

## A moment that changed my life

The first I heard of it was a Friday evening, I recall. I was feeling cheeky and chirpy as usual. My brother and I were fighting – again. He hit me and I started crying and went to find mum. I couldn't find her so I went to dad. He cheered me up. As I remember it he seemed distracted. I went to bed and lay thinking, wondering where mum was.

The next day mum came downstairs looking terrible. She did some washing and then went upstairs to bed without breakfast. She stayed there all day; I just watched television with my brother. The next day wasn't much different, mum just stayed in bed without any food at all. Now I was getting worried, it felt hard and all jumbled up inside. Dad said it was just a tummy bug but I could sense it was something more than that, worse. If I had to put it into a person it would be a horrid, spiky person with evil thoughts.

That evening it got even worse and dad told me the truth about mum. She had this horrible, strange illness called anorexia, something that means that you're scared of eating.

I was very sad but I didn't understand at all, **“Why didn't she just eat?”** As I was in bed that night I felt very confused and upset, partly because I was dreading the day ahead of me with a long day of school and also with worry for mum. I didn't want to leave home tomorrow I wanted to stay home to look after mum and her anorexia. I thought about the future and whether it would be like this years later. I didn't get to sleep till very late that night. I repeated my story tape over and over until I got to sleep.

I had a bad dream that night: I dreamt about a little cottage, we lived there, Dad, Nathaniel and I .Mum wasn't there. We got into more arguments and we only ate tinned food. There was no fresh water and our lives were slowly collapsing all around us. I woke up with a start. I suddenly remembered that mum was still here and there was no need to worry. All the same, I went to mum and dad's bedroom and woke them up. The next day they came downstairs, all tired and grumpy. At one point the doorbell rang and outside stood a doctor. Dad asked him to come downstairs and he asked to see mummy.

She talked to the doctors for a while and then she was taken to hospital.

I was truly devastated but we went to see her later. She wasn't much different from when we left her. She was tired and very ill but still grateful to see us. When I went into school the next day daddy told my teacher I would be a bit less lively and happy because of what had happened the night before. I was only 4 when this happened and as I write this I am thinking of the impact it has had on my life. It is a lot worse now but mum is getting better.