



*My mommy has been sick a long time. Not just a week or two, you know, but ever since before my last birthday. That was when my aunt gave me a fire engine cake with six red candles. Before long I'll turn seven, so I guess Mommy's been sick a whole year.*



*Mommy has been in the hospital pretty often too—not at the small one in town where I was born, but in the big city hospital two whole hours away. Grandfathers took my brothers and me there to visit her sometimes. It seemed like a long drive.*

