

The Hope in Her Youth

Written by
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Ext. Funeral - Afternoon

[Scene 1]

Car crash sound is heard, followed by an ambulance siren, in the dark. Lights on to reveal a funeral procession. SELENE is seated with DAD, both bandaged in some way. There are some other people seated. There is a casket in the middle. Mom is standing in white at the corner.

MINISTER

You may now pay your final respects.

The people start to take turns looking at the casket for the final time. Finally, it is DAD's turn. He kneels at the casket. MOM stands beside him and puts her hand on his shoulder.

DAD

Why! I was driving properly!
The truck came out of nowhere!
It wasn't my fault!
(looks up at the sky)
Why did you do this to us!
I was driving properly!

Selene comes over and helps him up, but feels a little weak. Lights off.

Int. Doctor's office - Afternoon

[Scene 2]

Lights on to reveal DOCTOR sitting across SELENE and JENNIE in an office. Calendar shows March 2017.

DOCTOR

Based on the results of the MRI scan, it has been confirmed that you have heart cancer.

SELENE

(Shocked and freezes for a few seconds)

Ohh...

DOCTOR

Fortunately, you are only in stage
1. So you can actually go for
treatment. With treatment, you
will be able to prevent the cancer
from spreading and getting worse.

SELENE

How much is the treatment per
session?

DOCTOR

Depending on your insurance
coverage, it should cost around
\$150 to \$250 per session, and you
will have to attend at twice times
a week.

JENNIE

(shocked, lowers her voice)
Its so expensive.
Are you sure you can afford it?

SELENE

I'm not sure... My mom's insurance
pay-out should be able to cover
most of it. I think she also
bought strong insurance coverage
for me, just need to go look
through her drawers.

(SELENE looks sad,
JENNIE hugs her)

JENNIE

We'll be alright.

Lights off.

Int. Selene's house, living room - Afternoon [Scene 2]
Lights on to reveal SELENE coming in through the door, into
the living room. As she places her keys on the tray, her phone
rings. Calendar shows March 2017.

SELENE

Hey, Jennie. I reach home already.
Don't worry about me.*coughs*
Today was a long day. *coughs*

JENNIE

Sel, are you sure you are ok?

SELENE

I guess... I'm just coughing a lot
and feeling weaker lately. Dad
thinks that I'm just sick. He's
not suspicious since he's still
drinking himself to sleep half the
time, and he's been going out to
gamble quite often lately. Almost
every night now.

JENNIE

(angrily)

Damn..... why is your father still
behaving like that. He's like this
for the past your years already.
Why can't he change?

SELENE

It's ok. Leave him be. He still
can't accept the fact that mom's
left us. He stopped going to work,
and started increasing his
gambling. He say it's the only
way. I guess he needs to release
his stress. Oh hang on a sec, I
got another call.

(looks at phone screen, presses
the screen)

Hello?

DOCTOR

Hey Selene, once again, I'm sorry
for your loss. What happened to
your mom was not fair.

SELENE

No worries. What's up?

DOCTOR

I don't want to disturb you, but I think there's an issue with your Mom's insurance pay-out. Someone seems to have cleared out your mom's insurance pay-out. We can't draw the money from the account to pay for your treatments.

SELENE

Huh? (gasps) Don't tell me-

Lights off.

Int. Casino - Evening

[Scene 3]

Lights on to reveal DAD playing poker at the poker table. There is a dealer and a few others. DAD is clearly drunk.

DAD

Come on! Hit me!

(dealer gives him another card, he sees it then he gets angry and throws his cards on the table)

Why so lousy!

Nevermind, next round can win!

(looks up at ceiling)

Then I don't need to worry about cash and I can *hiccup* spend time with Selene like you always wanted!

(receives a call, and SELENE appears at the doorway, speaking)

SELENE

Dad! Where are you!

DAD

What you want Selene! Pa is busy

trying to give us a better life,
like Ma always wanted!

SELENE

PA! Did you take Ma's insurance
pay-out!

DAD

Yea. Girl I'm using it to help us
earn more money so I-

SELENE

Pa!
(cries and hangs up)

DAD looks bewildered, then continues gambling. Lights off.

Ext. School, Principal's Office - Afternoon [Scene 4]

Lights on to reveal JENNIE talking to the PRINCIPAL in the
Principal's office.

