

Sadako Learns to Make a Paper Crane

This script is adapted from *Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr (pages 33-36)

Characters

Narrator
Sadako
Nurse Yasunga
Chizuko
Dr. Numata
Voice off stage

Place: A pediatric hospital room in Hiroshima, Japan

Time: A morning in February of 1955

The scene opens as 12-year-old Sadako wakes up. She is in the hospital because she fainted at school. (*Sadako is sitting on a chair. A small table is at her side. A chair is behind the table. A folded paper crane is on the seat of the chair.*)

Narrator: Sadako woke up slowly and looked around the room. (*Sadako yawns, rubs her eyes, and sleepily looks around the room.*) For a moment she thought getting sick at school and spending the night in the hospital was only a bad dream. (*Nurse Yasunga enters the stage carrying a small tray*) When Nurse Yasunga walked into the room, Sadako knew she wasn't dreaming. She also knew she was going to get a needle and that her arm was going to hurt.

Nurse Yasunga: Good morning Sadako. How are you feeling?

Sadako: I am scared. Do I have to have a shot? I am afraid it will hurt.

Nurse Yasunga: Getting an injection is part of being in the hospital. You'll get used to it.

Sadako: Why do I have to have a shot? I want to go home.

Nurse Yasunga: It is for your leukemia. It will help you get better so you can go home. You may cry if it hurts, but you have to hold still.

Narrator: Sadako tightened her body so she wouldn't move and turned her head away from Nurse Yasunga. (*Sadako straightens her arm and turns her head away from Nurse Yasunga.*) Nurse Yasunga lifted up the sleeve of Sadako's hospital kimono, wipes her arm with an alcohol prep pad, and quickly slips the needle into her arm. (*Nurse Yasunga pretends to give Sadako an injection. Nurse Yasunga turns to walk off stage. Sadako turns her head toward Nurse Yasunga.*)

Appendix 7c1

Sadako: What is leukemia?

Nurse Yasunga: Leukemia is a cancer of the part of your body that makes blood. Leukemia stops your body from making normal or good blood cells.

Sadako: How did I get leukemia?

Nurse Yasunga: Doctors aren't sure what causes leukemia. They believe it comes from radiation poisoning. You probably got it from the radiation created from the atom bomb.

Sadako: Is leukemia the same disease as the atom bomb disease?

Nurse Yasunga: Yes. Now it is time for you to rest.

Narrator: Sadako could get out of bed only to go to the bathroom. She had to eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner on a table beside her bed. Nurse Yasunga was busy, so Sadako had to eat all by herself. She was only allowed to have visitors at certain times of the day. There wasn't a television in her room. Sadako was very lonely. That afternoon she was able to have visitors.

Nurse Yasunga: Sadako, you have a visitor.

Chizuko: *(Smiling and holding her hands behind her back.) Shut your eyes. (Sadako closes her eyes. Chizuko puts paper and scissors on the table beside Sadako. Chizuko stands in front of the chair behind the table, and then faces the audience.)*

Chizuko: Now you can look! *(Sadako opens her eyes.)*

Sadako: What is it?

Chizuko: I have found a way to make you well! Watch! *(Chizuko takes a square piece of paper and folds it and over and over and then holds up the pre-folded paper crane located on the seat of the chair.)*

Sadako: How can that paper bird make me well?

Chizuko: Remember the story about the crane? *(Chizuko says excitedly.)* A crane can live for 1000 years. If you fold 1000 paper cranes, then you will be granted a wish. You can wish to be well again. Here is your first crane!

Narrator: Chizuko handed the golden crane to Sadako just as Dr. Numata walked by Sadako's room.

Appendix 7c2

Dr. Numata: *Dr Numata walks onto the stage.* The crane is a symbol of courage.

Chizuko: It is?

Dr. Numata: According to an ancient legend, a warrior sent his hawk into the air to catch a crane. The crane was more courageous than the hawk, so the warrior sent another hawk to help the first. Together, the hawks finally brought the crane down.

The warrior watched the crane as he walked towards it. He was going to cut off a piece of its body to give to the hawks as a reward. The crane was not afraid and the warrior decided that the bird had the spirit of a great warrior.

Sadako: What happened next?

Dr. Numata: The warrior released the crane without cutting off a piece of its body. Some people believe that the warrior lived to be 95 years old because he let the crane go free.

Voice off stage: Dr. Numata! Report to the emergency room! Dr. Numata! Report to the emergency room! Dr. Numata! Report to the emergency room! Dr. Numata! Report to the emergency room! (*Dr. Numata glances off stage.*)

Dr. Numata: Sadako you are courageous warrior. I will see you tomorrow. (*Dr. Numata smiles as he quickly leaves the stage.*)

Sadako: Oh! Thank you Chizuko chan! (*Sadako says with excitement.*) You have brought me a good luck charm and the courage to fight my disease. I will always cherish your gift. Please show me how to fold the paper cranes. I want to make 1000 by next week. (*Chizuko and Sadako begin folding the paper on the table.*)

Narrator: Chizuko taught Sadako to make the paper cranes. By the time Sadako's family arrived that evening she had folded twelve. As long as she folded the paper cranes Sadako felt like a courageous warrior. She no longer felt lonely or scared.

Appendix 7c3