the area is being renovated. The land has been expropriated. Many graves need to be relocated. You were in prison then, so you didn't know. The village already sent the notice."

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Bella pressed her lips together. She remembered everything clearly.

Lucky Draw

When her mother died, there was no money. No proper burial plot. Her father had asked a friend in a nearby village for help. The public cemetery was free, so her mother was buried there.

After that, her father barely visited.

It was only later, when Bella studied desperately and got into a prestigious high school and university, that Alex and Yolanda began visiting the grave again.

After Bella went to prison, no one went anymore.

When she visited after her release, weeds had covered the gravestone. Cracks ran through it. Her heart had ached as

she knelt there alone.

She had planned to fix it someday. She hadn't expected it to be moved.

"Alright," Bella said quietly. "I'll come back."

f/iweren't for her mother, she would never step into

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that house again.

Lucky Draw

"Come tomorrow night," Alex said. "What do you want to eat? I'll have your stepmother prepare it."

His tone sounded caring, almost warm. Bella was confused. He had never cared about her enough to ask

what she wanted to eat when she would come over.

Bella went silent for a moment.

He used to speak to her like that only when she was successful, respected, and useful.

After prison, that tone disappeared completely.

"I'll come after dinner," Bella said calmly.

She ended the call and set her phone down.

Why now? she wondered.

She knew her father too well. Kindness from him always came with a price.

She wondered what the price was this time around. 20:47

Chapter 215

BELLA'S POV

Just as I turned around after ending the call, I noticed Kane leaning against the door.

He stood there quietly, one shoulder resting on the frame. His eyes were fixed on me, dark and steady, as if he had been there for a while.

"Who called you?" he asked as he pushed himself upright and walked toward me.

"My father," I answered honestly. There was no point hiding it from him. "I'm going home tomorrow night. So... can you ask the driver not to pick me up at the hospital?"

He stopped in front of me. For a moment, he didn't speak. His eyes lost focus a bit, as if he was thinking about something deeper.

"Do you want me to go back with you?" he asked.

Hooked at him in surprise. Go back with me?

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Lucky **Draw**

Why would he go back with me? That house was never a pleasant place, not even for me. And I was going back to deal with my mother's affairs, not for a family reunion.

"No," I said quickly. "I can go back by myself."

I paused, then added softly, "It's late. I'm going to bed now."

It was a clear dismissal. I was asking him to leave.

Instead of stepping back, Kane narrowed his eyes slightly. He leaned down and picked up a strand of my hair between his fingers. His touch was light, almost gentle, yet it made my body tense instantly.

“Why are you so against me?” he asked in a low voice.

I pressed my lips together and said nothing. Deep down, my heart was racing out of control. My stomach twisted like there was something heavy inside. That was how much of an effect Kane had on me.

He moved closer. Too close.

2/10

20:47

< Chapter 215

Lucky Draw

“Then tell me,” he said slowly, “what must I do so that you’ll treat me like you used to?”

His breath brushed against my face. I caught his clean scent. It stirred memories I didn’t want to remember.

I remembered how I used to smile at him easily. Seeing him at home would turn the worst day into the best one. I remembered how free I used to be with him, how I used to speak to him gently, naturally. How my eyes used to follow him unconsciously, as if he were the center of my world.

Like I used to.

My heart tightened.

“You used to be the Kane I knew,” I murmured.

He didn’t hesitate. “I can be that Kane too,” he said. “I can be Kane just for you.”

My heart jolted violently. Just for me? Was that even possible?

B&Hould have been afraid. I knew that. I should wave 20:47

< Chapter 215

Lucky Draw

pulled away, should have told myself to stay calm. But my heart was beating so fast it felt like it was going to tear out of my chest.

Slowly, Kane lowered his head until his forehead rested against mine.

"I've only said these words to you," he said quietly. "Will you consider me as your Kane again?"

I couldn't answer. Not right now.

That night, I barely slept. His words echoed in my mind again and again.

Be Kane again. Just for you.

His expression had been too serious. Too sincere. It didn't feel like a joke.

It scared me more than anything else.

The next day, I went to work as usual. 4/10

20:47

< Chapter 215

I held a broom and cleaned the hospital corridors,

Lucky **Draw**

moving from one section to another. The floor was cold and the smell of disinfectant filled the air. My hands moved automatically as my thoughts drifted.

I swept, wiped, and cleaned without stopping, trying to calm myself down.

Later, Jasmine and I finished cleaning one area together. She hesitated for a moment before speaking.

"Bella," she said quietly, "Director Trevor asked me about you."

I paused. "What did he ask?"

"He asked who you are. He asked whether you really work here as a cleaner. He said you caused quite a scene yesterday at the movie set and that you have some big shot backing you." She looked confused. "What happened?"

