



Item Code:

951

Participant Code:

113

THE HOUSE ON

"HOPE STREET"

"Who'll be a brave young man today?" she sang as she entered the room. The floor was cold, sending a shiver up her feet. Something was wrong and she didn't know how to make it right. Glancing over, she saw her precious baby, sound asleep, his curly head barely showing through the blanket.

"Wake up, darling! I need a brave boy to take his medicines." She smiled, reaching out to caress his gorgeous face.

"Momma's boy is brave. I know." She stopped abruptly, her heart missed a beat. Her boy was cold... he was

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He was not breathing...

"w-wake up..." she pleaded ... holding his lifeless body like a fragile little flower about to wither. My darling does not feel my touch ... she wept ... rubbing her shivering lips against every nook and corner of his tiny body. Trying to somehow miraculously kiss him awake ... she failed ... The whole world stopped for a moment, the wind keeping silence, while the moon through a window, lit him in a faint ivory. " ... my ... b-boy ... " she cried, drenching her baby in a lake of love ...



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"My... boy.....?" her voice laden with grief as she wept. Eyes tightly shut, refusing to witness anything but his smiling face. Her hands searched for something she held so dear. With a sigh of relief, her fingertips finally met with a tiny palm. It was still warm... Eyes wide open, she cursed the ~~were WRETCHED~~ dream. the "WRETCHED" dream.

The pillow, wet with pain, but she smiled... right next to her laid the bane of her existence. The keeper of all her joys. She checked his little heartbeat, faint... but it was there. It was a new moon, but his face glowed, bright enough for the whole sky. Her angel. An angel she

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won't let go... back to any heaven...

No... not yet... She ran her eyes

through every fragment of his being
that she loved so dearly...

"my boy..." she hummed with a smile.

Her smile faded when she heard a

weep... A weep that held so much
pain to make her eyes well up...

She raced to its source, only to find

her husband, on his knees, breaking

into tears. Right then he was not

the strong, gentleman who stole her

heart. He was just a father. And

he seemed even more stronger now.

To hold a burning ember of sadness

in his heart and still breathe...

that was strength...



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She gently took his face in her hands, the stream of tears leaking through her fingers. He embraced her, but it was not at all warm...

His arms didn't feel safe today...
will it be okay?

And without knowing it, without planning it, her eyes gave birth to crystallised drops of sheer grief. They pleaded and prayed to every God they knew, to take their life, but not their child's... to end their sufferings.

His laughter echoed in her ears. Oh, how his smiles lit up the whole house. Heaven on earth, paradise, their little home... It was barely a home



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anymore. A structure with floors and walls that only reflected back their sorrow... "HOME" is where the heart is... And their hearts were currently shattered into a million little shards... pricking them occasionally, drawing blood and tears alike. They held each other, tighter... tight enough to hear the weeps and whimpers. They held each other like their life depended on it... and it did...

"... maaa..." a faint voice called from afar... The pair sprang to their feet, rushing, practically flying to their darling child's bedside. The little bundle of joy gently wet his scarlet lips with his tongue. Eyes



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still shut... He didn't have to call out again... they heard him the first time... they heard what they needed to hear... The child was still very much alive- Tears of pain turned into tears of joy in the matter of moments. Their eyes met each others, eyes holding tiny stars, little stars that kept their heart from giving out. Stars that kept them breathing. ~~Sting~~

In the house of joy and sorrow, of cries and laughter. A precious little light kept on burning. And humans called it "hope."