



The Imperfect Gift

Anish Paudel



Anushka sits on her messy bed, scowling at her phone while complaining about her boring life. Her older brother Anish smirks and teases her about being a future CEO, but later that night, he quietly checks if her bedroom door is safely locked.



One evening, Anushka's frustration boils over as she wishes for a completely different life. Anish looks at her with a strange, serious expression before snapping his fingers, causing the air to ripple and the reality of their small apartment to shatter like glass.



She wakes up in a cold, vast mansion filled with gold accents and sparkling glass. A polite butler bows deeply and calls her Miss Anushka, presenting her with a world where everything is expensive, silent, and perfectly in place.



Anushka spends her day at a luxury mall where stores close just for her, and she buys every designer item she ever desired. However, the shopkeepers are robotic and cold, offering no real conversation or the human warmth she didn't realize she would miss.



She travels the world on private jets and rests on pristine, empty beaches with every whim catered to instantly. Despite the luxury, she whispers into the wind, feeling a growing ache of loneliness in a world that responds to her commands but not her heart.



Back in her silent mansion at night, the emptiness becomes unbearable as she remembers the sound of her mother shouting from the kitchen. She realizes that the noisy chaos of her real home was actually the sound of life and love happening all around her.



A glowing, calm version of Anish appears in the room, looking more like a celestial being than an annoying brother. He explains that he granted her wish by removing everything imperfect, leaving her with a life that is flawless but entirely hollow.



Anushka's voice trembles as she admits she doesn't want this empty perfection anymore. Anish smiles softly and flicks her forehead just like he always did, telling his 'idiot sister' that she already possessed everything that truly mattered.



The golden mansion begins to dissolve like a fading dream as Anish raises his hand and offers her a final choice. Without a single moment of hesitation, Anushka chooses to leave the gold behind for the messy, loud reality of her real family.



Anushka wakes up to the familiar sound of her family arguing and the comforting smell of her mother's cooking. When Anish teases her about her 'dream vacation,' she simply smiles, finally understanding that a life doesn't have to be perfect to be beautiful.