"Nothing. It's all over now."

She didn't look convinced "Are you sure about that?"

5/10

20:47

< Chapter 215

Lucky Draw

I took a breath and said, "Jasmine, I don't think I'm suitable to be an extra anymore. I won't do it again. Please tell Trevor I'm sorry for the trouble. I'll quit the group chat later."

The entertainment circle was small. Everyone talked. Everyone watched. After what happened yesterday, going back would only make things awkward.

"I see," Jasmine said. She didn't push further. "I'll talk to Trevor, but tell him first before you leave the group chat."

"I will."

What worried me more was money.

I needed to pay Tara back as soon as possible. And if my grandmother's medical bills increased again, I didn't know how I would handle it.

I smiled bitterly.

In the past, I believed that studying hard would

guarantee a good future. I had memorized medical books and knowledge that once defined me.

6/10

20:48

< Chapter 215

Now, I was earning money through manual labor.

It felt ironic.

Lucky Draw

After work, I bought a simple packed lunch from a stall near the hospital. The food was plain and cheap. It was nothing compared to the meals at Stonewood Residence.

But I ate it without pressure. Without fear.

When I ate with Kane, there was always an invisible on top of me. I felt a small sense of oppression that made me

want to escape.

I couldn't see through him.

Even if he said he could be my Kane, I didn't know what was real and what wasn't.

Maybe prison had changed me. Maybe I was afraid of him. Afraid that if I angered him, I would fall back into that hell again.

I shook my head and stopped thinking.

After finishing my meal, I took the bus and went to the:48

< Chapter 215

Lucky Draw

Jameson house. It was no longer my home but I had unfinished business so, I had no choice but to come.

I rang the doorbell.

A moment later, Kathy opened the door.

"There you are, Sis," she said gently.

She looked soft and polite, nothing like the domineering person I had seen on set.

I glanced at her and walked inside.

"You look pretty" Kathy said with a smile.

I looked at her in disbelief. Pretty? I was still wearing my regular clothes.

"In these plain clothes?" I asked.

She shrugged "There's just something different. Did you do something to your hair?"

She reached out to touch my hair but I moved back. Okay... that was weird.

20:48

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Lucky Draw

Yolanda walked out of the kitchen with a big smile on her face. greeted me warmly. "Bella is here. Your dad and I were just talking about you."

I was confused. Why were they being so nice?

My father came out as well "Hey Bella. You're here"

Before I could respond to his greeting, he walked forward and hugged me.

I stiffened instantly. I couldn't remember the last time he hugged me.

Everyone was smiling. He asked how I was doing. I answered awkwardly.

"Sit down first," he said.

I sat.

asked directly, "Where are you going to move my mother's grave?"

"There's no hurry," my father said, waving his hand. 9/10

20:48

< Chapter 215

Lucky Draw

"Let's talk about you and your sister first. I want to be a peacemaker today."

"I just want to know where you're moving my mother's grave."

His expression darkened. "Didn't I say we'll talk about that later?"

Then Kathy spoke softly, "Sis, if I've done something wrong, don't take it to heart. I apologize."

I froze.

Kathy... was apologizing?

Chapter 216

BELLA'S POV

Why was Kathy apologizing?

That was the first thought that flashed through my mind as I sat there, staring at her pale face and red eyes. Kathy looked pitiful, fragile, as if she had gathered all her courage just to say those words.

“Sis,” she said softly, her voice trembling, “I’ve thought about it for a long time. What happened before... I’m sorry. I shouldn’t have hurt you. The past should be buried. We’re sisters. No matter what, we’re still family. I hope we can start over.”

Her tone was sincere. Her eyes were glossy with tears, and anyone watching would have thought she was the wronged one.

But I didn’t relax at all. Instead, my guard rose higher.

The more she spoke like this, the more I felt that something was wrong.

1/10

20:48

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Sure enough, my father spoke next.

Lucky Draw

“Alright,” dad said heavily, “you’ll always be sisters. You can’t hurt each other over a man.”

My heart sank.

“Eric is your sister’s boyfriend, Bella,” he continued, looking straight at me. “You can’t interfere with your sister’s relationship. Besides, aren’t you close with Alpha Kane now? Since you already have someone, you shouldn’t get between Kathy and Eric.”

So that was it. I suddenly understood everything.

This apology, this warmth, this so-called reconciliation – it was all for Eric.

I almost laughed out loud. No wonder they were being so nice to me.

“I’m not interested in what’s going on between her and Eric,” I said calmly. “It’s none of my business. I just want to know where you’re moving my mother’s grave.”

father's face darkened immediately.

