

THE LUCKY GIRL

By

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EMMA, a woman who is in her 30s but looks 27, is walking down the street, branded shopping bags in her hands swinging in sync with the confident strides of her heels.

Not too far ahead, in front of a block of flat, PAULA, a woman in her late 30s who definitely looks her age, is taking bags of groceries out of the boot of her car. She fumbles and drops one of the bags.

PAULA

Shit.

She mutters as she tries to chase after the escaping apples and onions.

An apple rolls toward Emma. She picks it up.

PAULA

Ah thank you... Oh hey! Gosh your hair looks gorgeous!

EMMA

Yeah, just got it done.

PAULA

You're all set for tonight.

EMMA

Shh, Tom doesn't know yet.

PAULA

Let him think this is all for him.

EMMA

Learned that from you.

She winks and they both laugh.

As she takes a step back, she almost bumps into a man - SMITH.

EMMA

Oops, sorry.

SMITH

(mutter)

'S okay.

PAULA

Morning, Mr Smith.

Smith just silently nods in reply. The two women watch as he continues to walk toward his flat's entrance. Turn to each other. Emma raises her eyebrow. Paula shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

EMMA

Anyway, you're sure you can't hang out with me and the girls?

Smith goes up to the door. He grabs the handle.

PAULA

Yeah, Susie has ballet.

Smith *pauses*.

EMMA

I thought she always walk home?

PAULA

Well, usually her class is 5 to 7, but today it's moved to 7 to 9. Honestly, I could let her walk, but these days it's... you know.

(cont'd)

Ugh, don't tell me. I don't dare to touch the newspaper...

Smith breaks into a wide grin.

He opens the door and steps inside.

2

INT. FLAT - DAY

2

Door closed. Latched.

Smith reaches for the light switch. Flick, and the room is slowly lit up by a sole bulb in an eerie way.

Under the light is a table, around and on which are a number of carton boxes of all sizes. At one end of the table are some *chocolate bars* with some metal tools, small jars and vials.

Smith walks over to the table and puts down his shopping bag. He sits down, and pulls out from the bag a newspaper.

Licking his lips, he turns the pages.

And he stops. His eyes light up in excitement. The grin returns to his face, getting wider and wider, as if his cheeks were to tear.

SMITH

Finally...

The big headline on the page reads "THIRD BODY FOUND..."

He scans the page, then suddenly recalls something, he puts the newspaper aside and grabs a small notepad on the table. He murmurs as he writes.

(CONTINUED)

SMITH  
"May family... Susie..."

He pockets the notepad, stands up and picks up the shopping bag. He turns around; the bag knocks one of the small boxes off the table.

Smith just glances at the box, smirks and walks away.

The box is on its side, the lid is open. Scattered on the floor are small plastic sachets, each contains a *curl of hair* of different colour.

3

EXT. PARK - DAY

3

It's a sunny afternoon.

The playground is full of kids. The moms and grandmas occupy all the benches, chattering.

On a bench at the far end of the playground is Smith, eating an ice cream cone, with a book opened on his legs.

He licks the ice cream and casts his eyes on the playground.

A boy and a girl are on the seesaw.

Smith licks.

Three girls are playing chase near the flower bed.

Smith licks.

A girl is playing with her dog.

SMITH  
No, not you... no... nope, though  
you look great, love... Ah!

Smith bites.

A LITTLE GIRL on the swing. She sits still, quietly watching other kids. She seems to be the only one without a chaperone.

Smith lets out a long deep 'HMMMM'.

He takes out his notepad and reads through his scribbles. Then he fishes out a pen.

As he munches the ice cream, the pen dances on the note pad. Soon there's only the very tip of the cone. Smith puts a finishing stroke to a small sketch of the girl on the swing.

He looks up at the girl, then the note, then the girl again. And he sighs with relief.

He pockets the note, stands up and tosses the cone tip into his mouth. It crunches.

4

EXT. PARK - NIGHT

4

The bell of a distant cathedral strikes.

A hooded jogging man. His footsteps so loud on the empty street.

The metal chain of a swing creaks.

The man runs along the fence of the park.

Swing creaks.

The man runs toward the entrance. He notices something.

A caretaker is walking casually out of the gate, whistling. The jogging man runs past him.

After a while, as the caretaker is out of sight, his whistling is barely audible, the jogger *comes back*.

He pauses at the gate, quickly looks around before running inside. For a brief moment, the face under the hood is exposed to the street light - it's Smith.

He runs along a row of shrubs. Around the curve of the path. Past the playground.

Smith comes to a halt.

The playground is dark - the lamppost barely lights one corner - and so quiet. The creaking of the swing is disturbingly audible.

