

Scenario 3: Later stages of Dementia

THIS SCENARIO EXPLORES SOME OF THE DIFFICULTIES FACED WITHIN FAMILIES WHEN CARING FOR A LOVED ONE IN THE LATER STAGES OF DEMENTIA

MAVIS: Look, I don't want to get into an argument with you. You're his sister and you love him, I understand that. But you don't know how difficult it's been for Andrew, or how hard it's been for me.

DIANE: It can't be that hard, you're just fussing over nothing. Andrew's fine, he's just a bit forgetful that's all, you're making a big deal out of nothing.

MAVIS: He's got Alzheimer's! What do you know about anything? You swan in here with your advice and tell me it's nothing.

DIANE: You always did have a turn for the dramatics. It's probably your fault he got it in the first place.

MAVIS: How can you say such a thing! You're supposed to be family.

DIANE: I am family, but you can't expect me to be helping out, I've got my own kids to be looking after.

MAVIS: I wouldn't dream of asking you. You wouldn't last a week anyway.

AWKWARD SILENCE

I'm sorry, I'm just so tired. Andrew's sleep pattern is completely upset and he's up most of the night. He can't help it, it's just how the disease affects him. I'm caring for him 24 hours a day and I don't get a break.

DIANE: I've told you, I don't have the time to help.

MAVIS: So you've said. It's just difficult, I love Andrew but I feel I'm losing him. I'm frustrated and I'm lonely.

DIANE: Lonely, how can you be lonely? You're with Andrew in this beautiful house. You've got loads of friends. You're always going on about your weekends away dancing or doing those murder mystery things.

MAVIS: You really don't get it do you. We don't have any friends, they've stopped coming round. People don't know how to be around Andrew, they're embarrassed or feel awkward. Our life has shrunk to just me and him. Sarah pops in from next door now and then, but that's about it.

DIANE: I'm sorry about that, I didn't know. I know you want me to help out, but I can't. I've got the girls and my business, it's just taking off and I've got to focus on that.

MAVIS: I'm not asking you to do anything. I'm not asking you to help with his care. I just want a bit of understanding that's all. To be able to pick up the phone and have an adult conversation would be nice. Sometimes I just can't cope and I don't know what to do.

DIANE: I'm only saying.

MAVIS: You're Andrew's sister, you should be involved with this.

DIANE: Well that's just typical. What about Angela? She's his sister too, but you don't see her coming over to see Andrew do you? At least I made the effort.

MAVIS: Angela lives in Australia Diane, you can't expect her to just hop on a plane and fly over.

DIANE: No, but you'd expect me to. Look, I've got to go, I've got to pick the kids up. We'll talk about this another time.

DIANE LEAVES

MAVIS: I don't know why I bothered.

FORUM WITH AUDIENCE

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