20:48

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Lucky Draw

"What?" he snapped. "Are you refusing to listen to me? Do you really want to destroy Kathy's relationship?"

He leaned forward angrily. "I'm warning you, Bella. If you ruin Kathy's relationship, don't even think about paying respects to your mother's grave for the rest of your life!"

I stared at him coldly. My chest felt tight, but my voice stayed steady.

"It's not up to me to refuse or accept anything," I said. "If Eric truly likes her, no one can take him away. If he's not serious, then no matter how hard she tries, she won't be able to keep him."

"What do you mean?" Yolanda immediately panicked. "Are you cursing our Kathy just because you can't marry Alpha Stonewood? Kathy is not like you. She's innocent. She has no criminal record. She'll become a famous actress someday not like you."

I laughed softly, without warmth.

"Since you think she's so different from me," I said coldly, "then let her win Eric over by herself."

3/10

20:48

< Chapter 216

I truly didn't understand why Eric chose Kathy.

Lucky **Draw**

If it was love, he wouldn't have allowed her to kneel on set in front of so many people. Even if Kane had ordered it, Eric had the background and status to stop it if he wanted to.

I had seen how Eric treated his former girlfriends. People who claimed to be sentimental were often the cruel est. I

remember what he did to Sarah and how he cut her off.

The public hadn't heard from her ever since she and Eric broke up. She had been black listed in the industry.

"I only came here today for my mother's grave," I said flatly. "Give me the relocation documents and the household register. I'll move her grave myself."

The room fell silent.

My household register was still here, tied to this family. I had nowhere else to put it. I had no property in the city, no collective registration I could rely on. Even my grandmother's side wouldn't accept me without suspicion.

4/10

20:48

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For the first time, I felt how truly isolated I was.

Lucky Draw

"All you talk about is your dead mother!" Yolanda suddenly screamed. "You can't stand seeing your sister happy, can you? I can't believe your mother raised such an evil daughter!"

"Evil?" I laughed bitterly. "I just want to live my life. Is that evil?"

I thrust my injured hand forward.

"Why don't you tell them the truth?" I demanded, staring at Kathy. "Did I force you to kneel? Do you want to explain how I got these wounds?"

Kathy's lips trembled. She wiped her tears and said

weakly, "I already apologized, Sis. Why can't you let it go? What else do you want me to do?"

Yolanda immediately pulled her into her arms, shielding her like a fragile treasure.

My father exploded.

dre an ex-convict!" he roared, pointing at me. 20:48

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Lucky Draw

"What's a few scars? Why can't you stop tearing this family apart? Your mother would be ashamed to see you like this!"

My head snapped up.

"You don't deserve to mention my mother!" I shouted.

"She's already dead!" he sneered. "I can talk about whoever I want. Like mother, like daughter. She was stubborn, useless, and unlucky. And look at you now— exactly the same! No wonder she died early!"

Something shattered inside me. In that moment, something snapped. I couldn't take it anymore. I acted before I could think about it.

I lunged forward and slapped him across the face. The sound echoed through the room.

Yolanda and Kathy screamed, covering their mouths in shock. They looked horrified. I didn't blame them. A daughter hitting her father. The act was unthinkable.

My lips parted in shock too. I did that without thinking. I shouldn't have done that. I just....he spoke bad about firs

< Chapter 216

mom and it hurt me.

Lucky Draw

My father touched his cheek. He looked stunned and humiliated. Then his face twisted with rage.

With a roar, he pushed me to the floor then kicked me hard.

"How dare you hit your own father!"

I crashed to the floor. Pain ripped through my body. But it was nothing compared to the fire burning in my chest.

He stormed into the bedroom. I laid there, breathing heavily. It felt like the air was knocked out of my lungs. When he came out, he was holding a photo album.

My blood turned cold. It was my mother's photo album. The one filled with photos of her smiling, of us together, of the few warm moments we had.

He pulled out a lighter.

"You're cursed, just like her," he spat. "I don't want to keep any of your filthy things!"

7/10

20:48

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Lucky **Draw**

He set the album on fire and threw it onto the tiles.

"No!" I screamed.

I rushed forward, pulling my sleeves over my hands and desperately beating at the flames. The heat burned my skin, but I didn't stop. I kept screaming as I tried to put it

out.

It couldn't burn. It couldn't. Those photos were my mother. They were filled with my memories. It was my only proof that she had once lived.

I didn't know how long I screamed. I only knew I kept hitting the flames until they finally went out.

My hands were shaking. My face was wet with tears.

I picked up the burned album and hugged it tightly to my chest. Then I looked up at the man I once called my father.

This man could destroy his wife's memories without hesitation.

86,1this was love.

20:48

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“How could you?” I cried out.