JENNIE

So that's when we found out the
Selene had heart cancer.

PRINCIPAL

Oh dear. One after the other.
How's her insurance coverage?

JENNIE

She's covered, its just that it
still costs money even on top of
the coverage.

PRINCIPAL

I see. And is her dad able to pay?

JENNIE

Her dad... is in a really bad place
right now. He even used up all of
the insurance pay-out from the...
accident... to gamble!

PRINCIPAL

Hmmm... ok I think I will give him a
call. So is that why you're here?

JENNIE

Yea. I was thinking, you know how Selene has always been helping out for stuff in school, prefect and all?

PRINCIPAL

Yes... and?

JENNIE

So I was thinking, we have an upcoming charity bazaar right? Why don't we use the proceeds for her treatment?

PRINCIPAL

Hmmm... tell me more about your plan.

Lights off.

Int. Dad's Room - Afternoon

[Scene 5]

Lights on to reveal DAD waking up, very drowsy and having a headache. He looks messy and dirty. His phone vibrates and he checks the phone screen.

DAD

(bewildered)

Why was \$10,000 transferred to Selene's account?

(pauses for a moment,
then mood changes)

Selene, I have no choice. I need this to pay back Ah Hua.

(conflicted)

But... it's her money. (idea occurs)
I know! I'll go and settle all my debts, start from scratch and go back to working hard! No more!
I'll pass Selene back her money in no time! That's right! What was her password again... Oh yea!

Lights off.

Int. Casino - Evening

[Scene 6]

Lights on to reveal the inside of a casino. DAD enters with an envelope and is greeted by one of the staff. MOTHER, dressed in white, accompanies him.

STAFF

(smiles sinisterly)

Hey, Mr John. Welcome! Are you ready to win money today? Oh, yah, Mr Hua finding you, he is in the office there.

DAD

Mr Hua finding me? It's ok la, don't need go his office. Here, this is the money I owe him.
(MR HUA walks in with security)

MR HUA

Oh, Mr John, hi! (DAD gives the money in the envelope) Never mind, it's ok, you hold on to the money first, are you still going to play today?

DAD

No, Mr Hua, this money give back to you.

MR HUA

Wah, all the money you owe me!
Wah, you're in luck. Today is doubles night you know, so whatever you win is times two!!
Imagine how much your 10k can earn you if you win!

DAD is conflicted, very attracted by all the sights and sounds in the casino but at the same time feeling like he doesn't want to gamble.

DAD
Doubles night..?

STAFF brings him to one of the tables, and seats him down.
MOTHER gently holds DAD's shoulder, holding him back. He feels a little resistance, but then he pulls away and carries on.

STAFF
Come come come. Let's us see what's the number here. Here Mr John, free chips on the house.
(STAFF puts some chips on the table. Dealer lets the dad roll dice, and DAD wins.)

DEALER
Wow, your lucky night, Mr John! Doubles night some more! (gives him more chips)

DAD
Yes, I win! Today is a lucky day for me! Hmm... Maybe I'll just continue one to two more rounds since my luck is so good.

Lights off. Lights on to reveal that a few hours have passed. DAD is drunk, upset and still gambling. He looks at his freshly drawn card and throws it on the table.

DAD
No! Why it is like that...
Arghhhhhh... What am I doing now, I've lost all the money again! I need to leave this place! (stands up to leave)

STAFF
Hey, Mr John why are you going back so early today? Come on, stay a bit longer lah! Your luck sure improve one!

DAD

Sorry, I have a daughter to take
care of!

Dad leaves and lights go off.

Int. Selene's - Morning

[Scene 7]

Lights on to reveal SELENE getting up from sleep.

SELENE

coughs I better go and drink
some water. *coughs*

(sees message on her phone, pick
up the phone and check)

\$10000 was transferred to my
account and transferred out? So
strange.

JENNIE calls her on the phone. She sounds happy. JENNIE
appears at the doorway at the back of the stage.

JENNIE

Hey, Selene!

SELENE

Hey Jennie! What's up!

JENNIE

Nothing, just wanted to ask: Did
you check your account yesterday?

SELENE

Oh I only saw it this morning.
Yesterday I was just resting at
home. Oh that was you? What was
that for?

