

*Scene opens on a small room with one window. There is a bed, a dresser, and a vase with flowers. There are pictures around the room. There is a wheelchair at the side of the bed. It is a nursing home.*

*Actor sits at edge of bed as she begins to speak.*

Dodo. The name my grandmother chose for herself. Let me explain. She became a grandmother when she was only 40, so she thought the name “grandma” made her seem too old. *(Laughs)* So, when she found out my aunt was pregnant, she began her search for a “cooler” name. She came across Dodo in a comic strip. I know it sounds crazy, but this name stuck and has been with her for over 50 years. Even my friends call her Dodo. She loves it. *(Smiles)*

*Picks up photo album from dresser*

Look, she must have been looking at this because it is not away in the drawer. I love this photo album. She made it for my sister when she turned 21. It is full of so many wonderful memories of us growing up.

*Opens album to second page*

Oh! This is us when I was about 10, and my sister was 8. Dodo would pick us up from school every Wednesday and I remember waiting in the schoolyard excited to spend the whole afternoon with her. She would bring us to McDonalds and would order us chicken nuggets and milk shakes. *(at album)* There we are in front of those golden arches.

*Brief Pause. Turns page of album*

Oh, yes, my favorite doll, Samantha. Dodo bought this for me for Christmas and every month came over with a new outfit for... *(sarcastic)* Samantha. Yep, that doll always had a better wardrobe than I did.

*Aside*

Hmmm... maybe I can sell those clothes on e-bay?

*Back to album*

Anyway, Dodo was always full of energy and even wore outfits you might think would look better on a teenager! Tie-dyed sweatshirts! Hoop earrings with pink high heels! I’m being serious. But, really, it was great—we loved her attitude and her sense of youthful, sarcastic style.

*Pause*

And, the way she treats my dad is so funny, you should see it. Typical mother-in-law bullshit. Always blaming him for doing... well, nothing really. *(Laughs)* Oh, my dad’s famous joke about her, “I may be Mary’s ONLY son-in-law, but I’m still not her favorite!”

*Stands, walks a few steps*

But, her humor and youthfulness couldn't last forever of course, and a few years ago, she moved... here. I am sure you have noticed by now, but this is a nursing home. I mean, of course I love Dodo, but I always feel a little weird when coming to her room. I wonder if you all know what it's like here. The hallways are full of old people in wheelchairs. Some who don't even know where they are, or who they are. Sometimes you hear them call out for help, or just laugh out loud for no reason.

*Pause, looks around to make sure no one is listening.*

And the smell. Oh, the smell is not good. Here in her room smells great—like her. But out there it is not pleasant. Trust me.

Sorry, I am getting off topic here. I was going to tell you the reason why I am here today.

*Walks*

Yesterday, we were all at my cousin's house for dinner, and my grandmother usually has to be carried into the car (*shows motion*) like out of her wheelchair and into the car seat. My cousin Patrick went to carry her in, and then gave her a hug. He heard something crack! Well, it turns out, he broke her rib! A hug.

*Upset*

A hug?! Seriously? A hug is supposed to be beautiful...and loving... and NOT HURT someone! Right? I mean, hugs make people feel BETTER, not worse. Hugs can dry tears, not cause them! It just makes me so sad to see her body disintegrating like this. I am not stupid, I know this is what happens—and she is 93. But still, her mind is sharp, and her humor is there, but her body is falling apart.

*Pause*

Really makes you think about how fragile life is, huh? I guess everyone has to grow old, but I wish she could be young forever. Taking me to McDonald's, buying Samantha clothes, and, of course yelling at my dad.

*Phone rings next to bed*

Hello? Ok, I'll be right down.

*To audience*

The doctor just finished the X-rays. (*Sigh*) I'm going to go pick her up now. I can't wait to give her a hug.

*Pause*

I will make it a soft one.

*End scene.*