Lucky Draw

Dad sneered. “I can burn it if I want. What can you do? You’re worthless without your wolf. No one will ever want you. You don’t deserve to be loved.”

I laughed. My laughter echoed coldly in the room.

“If my mother were alive,” I said slowly, “she would regret marrying a man like you. You never deserved her. If you had even a shred of real feeling for her, you wouldn’t have done this.”

His hand flew up and slapped me hard. I staggered back

but didn’t fall.

His actions didn’t surprise me anymore. I was used to the pain.

I clutched the burned album tightly and looked at him with icy calm.

“From today on,” I said clearly, “you’re no longer my father.”

9/10

20:48

10/10

< Chapter 216

Lucky Draw

With that, I turned and walked out of that house, holding my mother’s photo album, without looking back

Coin Package: get more free bonus

Chapter 217

THIRD PERSON’S POV

Inside the house, there was silence long after Bella had staggered out. The air still smelled of smoke. Alex, Yolanda, and Kathy stood there, facing one another.

Yolanda broke the silence first. Her face was pale.

Why did you burn it like that?" she asked. "What if she hadn't managed to put out the fire? What if it had really burned her? That could have killed her,

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Alex snorted coldly. There was still anger still burning in his eyes.

"Let her die," he snarled without hesitation. "If I had known I was raising such an ungrateful brat, I would've buried her myself years ago."

Yolanda's breath caught. She glanced toward the door Bella had exited through. She could feel the fear creeping into her chest.

She's... she's with Alpha Stonewood now, isn't she?9:48

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Lucky Draw

asked anxiously. "What if she complains to him? What if she tries to get even with us?"

Alex's eyes hardened further. "Get even?" he snapped. "If she dares to make trouble, I'll make sure she never finds her mother's grave again. I'll erase it completely."

Not far away, Kathy stood quietly with her head lowered. Her hands were clasped in front of her, but her lips curved a bit.

Her eyes were filled with twisted satisfaction. Deep down, she felt only disappointment that the fire had not burned Bella properly.

If Bella's face had been ruined. Eric would never look at her again. He would never choose a woman who was disfigured.

What a pity. The flames had gone out too soon.

Béla didn't know how she managed to walk downstairs 48

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Lucky Draw

Every step felt heavy, as if her body had turned to stone. Her arms ached, her chest felt hollow, and her hands trembled uncontrollably as she held the half-burned photo album against herself.

She didn't dare to open it.

She didn't dare to see how much had been destroyed.

Those photos were everything she had left. Every smile. Every moment. Every trace of her mother's warmth.

By the time she reached the entrance of the neighborhood, her legs were barely holding her up. Her vision blurred, and the world tilted. Just as she felt herself about to collapse, a figure rushed toward her.

"What's the matter with you?"

The voice came from above her head. The voice was filled with concern.

Before she could react, a pair of strong arms caught her. The sudden support startled her weak body. She leaned into him without resistance. Her strength was completely gone.

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Who...?

Lucky **Draw**

She slowly raised her head. The first thing she saw was his eyes.

They were breathtaking. They looked beautiful like blooming peach blossoms, yet dangerous in their depth. They were dark and unreadable. Those obsidian pupils seemed to pull her in, making it impossible to look away.

Kane.

He frowned when he saw the tear tracks on her face. Something pulled painfully at his chest.

"What happened?" he asked again, his voice lower now.

Bella stared at him.. Her lips shook. Then she smiled a bit. It was a sad, broken smile.

"Kane..." she whispered.

At that moment, the entire world faded away. There was only him. The Kane who stood beside her. The Kane who shielded her. The Kane who made her feel warm even 4/9

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when everything else had frozen.

Lucky Draw

His expression froze for a brief moment. Then he said quietly, firmly, "I'm here."

"Kane..." Her voice shook. "I'm tired... I really am."

She was too tired to walk. Too tired to cry. Too tired to pretend she was strong.

Without another word, he bent down and scooped her into his arms. His movements were careful. She didn't struggle. She lay quietly against his chest.

He carried her to the car parked nearby. As he placed her inside, his eyes landed on the photo album clutched tightly against her chest. The edges were dark, like it had just been burned.

Then his eyes narrowed.

Her hands. He noticed how red they were. She had blisters on them too. They looked burned.

"Drive to the hospital," Kane ordered coldly. 5/9

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Lucky Draw

"What happened?" he asked her again. "Who did this to you?"

Bella didn't answer. She only held the album tighter, her fingers shaking.

A feeling of pain stabbed into Kane's chest. If he had known things would turn out like this, he would have gone back with her no matter what.

At the hospital entrance, Kane got out of the car with Bella still in his arms. He moved quickly as he carried her straight into the emergency room.

