

Going and Gone By Ebony Ballan Grade 6, Newtown Primary School

You were so close to me. But then you were in hospital, surrounded by scary white pipes and machines. Sometimes you would come home but you would be in a dusty navy blue wheelchair that had a grimy metal frame. We would play games but all you could do was sit there in agony. At least you're at peace now.

One day we had a phone call. My Dad answered. It was your Dad. We were told to get in the car. Driving to Melbourne thoughts kept passing through my mind. What had happened? Well, arriving at your house I found out. There was a traumatic silence that hung in the air as I stepped from the dull concrete to the soft carpet inside. You were lying on your back, dressed in your best pink dress and frilly white socks. I didn't know what happening was so I just stood there, looking at you. Wondering why you wouldn't talk or play games with me. But then Mum called me away.

On the day of your funeral I just stood in the polished wooden pew. My face was blank and I was standing in a gloomy silence. At the age of 4 I didn't really understand death. But you were brave. You were only 6 when you faced the ending of your life. You were my favourite cousin. I will love you and remember you forever.

A true story about the death of my cousin, Lorissa Jade Ballan, who faced brain tumours at a very young age.