



*Her
Perfect
Family*

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by

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Her Perfect Family

She climbed the stairs, her arthritic knees making almost as much noise as the wooden risers. She hadn't been upstairs in years, but the sound of their laughter was irresistible. The children must be pleased with their new little brother.

The old woman felt a small thrill of pleasure. All those years of longing. She'd almost given up hoping for another boy. Then, there he was at the park. She fell in love with his blond hair and chocolate brown eyes; he was destined to be hers. She brought the toddler home and settled him in the playroom. Her family was now complete: two boys and two girls. Perfect.

At the top of the stairs, a whirling dervish in the shape of a toddler careened into her. She scabbled to hold on to the railing. Suddenly, the air around her was filled with voices. This time, they sounded anything but happy. Unseen fingers pried at her hands and a sharp intense pain shot up her right arm. It felt as if someone had bitten her! Her new son had backed off, staring at her. Inattentive, she let go of the bannister. With a yell, the boy ran at her. She gasped and stepped backward into darkness.

* * *

Lieutenant 'Mack' McDonald had difficulty piecing together the abducted boy's story. Was the woman's death a premeditated attack or an accident? Could a four-year old really grasp the concept of death? He thought about his own little boy at home. It seemed incomprehensible. But the toddler now sitting quietly on the floor had been very clear.

"So you waited at the top of the stairs and then pushed her?"

The boy looked up and nodded without blinking "If'n I didn't, I'd end up like them."

Mack sighed. He'd searched the house; there was no sign that anyone but the old woman lived there. "Tell me again, who told you to push her?"

"Them." The boy stood up, came over and took his hand before leading him to a window overlooking the overgrown lawn.

"Them," the boy reiterated and pointed down.

Mack could see the grass grew greener in three suspicious-looking spots. Oh, God.
Graves?

