

The Selfie by Kim Magri



It's two o'clock on a Saturday morning. Heaven's gates have opened and I can hear thunder roaring outside my dimly-lit room.

I cannot sleep. My mind is racing with thoughts. What can I do now? Will everything be okay? I grab my phone and in to my Instagram. After scrolling around for three minutes I get bored. I don't care what Jayden ate for lunch or what Lucy is listening to on Spotify so I just turn off my phone. I sit there quietly; not knowing what to do. I should read a book. Maybe it will distract me and my stupid brain which can only focus on negativity right now. I go to my bookshelf and pull out my favourite book; "All The Bright Places". It's my third time reading it and I don't think I'll ever get bored doing so. As soon as I open it a picture falls out. It's a photo I have with my mum or as many people like to call it, a selfie. I feel a warm tear trickle down my pale face, followed by another, and another until everything goes blurry and my mind goes blank.

It was Christmas time. All the family was gathered at my nan's. All the presents were given and everyone had a wide smile on their face. Aunty Mel was making tea for everyone and while they were chatting about Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, I took my phone from my back pocket and asked mum to take a selfie with me. We didn't have to fake a smile for this one. Our eyes were shining and you could feel the positive vibes it radiated from miles away.

It was New Year's Eve when mum received a phone call from the hospital saying she needed to get there quickly. We ditched our plans and rushed there. We got in from the automatic doors and then talked to the lady at the front desk who directed us to the oncology ward. My stomach was doing backflips by the time we reached the doctor. He seemed uncomfortable. "You're diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. I don't want to alarm you but you've got four months left to live." I was numb. I couldn't feel a thing. Or maybe I felt too many things. The next four months were the longest in a very speedy way. They were painful and I don't wish this to my worst enemy. It was a pain like no other I've ever experienced before.

Fast forward now, one month after mum's death. I still have no clue what's going on. I am a body without a backbone. I lost my best friend, my role model and the person who supported me and motivated me to be my best self. I turn the photo round when I suddenly see my mother's neat calligraphy. "Have courage and be kind. I'm always here. Love, mum." Am I losing my mind? Did mum actually do that? Tears continue to stream down my face; they're out of control.

Things changed, my priorities changed and the way I look at life changed in the most dramatic way. One thing that will never change is how eternally grateful I am to have been blessed by such a great role model and my most prized possession is the selfie which I took with the beautiful mother of mine.