

A Closed Distance

INT. TIFFANY'S BEDROOM - DAY

TIFFANY, 9, rubs her eyes half-open to the sound of her alarm. A hand silences the alarm and the other scoops her head off the pillow, slowly pulling off the covers and tightly strapping on her respiratory vest.

Tiffany sits up in a daze as her MOM, 42, shakes her inhaler and releases it in her mouth while counting to ten. Tiffany then bites down on a nebulizer mouthpiece that her mom places in her mouth.

MOM

(quietly)

Make sure you turn your vest back on
in 10 minutes and switch nebs once
you finish your Hyper-Sal.

Tiffany nods drowsily.

Mom walks out of the room cracking the door halfway.

Tiffany peels her eyes slightly open to see the hallway light peek through the door. She hears mom knock and open the other bedroom door to the humming of another respiratory treatment and nebulizer, followed by someone's persistent coughing.

She closes her eyes.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Mom rushes around the kitchen prepping four lunches and ushering kids out the door. SYDNEY, 13, comes downstairs looking pale and fatigued. She eats a spoonful of peanut butter, sorely swallows a handful of medications in one gulp, and walks out the door with her lunchbox.

INT. KITCHEN - LATER

Tiffany finishes her breakfast as Mom sets up her math lesson on the kitchen table. Tiffany pours a handful of medications into her palm and slowly swallows each pill individually.

The phone rings. Mom answers to hear Sydney's voice faintly

coughing up tears on the phone. Mom begins gathering her keys and glasses as she hangs up the phone and places a math sheet in front Tiffany.

MOM

Take your multiplication sheet to my room and see how much you can finish before I get back. I need to go pick up your sister, she's sick.

TIFFANY

Can I come with?

MOM

No, y'all are going to need to be separated right now. Six feet at all times, okay?

Tiffany's words fall short and into an accepting nod, as if this was routine.

INT. MOM'S BEDROOM - LATER

Tiffany hears the back door shut closed and peaks her head out of the bedroom as Sydney walks past and up the stairs. Tiffany waves at her with a faint smile but Sydney doesn't see.

Tiffany's smile drops.

Mom enters the bedroom to see the back of the math sheet scribbled with drawings.

TIFFANY

(mumbling)

I wanted to show Sydney the drawing I made of us...when will I be able to play with her again?

Mom's eyes tear up ever so slightly.

MOM

(sighs)

Soon, pumpkin. Soon.

9 YEARS LATER

INT. CAR - DAY

Tiffany drives down the highway and passes a city sign that reads: COLLEGE STATION, TEXAS.

She steers her car into the cramped driveway of a small town home to see Sydney standing in the lawn, waving.

MONTAGE OF SYDNEY AND TIFFANY'S DAY

The sisters order tapioca drinks at a tea shop and trade sips as they walk to the bookstore. In the bookstore, they both head straight for the manga section and look for the latest releases. Back in the car, they talk about their purchases and giggle at the contents. Next, the two of them go ice skating at the rink Sydney works at and video on another spinning around the ice. After, they sit at a table filled with Korean side dishes and boiling soups, sampling each others' food and discussing what movie to watch. They drive home blaring their new favorite K-pop album.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tiffany sits with Sydney on her bed as they watch Netflix on her laptop. As Sydney snacks on her Pocky sticks, Tiffany leans her head on her shoulder and slowly closes her eyes.

Sydney shuts the computer and clears off the bed. Tiffany wriggles under the covers as Sydney turns off the lights and places her stuffed bear in Tiffany's arms. Sydney crawls in and leans her head against Tiffany's back, dozing off to her sister's warmth.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

The sun faintly peaks through the curtains as Tiffany and Sydney sleep soundly, snuggled up closely to one another. Their expressions as carelessly as two little kids lost in their dreams.