Bella remained quiet. It felt like she had withdrawn into a place no one could reach. It was only when the doctor reached for the photo album that she suddenly reacted.

“No!” she screamed, clutching it tightly.

Kane immediately leaned closer. His voice was gentle. “He’s not taking it. He just needs to look at your hands.”

“sig,” he added softly, “let go for a moment. Let the

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doctor help you.”

Lucky Draw

At the sound of that word, her eyes finally focused on him.

“Kane.....” she murmured weakly.

“It’s me,” he said. “Tell me. What happened?”

Her lips trembled. Tears spilled out again. “Burned... it was burned,” she sobbed. “The album... all of Mom’s photos...”

Kane froze. So that was it.

That half-burned album was her mother.

The doctor finally managed to examine Bella’s hands. His expression changed immediately as he began treatment. Burns layered over old bruises. Fresh wounds were stacked upon pain she hadn’t even healed from yet.

Both hands were cleaned, treated, and wrapped in thick gauze.

Béfta didn’t once.

20:49

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Lucky **Draw**

She felt no pain – at least none compared to what was tearing her apart inside.

Kane pulled out his handkerchief and gently wiped the tears from her face.

“Stop crying,” he said quietly.

“There are burns,” the doctor said. “They’re not severe, but she must keep her hands dry and change the dressing daily. There may be scarring.”

Kane’s brows furrowed. “Permanent?”

“Only superficial. No nerve damage.”

Afterward, Bella immediately reached for the photo album again, holding it tightly.

Kane lifted her once more and carried her out.

“Don’t worry,” he said calmly. “When your hands heal, I’ll have the scars removed.”

She looked up at him. Her eyes were still wet with tears.

8/9

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“Sorry,” she said softly. “I lost control earlier.”

Lucky Draw

“There’s nothing to apologize for,” Kane replied. “You can lose control in front of me any time.”

Write your comment

Chapter 218

KANE’S POV

Her nose turned red first.

I noticed it before the tears came back. The small redness at the tip of her nose, the way her breathing became uneven again. She had forced herself to stop crying earlier, biting her lip, swallowing everything back like she always did. She thought silence was strength. She thought enduring without sound meant survival.

I knew that kind of endurance too well.

I lifted my hand slowly, careful not to startle her. I used my fingertips to trail lightly over the corner of her eyes, wiping away the tears that had gathered there again.

"If you want to cry," I said quietly "then just cry, sis."

Her entire body trembled.

It was as if I had unlocked something deep inside her. The small self control she had been holding on to shattered in 1/8 an instant. Her lips trembled, her breath

20:49

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hitched, and then she let out a broken sound.

She wailed.

Not quietly. Not gently.

Lucky Draw

She cried like someone whose heart had finally cracked open after years of being sealed shut.

The sound pierced straight through my chest.

Bella clutched at my clothes as if she was afraid of falling. Her shoulders shook violently as sobs tore out of her one after another. She cried with no pride, no defense left. Her tears soaked through the fabric of my shirt. It felt like they were burning straight into my skin.

I froze.

Every nerve in my body locked up.

I had seen blood, death, betrayal. I had watched enemies kneel and beg. I had stood with my mother's frozen body at my feet. I had watched my father turn her back on me and leave without looking back.

2/8

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None of it made me feel like this.

This was different.

This was unbearable.

Lucky **Draw**

Her crying got more desperate. Each sob sounded like it was tearing her apart from the inside. I realized then that she had not cried like this in a very long time. She had convinced herself that crying was useless. That tears solved nothing. That relying on anyone would only lead to disappointment.

She had been alone for too long.

The word sis had broken the last wall she had left.

I understood why.

It reminded her of her mother. It reminded her of a family she never truly had.

She kept crying. I didn't know what to do. I had never felt so helpless.

chest felt like it was being torn apart. It felt like 20:49

ke

< Chapter 218

Lucky Draw

different emotions were clashing violently inside me. I wanted her pain to stop. I wanted to crush the people who caused it. But my body was stiff, unresponsive, as if I had forgotten how to move.

Then she suddenly buried her face into my chest.

She pressed herself against me, gripping my clothes tightly as if I was the only thing keeping her upright. Her cries became muffled, but no less intense. Her tears soaked into me completely. I could feel the heat of them through my skin, sinking deeper and going straight into my heart.

Slowly, finally, I raised my arms.

I held her. I did it carefully and gently. As if she would shatter if I held her too tightly.

She could cry. She should cry. But she would cry here, only here. I did not want anyone else to see her like this. This pain, this fragility, belonged to no one but me.

The thought was possessive. And I did not reject it.

