

EXTRACT

Ballerina Flowers

a short play

By

Alex Broun

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Characters

ASHLEY Recently lost her mother

TAYLOR Ashley's friend

EMILY Inquisitive

SARAH Bossy

HANNAH Shy

The Setting

School playground

Time

Lunchtime

BALLERINA FLOWERS by Alex Broun

Playground. Lunchtime.

ASHLEY sits in a quiet corner under a tree, drawing in a sketch pad.

After awhile **TAYLOR** enters.

TAYLOR: Hi.

ASHLEY: Hi.

BEAT.

TAYLOR: What you doing?

ASHLEY: Drawing.

ASHLEY shows **TAYLOR** the drawing.

ASHLEY: It's a ballerina.

TAYLOR: It doesn't look like a ballerina.

ASHLEY: A ballerina flower. It's called a Freesia. It's for my mum.

BEAT. **ASHLEY** continues drawing.

TAYLOR: You haven't been at school for awhile.

ASHLEY: No.

TAYLOR: How come?

ASHLEY: My mum was sick.

TAYLOR: But she's better now?

ASHLEY: She didn't get better.

TAYLOR: What happened?

ASHLEY: She died.

BEAT.

TAYLOR: That's sad.

ASHLEY nods.

TAYLOR: Why are you drawing the flower for her then?

ASHLEY: Dad said we could go and visit her next week. At the cemetery. I'm going to give her my picture of the ballerina.

TAYLOR: That's really nice of you.

ASHLEY: No, it's not. She's my Mum.

BEAT.

TAYLOR: Do you think she knows? (BEAT) That you're taking her the flower.

ASHLEY: I don't know. I hope so. Dad says she'll always be with me – in spirit. But that's not the same. She's still not here.

TAYLOR: I'd hate it if anything happened to my mum. I love her.

ASHLEY: I loved my mum too.

EMILY, SARAH AND HANNAH ENTER. HANNAH HAS SOMETHING BEHIND HER BACK.

EMILY: Hi Ashley. We were looking for you.

SARAH: Why are you sitting over here by yourself?

ASHLEY: No reason. Just wanted to be alone. I'm drawing a flower for my Mum.

SARAH: Mrs Ormond told us what happened.

EMILY: That's really awful.

HANNAH: You must feel terrible.

EMILY: If it happened to my Mum I'd never stop crying.

ASHLEY: I did cry. When it first happened. But then I started drawing pictures for her. That made me feel better. So now whenever I feel like crying I draw something and I stop crying.

TAYLOR: What else do you draw?

ASHLEY: The things she liked the most. Her cup of tea in the morning. Fresh strawberries. The oak tree in the backyard. The little stone bridge behind our house, that goes over the millstream. I put them up on the wall in my bedroom. And whenever I'm really lonely and missing her I think of her standing there, looking at them with me.

- EMILY: How did she die?
- SARAH: Don't ask that!
- ASHLEY: No, it's okay. Dad said it was good to talk about it. Not keep everything closed up. It was cancer.
- HANNAH: My uncle had cancer. Prostate. But he didn't die.
- ASHLEY: Sometimes you don't. The doctor said Mum was very unlucky.
- TAYLOR: What kind of cancer was it?
- ASHLEY: It's called non-Hodgkin's lymphoma. It's quiet rare.
- EMILY: Who was Hodgkins? Was he the man who got it first?
- SARAH: Emily. Stop asking such stupid questions.
- EMILY: I'm not.
- ASHLEY: It's okay Sarah. I don't mind. Hodgkin's was the doctor who discovered another type of lymphoma. But my mum had the other kind.
- EMILY: What's lymphoma?
- ASHLEY: It's a cancer that attacks the immune system. It starts in the lymphocyte cells.
- HANNAH: Lympho ... Lymphoca ... I can't even say it.
- ASHLEY: I wish I couldn't either.
- TAYLOR: Was it fast?
- ASHLEY: Mum was first diagnosed three years ago. She went through lots of treatment . That's why Dad always used to come and pick me up. Then she got better and we thought everything was going to be okay. But then she got sick again and one day, about a month ago, we went to the hospital and Mum said she wasn't going to get better.
- EMILY: That must've been really sad.
- ASHLEY: That's why I have to keep drawing.

ASHLEY WIPES AWAY THE TEARS. SHE STARTS DRAWING AGAIN.