

VISITING MUM

By

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SCENE 1

A busy hospital ward.

SFX: a soundscape of a hospital ward; persistent beeping from the heart monitor.

MIA:                (V.O) Hi, my name is Mia. I live with my mum and dad and spend a lot of time with my nana in my free time. My life is a little bit complicated as my mum isn't very well. My dad tells me that she won't be well for a long time now. All of my friends at school have mums but most of them are always at home, cooking, cleaning and doing normal things. Sometimes I get sad when I see everyone's mums outside the gates after school. Sometimes I forget and still look for her. (PAUSE) 'Cancer' Dad says, it's Cancer's fault that mum can't pick me up from school or watch me in ballet class or plat my hair in the mornings before school. My dad tries but it's not really the same. Every Wednesday, Dad takes Mum to the hospital to get her medicine to try make her feel better.

(BEAT) I wish my Mum was like the other mums. I wish she could do things with me more.

Yesterday, I asked Mum if we could go out for the day, but she said she was too tired. Mum is

always sleeping. Dad said Mum should be a little bit better next week and that she won't need as much of her magic medicine for a while. I hope she picks me up after school next week, just like she used to, just like the other mums do. I do really, really, really love my mum but I just wish things were like they used to be and that we could be a normal family again.

FADE

SCENE 2

MIA IS PLAYING WITH HER DOLLS IN HER BEDROOM.

SFX: the faint noise of Mia playing with dolls in her bedroom. There are footsteps and nana opens Mia's bedroom door.

NANA: Hi Mia, what's all this noise you're making?

MIA: I'm just playing with my dolls Nana. I'm a bit bored really.

NANA: Well how about you come downstairs and help me make your Mum a special card?

MIA: (BEAT) You mean, a get well soon card?

NANA: No Mia, Mum isn't going back to the hospital for a little while and won't be needing to take her magic medicine for a while either.

MIA: So, is Mum better?

NANA: Well not quite. (PAUSE) I just thought -

MIA: (INTERRUPTING) So why does she need a card?

NANA: Well -

MIA: (INTERRUPTING) Does this mean Mum will be normal again and we can go back to -

NANA: Mia! (PAUSE) Darling, I just thought it would make your Mum happy. I know she'd love it if you made her something special. It would mean the world to her.

FADE

MIA: (V.O) My mum didn't stay back home for very long. She complained about having bad headaches and ended up having to be taken back into hospital after a couple of days. It was

nice having her back home, although she did get tired very quickly and the nurses kept having to come into our home to give mum her magic medicine. She was too tired to spend that much time with me, but dad tells me that I should be grateful that we had some time with mum back home, where she loved to be.

### SCENE 3

DAD IS DRIVING MUM AND MIA IN THE CAR TO THE HOSPITAL. MUM AND DAD ARE BICKERING UNDER THEIR BREATHS IN THE FRONT SEATS.

SFX: the sound of the car engine in the background.

DAD: (LOW) Mrs Adam's said Mia was very quiet in class again today. I think she feels lonely. Maybe if you tried to spend a bit more time with her in between -

MUM: (INTERRUPTING, LOW) I'm doing the best I can. I'm constantly tired, the chemotherapy is hell. You just honestly have no idea -

DAD: (INTERRUPTING, LOW) I don't have any idea? Who is the one driving you to hospital every week?

Who has to explain to Mia why her mum can't stop crying? Do you think that's easy for me?

MUM: And do you think it's easy for me to go through treatment whilst trying to hold a family together? Mia deserves to be around a normal family, she's only 10. Think about how this is going to impact her in years to come. Us arguing isn't going to help me, you and certainly not Mia.

DAD: I know, I get it. We can't keep fighting. Especially not in front of Mia, she's got enough happening for her right now.

MUM: I'm tired, Pete.

DAD: Yeah, I know. I get that.