By the time the car arrived at Stonewood Residence, She49

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Lucky Draw

was still crying. The driver stepped out respectfully, opening the door, but I didn't move. I kept Bella in my arms, letting her cry until there was nothing left.

Her sobs eventually weakened. Her grip loosened. Her breathing slowed. When I lowered my head, I saw that she had cried herself to sleep.

Her face was covered in dried tears. Her eyes were swollen and red. Her lashes were clumped together. Both her hands were wrapped in white gauze.

She looked pitiful. The sight of her made anger spread in my chest. I felt my blood boil with rage.

Her phone suddenly rang.

I frowned and reached into her pocket carefully, pulling it out. The name on the screen read: Tara

I answered.

"Hello? Bella?" Tara spoke anxiously. "Why aren't you home today? Are you working overtime?"

"Tara," I said quietly. "She's asleep. If you need 20:49

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something, call tomorrow."

There was a sharp intake of breath.

66

"... Is that Kane?" she asked, shocked.

"Yes."

I hung up without waiting for another word.

Lucky Draw

I put the phone away and stepped out of the car, lifting Bella carefully. I took off my coat and wrapped it over her body, shielding her from the cold. The servants froze when they saw us. They bowed their heads respectfully but I could see the shock in their eyes.

They had suspected she was special. But they had never seen me hold anyone like this .

I carried her straight to her bedroom. No one spoke. No one made a sound.

I placed her gently on the bed, removed her shoes, and helped her out of her coat. Even in sleep, her brows were furrowed. She clutched the half-burned photo album tightly against her chest, as if it were her last lifeline. 20:49

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Lucky Draw

It took time to carefully remove it from her arms. I looked at her bandaged hands.

"It's just a photo album," I muttered. "Why are you so emotional?"

Even if it was her mother's... if the fire had spread, she could have been seriously injured.

I took her hand gently and pressed a kiss against her gauze-wrapped fingertips.

"It must have hurt," I whispered. "I want to bear that pain for you."

The thought startled me.

I had never wanted that before.

I tucked her in and stood by the bed, watching her sleep. My wolf stirred restlessly inside me.

She matters to you, he said.

I clenched my jaw. That frightened me. 7/8

20:49

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Lucky **Draw**

I stood there until her breathing evened out completely.

And I did not leave.

Coin **Package**: get more free **bonus**

c 219

BELLA'S POV

Lucky **Draw**

I felt like I was trapped inside a long, endless dream.

I was young again. Too young. I was standing beside my mother, holding her hand. Her palm felt warm and familiar, the way it used to feel when I still believed the world was kind. The air smelled like home. I could hear her voice, but I couldn't remember the words. I only remembered the feeling of being safe.

Then the dream shifted.

My mother's face twisted in pain. Blood soaked through her clothes. I saw her body bend forward as she cried out , and I saw my brother – my unborn brother – already formed, already human. In this scene, he was real. He was still. Too still. His tiny body was cold and lifeless.

No.

No, no, no.

20:49

I screamed for my mother. I reached for my brother. My

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Lucky **Draw**

chest burned with panic, but no sound came out. My mouth opened, yet I was voiceless. I tried to move, but my legs felt rooted to the ground. The walls felt like they were pressing down on me.

Then a bell rang.

The loud clear sound cut straight through the nightmare.

My eyes opened slowly. Light poured in. My head felt heavy, and my thoughts were tangled together. I was still half lost between the dream and reality.

A voice came from close beside me. "You're awake?"

I blinked again. A face appeared above me, slightly blurred at first, then slowly coming into focus.

"Yes..." I answered dully. My voice didn't feel like my own.

I could still feel the dream from earlier. My heart was racing. My chest still felt tight, as if the nightmare had followed me into the room. I couldn't tell where I was.

Before I could ask anything, he lifted my phone and Relo

< CHAPTER 219(revised)

it gently to my ear.

"You can answer the phone then," he said.

I froze.

Lucky **Draw**

A familiar voice came through the line. "Bella? Are you awake, Bella?"

My breath caught. I recognized who it was instantly.

"Tara?" My voice shook.

"Yes," she replied quickly. "Where are you now? Are you with Kane? I called you last night, and he answered. When I called again just now, he answered too."

"You called last night?" I asked, surprised.

"Yes," Tara said. "He said you were asleep. Bella, what's going on? What's happening between you and him? I thought you didn't want anything to do with him anymore."

Questions spilled from her mouth one after another. I bit

my lip and turned my eyes toward Kane. He stood beside me

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****Lucky Draw**

the bed, phone still in his hand. His expression was unreadable, calm as ever.

"It's... complicated," I said quietly. "I'll explain when we meet. What did you want to talk to me about?"

There was a pause.

