

HARDEST PART OF LOVE

by

Nicholas Vince

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[nicholas.vince@me.com](mailto:nicholas.vince@me.com)

07968 120 625

13 Macclesfield Road  
LONDON  
SE25 4RY

EXT. RAILWAY STATION - DAY

SOFIA and her father, PAPPA, are hurrying towards the platforms. SOFIA is leaving for university, so she has a large rucksack on her back and they both strain to carry luggage in both hands.

PAPPA

Sofia! Slow down please.

SOFIA

But Pappa, we're late.

PAPPA stops. He is short of breath. He puts the bag in his left hand down first, almost dropping it, then the other. He starts rubbing his upper left arm, whilst he looks down at the bags.

PAPPA

Ay, Sofia. Are you sure you need all these things for studying?

SOFIA

I know Pappa, I made us late because I couldn't decide what to bring, but I didn't want to have to ask you and Mamma to send things. That would be expensive.

PAPPA takes SOFIA's face in both hands and kisses her on the forehead.

PAPPA

You're a good girl and you mustn't worry so much. You're young, you should-

He suddenly steps back, a look of confusion then panic in his face. He grasps his chest, staggers and then falls.

SOFIA

Pappa? Pappa! Help! Someone help!

INT. SOFIA'S HOME - DAY

There are 3 Valentine's cards on display, mixed in with condolence cards. The Valentine's cards are from Sofia's parents to each other, with one from her to them. MIRABELLE, Sofia's aunt, examines these 3 cards as she speaks. Sofia's mother, ANNA, sits in a wheelchair.

MIRABELLE

Sofia, you have to understand, you must stay and look after your Mother. What other choice have we? I'll help you all I can, but I

have Georgio and the kids and my work. Your mother understands, don't you Anna? It's impossible for me.

SOFIA

Yes, Aunt Mirabelle. It's O.K.

ANNA

No, Pappa and I discussed this, Sofia. You're to go to study. You mustn't worry about me.

MIRABELLE

That's typical Anna. When are you going admit how much care you really need? ... Ahh! I won't do it Anna, I won't have this argument with you again.

MIRABELLE grabs her coat and pauses. She looks at her sister.

MIRABELLE

Anna. Please. Be sensible.

MIRABELLE, leans to place her left cheek against Anna's right cheek. As she does so, she kisses the air, not her sister's cheek. She straightens and turns and looks at SOFIA.

MIRABELLE

I mean it Sofia, I will help.

ANNA

Sofia, don't listen to her ... your father's will ... left you everything.

She slumps to her side, in the chair. Her hand opens and an empty pill bottle falls to the floor. MIRABELLE picks it up and looks at it, moans quietly. She looks at SOFIA.

MIRABELLE

Sofia, we need help.

SOFIA

Mamma? No, no, no, NO!

SOFIA pushes MIRABELLE to one side and kneels in front of her mother. She takes one of Anna's hands and cups it round her own cheek, making her mother stroke her face. She frequently kisses the palm of ANNA's hand.

SOFIA

Mamma ... Please ... No.

MIRABELLE quietly sits and watches. She doesn't speak.