

## Exploitation After Death

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### Chapter 1

April 3rd, 2025. Sunny. The 93rd day after my death.

Floating in the air, I watched my parents talk to the doctor in the ward. Their conversation was too heavy, and their faces were weary.

"Mr. Newman, Mrs. Newman, your son's leukemia was detected in its mid-stage. It's critical that he undergo a bone marrow transplant as soon as possible. However, the hospital doesn't have a matching donor.

"Generally, family members have a higher compatibility and are safer for bone marrow transplant surgeries. You need to hurry and find a compatible donor.

"The earliest available surgery slot is on the 8th of next month. The procedure will cost 138 thousand dollars. We need the payment as soon as possible."

Once my parents left the hospital, they started arguing.

138 thousand dollars was a significant amount for our family. We had the money, but if it went to my younger brother, Caleb's medical bills, my older sister's private ballet lessons would have to stop.

My sister, Ruby, was the captain of the school's cheerleading squad. All the members had signed up for this training. If she didn't go, she'd be ridiculed by her teammates. That was something she wouldn't let happen.

I watched as Ruby shifted uncomfortably, then clung to Dad's arm with a pout. "Dad, I want to help Caleb, but if I make it to the national finals next month, The Royal Ballet Academy will offer me a spot!"

The Royal Ballet Academy was a top-tier college. If Ruby got into such a prestigious institution, Dad would definitely feel proud.

Dad's eyes lit up at her words. He hesitated as he glanced at Mom.

Dad favored Ruby because she was beautiful and great at sweet-talking. At school, she wasn't only the cheerleading captain but also an outstanding student with excellent grades.

Mom frowned. She was more partial to Caleb because he was her only son. Moreover, she had raised him on her own. He was cheerful, handsome, and good at understanding others.

Ruby quickly thought of a solution. After all, Caleb was the apple of the family's eye. Then her eyes brightened.

"Dad, Grandma left an education fund for Jolene. We could borrow some from her. She'd definitely agree."

"Right, I've forgotten about that ungrateful Jolene! Ruby, get her to come back. If she agrees to donate bone marrow to Caleb, I won't hold her stealing the money against her."

I had been drifting around my family for three months, and finally, they mentioned me.

Following Mom's instruction, Ruby quickly pulled out her phone, opened our chat, and typed a message. "If you're not dead, get back here. We'll be home by 6:00 pm, so have dinner ready!"

It was like a silent agreement had been made among them. They felt the problem was solved because I was the one being sacrificed.

I floated in the air, watching coldly.

Three months earlier, Mom had lost 300 dollars she'd planned to use to buy Caleb a basketball. The whole house had been turned upside down looking for it, but it was nowhere to be found.

Ruby had claimed she saw me sneaking out of Mom's room.

Already irritated by the chaos at home, Dad tossed me out without hesitation.

That night, there was no moon.

The fierce wind and blinding snow made it feel colder than any winter before. But what was colder still was my heart.

Thrown out into the night, my head hit a stone hidden beneath the snow, and I lost consciousness. When I woke up, my body had turned cold, and the thick snow had erased the traces.

No one thought to look for me.

They were inside, warming by the fire, enjoying their family time. Meanwhile, I lay frozen in the snow, wondering how long it would take before they noticed I was gone.