

## My Life Without Me 4

Ann

Do you take sugar in your coffee?

Anne

No, no, it's all right.

Ann

Why? You're not on a diet, are you?

Anne

No, why, should I?

Ann

No, I just have this friend who's obsessed with diets and calories, and she goes on and on and on.

Anne

Boring. No, I've seen too many people sick with anorexia and bulimia. I'm a nurse, so I'm not really bothered.

(Beat)

You know, you've got really cute kids.

Ann

Yeah, they're great, aren't they?

Anne

Yeah.

Ann

What about you? You want to have kids?

Anne

No. no, I don't think so.

Ann

Why not? You think it's stupid to bring them into the world, or just haven't found the right guy, or...

Anne

Uh, no, I haven't. no, but it's not that either, no.

Ann

Do you think you can't, or...

Anne

Uh, no. well, I don't know, actually. But um...

(Beat)

Okay, um... I was in my last year of nursing college. We were doing some work experience in a pediatric hospital. I'd decided to specialize in kids, because I've always liked them. Maybe because I was an only child. I don't know, anyway, one night I was on duty, and they called me in to help with a birth. This woman was overdue, she was expecting twins, and the babies were in danger, so they decided to do a C-Section, and the mother was put under general anesthetic, and... it turned out that the twins were Siamese twins, you know, Siamese? They were born with one torso, one set of lungs. They hardly cried. They weren't horrible to look at. No, no, they were just like any other baby. But... you know, there was no way they were going to survive. It's impossible. So, we put them in an incubator while the doctors talked to the father about what they should do. The father didn't even want to see them, so they decided to take them out of incubator, and, um... wait for them to die. I offered to <sup>be</sup> with them until they... I couldn't bear the thought of them dying alone in a cold hospital room. They lived 30 hours. I held them in my arms for 30 hours. I sang them every song I knew, songs of the world they would never see. But anyway, they just grew smaller and smaller in my arms. First one died, and six hours later, the other died, so.

Since then, I've specialized in geriatric nursing. Yeah.

(Beat)

I'm so sorry. I'm sorry. I don't know why I told you that story. Thanks for the coffee. You know what? I'd better be going. Really, I'm sorry.

Ann

Do you want to come over for dinner next week?

Anne

Are you sure?

Ann

Yeah, no, I would really love you to. I know the girls would really love it too. Because you have to tell them the end of that mermaid story. They loved that story.

Anne

I'd love to, Ann, and you know, that story is happy. It's, happy. Thank you so much, I'd love to, okay.