"One of the witnesses in your case might be in the neighboring city," Tara said. "I wanted to discuss it with you."

My heart skipped.

"What?" I straightened slightly despite the ache in my body. "Are you sure?"

"Not one hundred percent yet, but it's worth checking."

"All right," I said immediately. "Then when are you free? Let's meet."

"After work today," Tara replied. "Are you going to work? I can pick you up."

4d, I said. "Let's meet at the usual place."

20:50

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Lucky **Draw**

"All right."

The call ended.

The

As soon as the screen went dark, I tried to sit up. The moment my hands pressed against the bed, a wave of pain shot through my fingertips.

"Ah-" I screamed.

The sound escaped before I could stop it.

In the next second, strong arms slid under mine and lifted me easily, as if I weighed nothing. I was suddenly upright, leaning against him. His body was warm.

I stiffened, feeling embarrassed. Then the pain in my fingers reminded me of everything. The fire. The smoke.

The album.

My heart raced as soon as I remembered the photo album.

“Where’s my photo album?” I asked urgently. “Where is it?”

5/10

20:50

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Lucky Draw

Kane frowned. “Are you giving up your life for a photo album? You were lucky. You only bruised your fingers. What if you had burned yourself seriously?”

“This album means a lot to me,” I said.

“More important than your hands?” His tone dropped. “Are you planning to ruin your hands for a pile of paper?”

“Yes,” I answered without hesitation. “Even if both my hands burned, I would still protect it.”

I took in a deep breath. That album wasn’t just paper. It was proof that I had once been loved. It was the happiest part of my life, the part untouched by prison, judgment, and blood.

My answer made his expression change. I saw anger flash through his eyes – not at me, but at the idea that I didn’t value myself. He cared more than he let on, and that realization unsettled me.

“Where is it?” I asked again.

He turned away, and walked to a cabinet. When he

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returned, he handed it to me.

Lucky **Draw**

The album was scorched. It was partially burned. The edges were black. I felt relieved. At least, it wasn't completely gone.

I let out a shaky breath and opened it carefully.

Some photos were gone completely. Others were burned along the edges, faces half missing. Only a few remained intact.

My eyes burned with tears. Each page felt heavy, like I was reliving the loss again and again. I had failed to protect even this.

I closed the album and whispered, "Thank you."

"For what?" he asked.

"For taking me to the hospital," I said quietly. "For helping me last night. I... lost control."

The memory of myself crying in his arms flashed through my mind. I would never have done that if I had been

headstrong. I had clung to him like someone drowning

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He leaned down till his voice was low near my ear

Lucky I was

"Then from now on," he said, "only I get to see you like that."

It wasn't a question. It didn't sound like an order either. It just sounded....final. The husky tone he said it in was enough to send shivers down my spine. My breath hitched.

He looked at my bandaged fingers.

"If anything happens again, tell me," he said. "Don't rush in alone."

Then he added calmly, "I've already arranged leave for you. You'll rest at home for a few days."

Home. The word stung. I had no home. Not really. Even the cabin I stayed at was for Kane. What if one day he decided to throw me out?

"I've taken too much leave already," I said softly. "They might fire me."

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Lucky Draw

"No one will fire you," he replied without hesitation. "Heal first. You can't even hold a broom like this."

I lowered my head. He was right.

"Are you meeting Tara tonight?" he asked. "Postpone it."

"I can't," I said firmly. "She might have information about the witness in my case."

His jaw tightened slightly.

"You plan to chase this yourself?" He leaned in and brushed a strand of hair from my cheek. "I told you, I'll reverse the case for you."

I shivered a bit at his touch

"You can't," I said gently but firmly, "You can't explain why the witnesses lied. Even if the charges disappear, people will still think I'm a murderer."

"Do their opinions matter that much?" he asked.

I smiled bitterly. "This one does. I want the truth. I won't let my mother be remembered as someone who raised a

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Lucky **Draw**

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BELLA'S POV

spent the afternoon sitting by the window with the photo album on my lap. Sunlight came in quietly, falling across the table and the worn pages. My hands were still wrapped in thick white gauze. They felt stiff and sore. Every small movement hurt, but I didn't stop. I couldn't.

I carefully took the photos out one by one. Even the half-burned ones, I treated as if they might break if I breathed too hard.

Some photos were stuck to the pages. Some corners were black and curled. Ash stained my fingers through the

gauze.

These were my memories. My mother's face. My childhood. My past.

"Let me do it," Kane said quietly.

Before I could refuse, he sat closer and reached out.

Unlike me, he didn't hesitate. He knew exactly where to

press and how to lift each photo without tearing it

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Lucky Draw

further. His movements were calm and strangely gentle.