JENNIE

I persuaded the school to wire our
Charity Bazaar money to your
account! Mr Lee said he will tell

you on Monday, but I couldn't
wait!

SELENE

Oh! Jennie! You did all that for
me? Thank you so much, you
shouldn't have! But, where's the
money now?

JENNIE

(confused)

What do you mean? Are you sure it
was withdrawn- wait a minute.
(angrily) Doesn't your dad have
your pin number too?! Don't tell
me-

Selene grabs the phone to her chest as lights go off.

Int. Selene's Living Room - Afternoon [Scene 8]

Lights on to reveal SELENE's house. SELENE looks tired,
looking through her phone. Doorbell rings. SELENE opens and
JENNIE enters. JENNIE noticed that her house was very messy
and full of empty beer cans on the floor. DAD is sleeping on
the sofa.

JENNIE

Where's your dad!

SELENE

He's... still sleeping... I didn't
want to wake him. I'll talk to him
lat-

JENNIE goes over and wakes him up rudely.

SELENE

Jennie!

JENNIE

Wake up! Do you know what the 10k
was for?

DAD

What...

JENNIE

It wasn't for you! It was for
Selene and her treatments?

DAD

(drowsily)

Treatment? What treatment?

Selene suddenly starts to cough out blood and has trouble breathing. At that point Jennie explodes.

JENNIE

How can you not notice your own
god damn daughter?! What the hell
have you done as a father? You're
wondering what treatment, am I
right?! Well it's treatment for
cancer! That's right! She's having
cancer and you don't even know!!

DAD's eyes widened.

DAD

C-c-cancer? Why didn't you tell
me? Cancer? When?

Selene

6 months ago. I didn't tell you
because you were busy drinking,
gambling. You didn't care. We're
all suffering but you didn't care-

SELENE coughs more blood, then faints on the floor.

DAD

(tries to wake Selene up but

cannot)
Selene! Selene!
(to JENNIE) Call an ambulance
quickly!

Lights off. Ambulance sound is heard.

Int. Hospital Corridor - Afternoon [Scene 9]
Lights on to reveal a Hospital corridor. PARAMEDICS push
stretcher with SELENE on it into the operating theater,
entering from one door and exiting the other.

DAD is left behind with JENNIE.

DAD
(addresses Selene with a reassured
face and grabs her shoulders, but
she pushes his hand away)

I'm sure she'll be fine. She's got
to be fine.

JENNIE cries. Surgeon comes out of the Operating Theater.

SURGEON
The cancer has spread. We have to do an
emergency operation to cut out the
cancerous parts. It's going to be a
challenge but we're gonna do our best.

SURGEON goes back in.

SURGEON
Irrigation please. Surgical knife please.
She's losing blood!! get more blood!!

Assistant runs out of the Operating Theater with blood stained
gown and into the other door. DAD and JENNIE are shocked and
tries to ask the Assistant, but the assistant pushes him away.

DAD

What's happening?!?!?
Tell me what's happening!

Assistant pushes comes back out and goes back into the Operating Theater, holding some packets of blood. DAD and JENNIE watches, shocked. Clock starts to move fast and DAD and JENNIE changes positions, from sitting to standing to sleeping. Finally clock slows down. SURGEON comes out of Operating Theater.

SURGEON

Your child is being moved to the ward. You
can go see her now.

DAD and JENNIE rush out the door. SURGEON slumps on the chair.
Lights off.

Int. Hospital Ward - Evening

[Scene 10]

Lights on to reveal the Hospital Ward. DAD is sleeping on the seat beside SELENE, who is sleeping on the ward bed. JENNIE comes in with some drinks. At this moment, SELENE slowly wakes up. JENNIE quickly puts down the drinks.

JENNIE

(goes to SELENE)
Selene!

(DAD wakes up)

DAD

(holds Selene's hand)

I'm sorry for everything. I'm sorry for
staying so emotional by myself when I
should have been focusing on you too. I
have made a grave mistake. I've lost one
love of my life: I can't lose the other. I
know u won't forgive me but please wake
up. I love you.

(Selene's eyes slowly opens)

SELENE

I-i-i forg-give y-y-you...

Everyone looks at each other lovingly and the lights go down.

THE END