

The Quandary of a Healthy (Child) Sibling Stem Cell Donor

Abstract

Feelings of abandonment in a healthy (child) sibling donor (HSD) merit ethical consideration; more so, when he is needed to undergo a minimally risky, yet painful, procedure of stem cell donation (SCD) for the benefit of his ill sibling (child suffering from blood cancer). The varied feelings of the HSD undergoing SCD procedure are being presented in the form of a poem.

Keywords: Clinical ethics, matched sibling donor, pediatric cancer patient, stem cell transplantation patient

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When safeguards are no more in place,
Leaving all three of us feeling vulnerable
and outpaced...

When salutations have lost their hold and
emotions are raging high,
Left only to the mercy of chance, we await
a miraculous embrace...

Although ethically complex and
emotionally intriguing,
Being your donor sibling is truly
“overwhelming”....

Believe me! It will go a long way to
improve our bond,
My heart feels deeply compelled, to
enable you “happily” live long...

Have faith in me, Oh kin! ‘Cause I am
determined to help you,
Hold your vehement outcry, but a bit
long...

The sun shall dawn once more on this
dismal night,
And bring us hope, yet again to stay
strong^[1]...

Propelling myself ahead, by the love for
you,
Here I am, donating my stem cells
anew^[2]...

Just a few moments ago, I saw mom’s
heart shatter into pieces like glass,
And heard her crying aloud, “feeling sad;
feeling blue”...

Move close to me, my brother, come near,

‘Cause I wish to whisper something in your
ear...

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At first, I imagined I was “apparently”
abandoned by her,

Mom’s love for me seemed, as if it had
entirely disappeared...

With “waves of rejection,” I felt restless
with a qualm,

Throwing me into a quandary, that
wouldn’t let me stay calm...

I thought “sickness” was a blessing and
“being healthy” a heinous crime,

Luckily, “motivation to help you” became
my healing balm...

My fondness for you, merits bearing a little
pain,

Its minuscule, as of now, against so much
more to gain...

As your donor sibling, I’d be better off in a
joyous family of us three,

Than in a distressed one, if we were to lose
you in vain.

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References

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2. Raturi M. Saviour sibling. *Indian J Med Paediatr Oncol* 2020;41:238.

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