



FOREVER by Jenny Worstall.

[This text is read aloud at the beginning of this video:]

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Forever by Jenny Worstall.

I felt a sharp stab as I pulled out my first silver hair. Age was catching up with me! Peering in the mirror, to my horror I noticed a whole streak of grey.

"Nearly finished the hall," called my husband, Tom. He was wearing filthy overalls and carrying a dripping paintbrush.

"Mind the carpet!" I protested.

"You've already got grey paint on your blouse and a couple of streaks in your hair," Tom replied.

"What have I said that's so funny?"

I explained my mistake as I plucked at the paint in my hair.

"Hey, don't pull any more hair out! Going grey is one thing, becoming bald is another!" he joked, then asked in a more serious tone, "Still worried about your mum?"

"Yes. I want to do the right thing for her and for us, but I'm not sure what it is yet."

Tom moved closer to embrace me.

"Keep that brush away from me," I laughed, wriggling free. "You're impossible!"

In the afternoon, I drove to my mother's nursing home. A member of staff greeted me in the hall. "Your mother's not too good today, but she's so looking forward to your visit. Perhaps a few words with the doctor first?"

Later, I sat beside my mother, smoothing her hair. Her skin felt as soft as fine leather gloves and her hair was an intricate mesh of delicate silver.

"You'll be coming tomorrow, won't you?" she asked.

"Every day, Mum, and we'll all be here at the weekend. Tom is collecting William from school now. Try to rest."

She sighed and her frail form relaxed. I continued stroking her head and as she drifted into sleep my thoughts went back to my childhood. What fun we had, always busy dressing up, cooking little grey pastry shapes, painting fantastic glittery pictures... and my mother was always at the centre with her endless vitality and enthusiasm.

"Love you forever, Mum," I murmured, kissing her perfumed cheek.

I took the long way home and stopped to gaze over the endless sea. The sun sparkled on the waves and the water faded from blue to a dull grey as it merged into the horizon.



“A matter of months,” the doctor had warned. “It’s her last winter.”

The setting sun glowed crimson, then sank lower until extinguished. I knew what we could do.

After tea and a long talk, Tom and I found we were in complete agreement. I dialled the number of the nursing home.

“Hello? Mrs. Winthrop’s daughter here. My mother will be coming to live with us...”

Suddenly the door flew open and William rushed in, dressed as Superman. He stared at Tom’s hair, liberally sprinkled with grey paint.

“Daddy! You look like a pensioner!” he shouted. “But don’t worry – when you and Mummy are really old and tired, I’ll look after you.”

As William ran off, he called out,

“Love you forever!”