MUM: But you don't get it. (PAUSE) I'm tired, Pete. I'm tired of trying to hold it together and I'm tired of arguing. We need to hold it together and get on with this for Mia's sake, for our family's sake. My mum is doing such a great job with her too, she doesn't need to see us arguing.

THE PARENT'S BICKERING BECOMES  
MUFFLED AND INAUDIBLE.

MIA: (V.O) I hope Mum is okay, when dad and I went to the hospital this afternoon, she looks even paler. I made her a card with my new sparkly gel pens. Maybe the sparkle will help make Mum feel better. I drew a big, pink sweet pea flower on the front of the card because I know they're Mum's favourite. The card made my mum cry. I hope they were happy tears.

FADE

SCENE 4

INSIDE A HOSPITAL ROOM, MUM IS LYING  
ON A BED WITH A DRIP WIRED TO HER  
ARM.

SFX: mum breathes heavily and the sound of a heart monitor pulses steadily.

MIA: Dad, what's that tube sticking out of Mum's arm?

DAD: It's a cannula. It's all to help make Mum better sweetheart.

NANA: Pete, can you come out here please?

SFX: Dad's footsteps and the sound of a door opening and closing. A busy hospital wing - background chatter, phones ringing.

NANA AND DAD ARE STOOD IN A BUSY  
HOSPITAL WARD.

SFX: phones ringing, chatter, footsteps passing Nana and Dad.

DAD: Hey, what's up?

NANA: I've just had a word with the oncologist and a few of the nurses on the ward. (PAUSE) It could be a matter of days we have left with her now. We need to start to prepare ourselves.

DAD: Blimey, that came out of nowhere. What's happened? Why the sudden turn around?

NANA: The CT scan has just come back. The Cancer has gone to her bones and nearly around her whole body now. It's taken over and there really isn't much more any of us can do. The chemotherapy is too heavy for her to keep



having. We have looked into lots of alternative options, but they really have tried their best.

MUM: (LOW) Mia.

SFX: Mia steps forward.

MUM: Give me your hand lovely.

SFX: Mum kisses Mia's hand.

MIA: Is Mum coming home with us today Dad?

DAD: You know your Mum loves you Mia. You know we both do.

MIA: But my Mum. Is she coming home?

DAD: No Mia, not today -

MIA: (INTERRUPTING) But if Mum really loved me, she would come home. I don't want to come to this stupid hospital anymore.

DAD: Mia! You should know Mum would do anything to come home with us. But she can't, it's not her fault. We have to support her right now.

SFX: Nana opens the door to the hospital room.

DAD: Nana, could you take Mia outside please?

NANA: Oh, of course (BEAT) come on Mia.

PAUSE

SFX: Mia kisses her mum on the hand. Nana and Mia walk out the room, shutting the door behind them. The heart monitor's pulse becomes louder and begins to slow.

CUT TO

SCENE 5

MIA IS SITTING ON A HER MOTHER'S  
ENGRAVED BENCH OUTSIDE A CHURCH.

SFX: a church bell tolls, morning birdsong in the background.

MIA: (V.O) It was a Sunday afternoon. We'd got back from the hospital and I was in my room when Nana told me to come downstairs. Nana sounded really sad and it was like I already knew. She said Mum fell into a deep asleep and won't wake up again and that she is with the angels now. I'm not really sure what that means. I guess I have to wait until I'm with the angels too one day to find out. (BEAT) The house feels empty now without her but I'm glad she isn't hurting anymore. I tell my Mum when I visit her at her special memorial that I will look after Nana

and Dad while she's gone. Sometimes I say: Mum,  
I miss you and I love you. I also say that I  
hope heaven is full of sweet peas and happy  
music to keep her content. I hope she can hear  
me. (BEAT) I also hope Mum isn't too lonely up  
there. I wish, I wish I could hear her voice. I  
always wonder what she would say now that I am  
down here, and she is up there looking down on  
us.

FADE

END