A pair of black dolly shoes dangle on the swing.

A pair of white trainers, quietly gliding on the mowed lawn, appear.

SMITH  
Hello, young lady.

It takes the girl a few seconds to look up at the man.

SMITH  
It's 8 already. Shouldn't you be going home?

The girl just stares.

SMITH (CONT'D)  
Are you waiting for Mommy?

The girl just stares.

(CONTINUED)

Smith looks around.

SMITH  
It's so late. Aren't you hungry?

The girl just stares.

Smith fishes out a small *chocolate bar*.

SMITH (CONT'D)  
Look here. Who's the lucky girl?

He peels and hands it to the girl. She silently takes it and starts eating.

SMITH  
Is Mommy always this late?

The girl just focuses on her chocolate. Smith eyes her expectantly.

As the chocolate bar grows smaller, Smith starts looking a little uneasy.

The girl finishes it. Smith tilts his head and looks at her face. She looks straight into his eyes.

SMITH  
Good girl. You like it?

He smiles. The girl's mouth slightly moves, hinting a smile.

He takes the chocolate wrapping from her hand and throws it into the bin.

He returns to the girl.

SMITH  
Now, how about I call Mommy for you?

The girl just keeps looking at him with that half smile.

Smith fingers his pocket.

SMITH (CONT'D)  
Do you know her number?

No answer.

Smith searches his jacket, pats his trouser pockets.

SMITH  
Oops, I think I forgot my phone at home.

He checks his watch then looks at the girl, who doesn't show one bit of concern.

SMITH (CONT'D)

It's not safe to stay here on your own. What shall we do? Do you want to go with me and we'll call Mommy to pick you up?

The girl doesn't answer. Smith, after a while, gives up and walks away.

He steals one last glance. The girl's still on the swing, staring at him.

But as he is halfway toward the exit of the park, he feels a tug on his sleeve. He looks down to see the girl right beside him.

Puzzled for a moment, Smith smiles. The girl smiles.

He offers her his hand and she takes it.

They walk toward the exit of the park. Smith looks left and right.

He realises the girl's looking at him.

SMITH

You liked the chocolate?

No answer, she just smiles.

Smith looks around one more time, and puts on his hood.

5 INT. FLAT - NIGHT

5

Smith opens the door.

SMITH

Come in. Make yourself at home.

The girl steps inside.

Smith closes the door - and quietly latches it.

He looks at her. The girl just stands there very still. He resists an urge to give her a nudge.

Smith tosses his house key on the table - now cleared of boxes and tools - but it slides off.

As he bends down to pick it up, he's startled upon noticing something on the floor - one of the hair sachet. He sneaks it into his pocket.

(CONTINUED)

SMITH

Here, have a seat. Do you want water?

The girl remains still.

Smith slightly shakes his head and turns away to hide a sigh.

He goes to the kitchen counter. His reflection looks at him from a sharp, shiny knife on the rack.

He steals a glance at the girl, then at the knife. At the girl again, then he reaches for a glass from the rack.

Pouring himself some water, Smith grabs a can of coke nearby. He raises it to the girl.

SMITH

Do you want some?

This time, she shakes her head.

Smith takes a gulp of water and lets out a long 'Haah' of pleasure.

He returns to the girl.

SMITH

Come on. You can use my phone here.

He offers the girl his hand, and leads her to his bedroom.

While she stands in the middle of the room, he searches a low table.

SMITH

Hmmm now where did I put that phone?

He takes a vial and a small jar of pills, carefully slipping them into his breast pocket.

He picks up a pretty doll that has been sitting on the low table. He adjusts the doll's hat to hide the red colour on some of the doll's blond hair.

SMITH

Here, you can play with it while I look for it.

GIRL (O.S)

Will you play with me?

Startled, Smith turns around. The girl is right behind him. Her big eyes stares straight into his.

(CONTINUED)

GIRL  
Play with me?

SMITH  
Ye... yeah sure. You want this  
doll?

He holds it out in front of him and forces a smile.

The girl, ignoring the doll, takes one step closer, tiptoes and slightly leans forward. Her eyes drill into his face.

Smith recoils a little bit.

The girl keeps staring.

Tilts her head.

GIRL  
Play?

Smith nods awkwardly.

And she smiles.

Smith's smile disappears.

The light in the living room flickers. Under it, on the table lies the newspaper.

The big headline: "Third body found: A man in his 30s, decapitated."

The light flickers.

The column next to it: "Award winning doll maker visits school for disabled children". A photo of Smith next to a girl on wheelchair, holding a doll that looks just like her.

The lightbulb blows.

FADE OUT.