

## Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes

Setting: 1955 in a hospital room in Hiroshima, Japan. Sadako, a 12 year old girl, is sitting on a chair in a hospital room reading a book. There is an empty chair nearby. Sadako is dying from leukemia, resulting from radiation poisoning. Sadako was two years old, and living in Hiroshima when the atomic bomb was dropped there.

NARRATOR: Sadako was 2 years old when the atomic bomb hit her town of Hiroshima, Japan. Now she is 12. A few months ago Sadako started having some dizzy spells. When her parents took her to the doctor, they found out that Sadako had leukemia. Leukemia is a type of cancer that many citizens of Hiroshima came down with after being exposed to the radiation from the atomic bomb dropped in 1945. Sadako had to be put into the hospital right away.

Sadako spent a lot of her time in the hospital writing letters to her friends in school and reading books. After a few weeks, a girl named Kiyoko was also admitted to the hospital. She was to be Sadako's roommate. (Nurse Yasunaga enters the stage with Kiyoko at her side.)

NURSE YASUNAGA: Sadako, you have a new roommate. This is Kiyoko.

SADAKO: (Enthusiastically.) Hi Kiyoko, I'm Sadako.

KIYOKO: Hi Sadako. (Kiyoko sits down next to Sadako and they begin to pantomime talking and looking at Sadako's book. Nurse Yasunaga exits the stage.)

NARRATOR: Before long Sadako and Kiyoko became best friends. They spent a lot of time talking and playing games. (Sadako and Kiyoko continue looking at the book and talking to each other. They also begin to smile and laugh more, obviously enjoying each other's company.)

NARRATOR: One day a package was delivered to the hospital. There was a special surprise in the package that encouraged the girls to do something else with their time. (Nurse Yasunaga enters the stage with a package.)

NURSE YASUNAGA: Sadako and Kiyoko, this package arrived today. Look inside! (The girls stretch their necks to get a glimpse. Nurse Yasunaga pulls out a paper crane.)

KIYOKO: Oh Sadako, paper cranes! (Nurse Yasunaga hands the package to Sadako. The two girls look at and admire the paper cranes in the package while Nurse Yasunaga leaves the stage.)

NARRATOR: The paper cranes had been prepared by some high school girls in the city of Nagoya. The girls wanted the cranes to be given to the atomic bomb victims in the Hiroshima hospital. The paper cranes were to remind the girls of an old Japanese belief: by folding 1,000 paper cranes, a sick person might get better. (Nurse Yasunaga reenters the stage with some scraps of paper.)

NURSE YASUNAGA: Sadako and Kiyoko, here are some old wrappers from some medicine bottles. I thought you might like them to make some paper cranes yourselves. (Nurse Yasunaga hands them the scraps of paper.)

SADAKO & KIYO: (Cheerfully.) Thank You!!!! (The girls very happily take the scraps and proceed to make some cranes. Nurse Yasunaga smiles and exits the stage.)

NARRATOR: Sadako and Kiyō spent many hours working together on their paper cranes. However, as time wore on, Sadako became more and more ill. Before long, she could hardly find enough strength to fold the cranes. But, she persevered.

SADAKO: (Wearily.) Oh Kiyō, I am so tired. I don't think I can do any more cranes today. (Sadako sets her crane down and wearily watches Kiyō. Kiyō glances at Sadako and then returns to her cranes.)

NARRATOR: After several weeks, Kiyō was well enough to go home. (Nurse Yasunaga enters the stage.)

NURSE YASUNAGA: Kiyō, today you are to go home!

NARRATOR: It was hard for Sadako and Kiyō to say good-bye to each other. (Kiyō stands up and embraces Sadako.)

KIYO: (Hopefully.) Please don't be sad Sadako, I will come to visit you.

SADAKO: (Sadly.) I will miss you Kiyō! (The girls wave good-bye to each other as Kiyō and Nurse Yasunaga leave the stage.)

NARRATOR: Although Sadako was saddened by the departure of Kiyō, she continued to make paper cranes every day. If her friends or family came to visit, they would help make some. Before long, Sadako had hundreds of paper cranes. However, she was not getting any better. She kept getting worse. (Sadako sits slouched on her chair and very slowly makes a crane.)

NARRATOR: One night Sadako was especially tired and it took every bit of energy she had to make just one crane. Using a toothpick and to help her fold the creases, she finally finished it. (Sadako very weakly finishes a crane using a toothpick and the book as a hard surface to work on to help make the folds. When she finishes, she closes her eyes.)

NARRATOR: It was the last crane Sadako ever made. She did not wake up the next morning. (Sadako is sitting peacefully with her eyes closed in her chair.)

NARRATOR: (To the side of the stage, Mr. Nomura and Sadako's classmates gather together.) Sadako's classmates were very upset to hear about Sadako's death.

MR. NOMURA: I am very sad to tell you that Sadako has passed away. (Students shake their heads in disbelief.)

STUDENTS: (Shocked and seemingly spontaneously.) Oh No! Poor Sadako! Not Sadako! This is terrible!

NARRATOR: Sadako's classmates were frustrated over Sadako's death and wanted to do something. (Mr. Nomura and the students are obviously talking among themselves, agitated.)

NARRATOR: They decided to raise money to have a monument built in honor of Sadako and all Japanese children who were killed from the atomic bomb. (Mr. Nomura and the students nod at each other in looks of agreement.)

NARRATOR: After years of hard work, a monument was finally erected in Hiroshima.

It is a small mountain with a girl on top holding a crane above her head. To this day people from all over the world send paper cranes to be hung at this monument as signs of hope for world peace.

(Mr. Nomura and students shake each other's hands as an indication of satisfaction.)