

# **I Died At The Age Of Twenty-seven When I Loved Him**

## **The Most Chapter 04**

“Buddy!”

Panic surged through me. Even though I was barely steady on my feet, I stumbled down the stairs to the living room. I took the last few steps in a tumble, landing hard.

And there he was—my Buddy—curled up in a pool of blood, his golden fur soaked and matted. He looked up at me with a sorrowful gaze, tears glistening in his eyes, and then he lay still, unable to close them for the last time.

He’d never hurt anyone. Just sitting quietly in the hallway, he didn’t deserve this brutal fate.

“B—Buddy, wake up! Please, just wake up!”

Ignoring the blood covering him, I cradled Buddy in my arms, begging him to come back to me. But he was gone—his breath no longer there, his eyes or closed.

Buddy had been a stray I took in years ago. When I first found him, he was just a tiny, starving pup. I’d only tossed him a few scraps, but he’d saved my brother and me from a gang once. He’d jumped in front of us, getting hurt in the process, and I couldn’t abandon him after that.

I named him Buddy, hoping he’d stay with me forever. But now, he was gone, and the thought of the monster who took him from me made my blood boil.

Fueled by rage, I pushed Chelsea, who had followed me down the stairs, hard to the ground.

“Ah!”

Ignoring her screams, I pounced on her, grappling with her as I struggled to lash out in any way I could. I spotted a teacup on the coffee table and smashed it, grabbing a shard of glass. I jabbed at her, lost in my fury. My own palm was cut and bleeding, but I felt nothing; all I could think about was avenging Buddy.

“Alexander, help! Madeline’s gone crazy! She’s trying to kill me!”

But I couldn’t finish what I started. I was so weak, my energy nearly spent. I managed only to scratch her shoulder before Alexander came rushing down.

He yanked me off her, cradling Chelsea protectively in his arms. His eyes, usually warm and loving, were now filled with concern and disappointment.

“Madeline, what are you doing?! Chelsea is sick! You can’t just attack her like this! Apologize to her!” he demanded.

I lifted my gaze, feeling numb as I looked into his eyes, frantic with worry for her. In that moment, I struggled to remember the face of the eighteen-year-old Alexander- the boy who once gave me warmth but now felt like a stranger pushing me into darkness.

Finally, I managed to speak, almost like I was in a daze. “B–Buddy’s dead. Chelsea kicked him to death...She...She killed Buddy! I wish I could make her pay for what she did–how could I possibly apologize?!”

“What did you just say?”

Alexander froze for a moment, his expression shifting as he noticed Buddy’s still body lying in the blood. The same dog who had once risked everything to save us.