I watched him for a moment. Under normal circumstances, I might have noticed how pleasing his hands looked, how composed he was even doing something so careful. But I could not think about that now. My eyes followed every photo he took out. I only cared about how badly they were burned, whether the faces were still clear, whether my mother's smile was still there.

One by one, he laid them out on the table.

Most of the early photos were of my mother and me together. I looked so small in them, with my chubby cheeks and my thick hair. I always clung to her arm or leaned against her side. Even through the smoke marks, I could still see how softly she smiled at me.

As Kane continued, the photos slowly changed. There were fewer of my mother and more of me alone.

I smiled a bit without realizing it.

"When my mother was alive, she loved taking photos with me?" I said softly. "After she died, I didn't take many

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anymore.”

Lucky Draw

I paused, then added honestly, “Only once in a while. Most of them were just me.”

Because I never fit
into that house again. Because I was always standing outside their happiness.

Kane stopped at one photo.

“Is this your wolf?” he asked.

The picture showed a small, fluffy wolf pup rolling happily in green grass. Her paws were in the air. Her eyes were bright.

My fingers hovered over the photo. “Yes.”

That was my first successful shift.

I remembered that day clearly. I remembered how scared I was and how painful it was. I also remembered how happy, I got too. I had laughed and cried at the same time. How long had it been since I last saw her? Too long. I missed her so much it ached.

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Lucky Draw

Kane stared at the wolf for a long moment. His expression grew darker. He didn’t speak, but I noticed something in his eyes.

I knew it without him saying a word.

He was thinking about bringing her back, whatever it took. He had promised me to do this so many times.

He continued turning the pages until he suddenly stopped again. His fingers paused mid-air.

“This photo of you,” he said slowly. “How old were you here?”

I leaned over to look.

The girl in the photo wore a light floral dress and stood in front of a wooden fence. Behind her were green mountains and a bright sky. Her eyes were clear. Her smile was shy but happy.

I felt warmth spread through my chest.

"I was eight or nine," I said. "I loved that dress." 4/9

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Lucky Draw

I swallowed before continuing. "It was expensive. Over a hundred dollars back then. Only families with money bought things like that. I didn't dare tell my grandmother I liked it."

My voice softened. "But she noticed. She saved money little by little and bought it for me."

I remembered it clearly. The way my grandmother smiled while pretending it was nothing. The way she told me not to tell anyone.

The older I got, the more I understood how hard that was for her.

Kane listened without interrupting.

"At that time," I went on, "most people earned only about eight hundred dollars a month. Grandma made money doing hand-finishing work. Everyone complained she spent too much."

I smiled "But she never took it back."

After a moment, Kane asked, "Where was this taken?"

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Lucky **Draw**

"Ter Village," I replied. "It's called Wen Ter town now. The villages merged."

His eyes darkened slightly. "Was that dress rare there?"

"I was the only one who had one like it," I said. "My cousin, Jenny, was furious. She tried to take it from me."

"What happened?" he asked.

"I tore it while playing outside," I said simply. "Then I got sick."

He looked at me with a confused expression "Sick?"

"Just a fever," I said. "I had it for a few days then recovered. But the dress was gone."

I paused. "Later, Grandma told me she'd buy me another one if I ranked first in class."

My chest tightened. "I did get first place. But before she could give it to me, my father took me back."

I remembered packing my things that day and crying Guletly.

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Lucky Draw

"She slipped a new dress into my luggage before I left," I said.

I was still lost in that memory when a large hand touched my forehead.

I froze and looked up.

"I don't have a fever," I said quickly.

"I know," Kane said softly. "I'll buy you any dress you want in the future."

My heart skipped painfully.

"I'm not a child," I said, lowering my eyes. "I don't obsess over dresses."

"Is that so?" he replied calmly.

He finished removing the remaining photos, then picked up the one of me in the floral dress.

"Sis," he said lightly, "can I keep this one?"

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Lucky Draw

I stared. He had already slipped it between his fingers.

"What do you want it for?" I asked.

"I like it," he said. "It's cute."

I pressed my lips together. "That's the only photo I have of that dress."

"Good," he said. A small smile appeared on his lips. "That makes it more meaningful."

I was speechless.

"Why don't I get you another copy?" I offered.

"No," he said firmly. "I only want this one."

He leaned closer and gently touched my face. His thumb brushed my cheek slowly. We looked into each other's eyes. I felt a small spark pass through my face where touched.

"I don't change what I like," he said quietly. "Not with photos. Not with people."

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My heartbeat went completely out of rhythm.

I couldn't look away....and I couldn't speak.

Lucky Draw

The world felt quiet and warm, as if nothing else existed.

Because in that moment.....nothing did.

X

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