

I Made \$900 Trillion In 24 Hours

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Evelyn Raven

North Hills was a thriving metropolitan city which uses the ranking system in its social status and hierarchy identity.

There were six ranks, A rank to E ranks, with E rank being the lowest rank. E ranks were individuals who had little to no money. They're poor and ridiculed by society. Barry was an E rank. He was born to an abusive father and a sick mother. After his mother died from her illness, he took his kid sister, Snow, and ran away. Homeless, Barry did what he could to provide for himself and his kid sister. During one of his odd jobs, he ran into Evelyn Raven. Her purse had fallen down on the walkway. It contained \$10,000 in cash, an ATM card, and some previous jewelry. When Barry returned her purse, Evelyn was smitten by his transparency and decided to take him in. She gave him a job in the Raven household, rented a small apartment to shelter him and snow. Then she enrolled them in school. Evelyn's kindness is the only reason Barry could endure the insults and abuse the Raven household dished out to him. * * It was 1:24.am and all the guests who had turned up for Laura's birthday had retired back to their homes. Barry was left alone in the kitchen to wash all the plates and wares used to serve the guests. There were over two hundred dirty plates stacked, and he was just starting when everyone else was getting ready for bed. As Barry scrubbed each plate, the kitchen door swung open and Ingrid Raven stormed in like a hurricane. "You lazy pig," she barked, startling Barry. "You're still not done? At this rate, you'll have flies buzzing around in my home." Barry turned to her, stammering. "I-I'm sorry, mother-in-law. I'm going to be quick—" Before he could finish his sentence, his grip slipped and one plate fell from his soapy hands, shattering on the tiled floor. Barry froze in terror. That plate was worth over \$2,000 or more. Ingrid exploded in fury. "You bloody fool," she shrieked, stepping closer and slapping him across the cheeks. "Do you have any idea how expensive that plate was?" "I'm sorry," Barry shouted, his voice trembling. "I didn't mean to break it. It just slipped because I was startled." Her hands flew across his face, dealing him a loud resounding slap. "You're just full of excuses, you clumsy pig. I'll make sure you're not paid until you recover the money for that plate." Ingrid backed away to catch her breath. She glared disdainfully at Barry as he shielded his face from her. "You disgust me," she spat in his face. "You're lucky things didn't escalate with Reeves tonight. If they had, I'd have made your life a living hell, you ungrateful little worm." Barry didn't say anything. If he did, he would only provoke her further. Ingrid tossed her hair back. "Now, clean up this mess before I tear you to pieces with the shards of this plate." Barry knelt down quickly and began picking up the shattered chunks of porcelain with shaking hands. Ingrid glared at him with her arms crossed. "After you're done, head to Evelyn's room. She says she wants to see you. Alone." Barry hadn't seen Evelyn Raven in three months. Her family wouldn't let him get anywhere near her. Barry knew her illness had gotten worse than before after the family doctor announced her case was hopeless. Barry nodded quickly, his voice barely above a whisper. "Yes, Mother-in-law." With a scoff, Ingrid turned on her heel and stormed out of the kitchen, leaving Barry alone to clean the shards. * * * Evelyn Raven lay propped up on a king-size bed in her room. She was an old woman in her mid-70s, but her illness made her look 90. All around her were life supporting machines and equipment beeping and humming rhythmically. She hated the hospital, which was

why she insisted on being treated at home. Barry pushed the door open and stepped slowly into the dimly lit room. Her eyes fluttered open as Moses stopped before her and bowed low. "You called for me Madam Evelyn." A weak, warm smile spread across Evelyn's face. "It's been a long while, Barry," she said. "You've fought hard to survive all this time, haven't you? Without me to shield you?" Barry swallowed the lump in his throat, forcing himself to meet her gaze. "It's been tough, but I've managed, Madam. Only because of what you've done for me and Snow. Your kindness has kept me going." Evelyn nodded faintly. Her breathing felt dragged. "You've fought well, Barry. I've been observing you, and I'm proud of you." Suddenly, she started coughing. Barry waited, watching helplessly as her body trembled with each cough. "I wished I could have attended Laura's birthday, but my condition won't let me. How was it?" She asked after catching her breath. Barry hesitated at first, then answered. "It was good. The guests all had a great time. Laura seemed happy." There was a long pause. Then Evelyn's weak smile returned. "My doctor was here earlier this week. He told me I had just three days to live." A volt of electricity jolted Barry's entire body. His face went pale in seconds. "Three days? But... today's the third day!" Evelyn nodded slowly, a calm expression settling on her face. "I know. That's why I asked him to keep it a secret from my family. I didn't want my departure to interfere with Laura's birthday." Barry felt tears welling up in his eyes. "Madam Evelyn.... Please don't leave. You're the only person who has ever shown Snow and I kindness." Evelyn reached out to Barry and touched his face. Barry was startled by how cold her frail fingers were. "Barry," Evelyn said faintly. "Once I'm gone, I'm certain my family wouldn't treat you so nicely. I know how they've treated you all these years." She paused to wipe a ball of tears that slipped off his eye. "I like you, Barry. You're an honest and good man. That is why I married you to my granddaughter. Before I go, I want to secure your future." Barry raised an eyebrow. "Secure my future?" Evelyn leaned her head back on her pillow. "I've spoken to my lawyer and left you a will. It ensures a modest inheritance for you and snow." Barry opened and closed his mouth. "I don't know what to say." "You deserve it," she whispered. "Promise me, Barry. Take care of Laura. Protect her. I know she doesn't like you, but I believe with time, she will grow to love you." "I promise," Barry nodded vigorously, tears choking him. They sat in silence for a few minutes before Barry noticed she wasn't breathing anymore. The noise from the life-sustaining machines had all died down. Barry sank to his knees beside the bed and buried his head in her abdomen. Evelyn Raven had bitten the dust.

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