

Ring-A-Ring.

Written by Leah Purcell

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Things to know first: -

This piece can be done like a TV show or theatre. The TV version depends on you or someone in your family and their ability to edit together what you film.

You can use various rooms in your house to tell this story or in one big area like a theatre.

You can make your props. For example, you could draw your family portraits instead of using your real family photos. Make the telephone out of cardboard and some string. You could make your costumes or hire them, or you may have something at home in a cupboard that you could use to represent the different scenarios needed to tell the story visually.

You will have to do some research but make it fun. You will have to do some rehearsing, especially for the dancing!!

You could consider adding some music and sound effects by finding them online or perhaps you and your family are musical.

Just have fun creating with your family, and coming up with some exciting ways to bring this story to life, use your imagination!

CHARACTERS

SHE - Is the little sister of the family, aged between 7 and 11 years old.

BROTHER - He is a gamer. Brother is older than SHE. (You might want to get your dad to play BROTHER. And your brother to play FATHER.)

SISTER - She likes to face-time on her mobile. SISTER is older than SHE. (You might want to get your mum to play SISTER. And your sister to play MOTHER.)

MOTHER - is your mum (or your sister could be.)

FATHER - is your dad (or your brother could be.)

NANNA(VO) - is your Nanna or grandmother.

(VO) means Voice Over - means you don't see NANNA, you only hear her.

TV version - You can play with NANNA'S voice. So, when she talks on the telephone, you can make her voice sound like she is on the phone. You can also show NANNA by doing a CUT TO: which means you can see NANNA in another room that would represent her home. For example, NANNA could be sitting in a chair near a window on the phone talking to SHE.

When we are inside SHE'S imagination, you can hear NANNA as if she is in the same room where the action is happening.

Theatre version - If your NANNA lives with you, you can set up a chair in one area of the stage space as if she is in another house taking the telephone call. You can also have her appear in the dance scene with BROTHER, and they can play other people at the dance.

TV or THEATRE - In the war scene, you might want to add SISTER as another nurse attending to FATHER. He can play an injured soldier too.

Follow the BIG PRINT it will help to give ideas for some of the action and what room to use for the TV version or to create for the theatre version.

For theatre, sometimes you only need one thing that will represent, for example, a chair by a window to represent NANNA'S home.

Have fun filling out the story by using your family and imagination.

Good luck or Break-a-leg as we say in the entertainment business!

RING-A-RING.

KITCHEN/DINING ROOM or space that represents this in the theatre version.

SHE leans on the kitchen counter. SHE looks to her family members.

The FATHER is on his mobile on the porch, walking back and forth, having an animated discussion about work.

The MOTHER is at the dining room table on her computer. She is frantically typing to meet a deadline.

The older SISTER is on her mobile face-timing a group of friends.

The older BROTHER is on his Xbox/PlayStation deep in a game.

The little girl has no one. SHE then looks to the wall and/or mantel, and there are family photos, individuals and grouped shots. There is one, a family portrait with her grandparents in it.

Her gaze falls to a photo of her and her grandmother, who SHE calls NANNA. From the picture, you get the sense that SHE and NANNA are very close.

SHE is ignored as she tries to engage with each family member.

SHE leaves the kitchen and goes into the home office.

HOME OFFICE / SHARE ROOM or a space that represents this in the theatre version.

It's cluttered, full of many old and new things.

SHE begins to search for something. SHE lifts things buried in the clutter: books, clothes, paperwork, a big pencil case and other crazy items. SHE is amazed at some of the objects she has unearthed.

SHE starts to pull on a cord. She follows its path, under and over a few things lying askew and finally, it leads to an old landline telephone.

SHE pulls it out and wonders how to use it. SHE turns it around and around. SHE finally picks up the handset and puts it to her ear and hears the dial tone. A big smile grows on her face.

SHE looks through a drawer and finds an old tattered address book. SHE goes to 'N' in the index and opens it to see her Nanna's home phone number. SHE punches in the numbers on the telephone but without lifting the handset, then realises that you have to raise the receiver. She does, putting the receiver to her ear and dials the number again.

SHE listens to the dial tone and then she hears a click and the lovely, kind voice of her NANNA.

Nanna (VO): Hello?

She: Nanna it's me _____ (say your name or make up one).

Nanna(VO): So lovely to hear your voice. I have missed you so much! And to hear you on the landline? Where are your mum and dad?

She: They're busy working. (Name of big brother) _____, he's playing games on the tv and (Name of big sister) _____, she's on her mobile face-timing her friends. And there is no one to talk to me.

Nanna(VO): Well, I'm here, darling. What shall we talk about?

She: Not sure. Can you tell me a story?

Nanna(VO): Yes, I can.

She: Shall I get a book?

Nanna(VO): Darling I won't be able to see it, and if I get a book you won't be able to see it. You're going to have to use your imagination. And your imagination can take you anywhere you wish.

She: I have an idea. Can we pick a picture on your wall and you can tell me about it? And I can imagine it, and maybe it will take me there.

Nanna(VO): What a great idea! Now let me think. Yes, I've got it. Let's start with my Mother, your great grandmother Mabel, in 1941. Remember the picture of her in her uniform?

She: Yes. It's next to the stairs on the left. She was a nurse in the ... second world war?

Nanna(VO): Correct. What a great memory you have. Now, close your eyes and use your imagination.

Great Grandmother Mabel is working in a base camp hospital, that's what they were called being so close to the action. She saw a lot of injured men that came straight from the battlefields. There was one particular man that came in, and he reminded her of her brother.

LOUNGE ROOM or a space that represents this in the theatre version.

Her big BROTHER is an injured soldier now, and SHE is the nurse, and she is attending his wounds, wrapping a bandage around his arm or leg.

Nanna(VO): Great Grandmother Mabel would ask them simple things like, where are you from? About family, stuff like that.

She: Where are you from?

Brother: _____ . (Where-ever you come from)

She: I'm from there too. Do you have family?

Brother: Yep. Mum and Dad, and two sisters both younger (or how your family structure is). I miss them all so much.

She: I miss my family too.

Brother: When I get home from this blasted war, I want to spend as much time with them as I can; even if it is just to share a meal and talk.

She: That sounds nice. I'm sure they would love that. Especially your little sister.

HOME OFFICE / SPARE ROOM or the space that represents this in the theatre version.

Nanna(VO): Your great grandmother would be called away to attend to another patient. She said she never saw any of them again.

She: Why?

Nanna(VO): Well, they moved to other care units, or some would go back to fight. Or, some were sent home and some, unfortunately, would pass away.

She: That's very sad.

Nanna(VO): Yes, it is darling. Now, what is our next picture? Oh, yes, this is a fun one. Remember the one of my Mother and me at a dance? Close your eyes.

SHE closes her eyes, a Big Brass band is heard playing, a Waltz.

Nanna(VO): It was a 'coming of age' dance. Always held at the local hall, with its lovely polished wood floors. Fathers were to escort their daughters, and the girls were to have their first dance with their dad. My father was not well this night, and I was desperate to go. So...

Porch / Veranda or the space that represents this in the theatre version.

SHE is dancing with MOTHER. They are doing the Waltz.

Nanna(VO): My mother took me! Your great grandmother Mabel loved to dance. Gosh we had a fun-filled night! Doing the Jitter Bug and the Pride of Erin!

SHE and MOTHER continue to dance doing a medley of the dances NANNA has mentioned. They are joined by FATHER and older SISTER. [Maybe NANNA and BROTHER can join in. For fun, NANNA could dress as a father and BROTHER as a girl or vice versa]

Nanna(VO): I saw my older cousin with her dad. And I could see from her eyes how special it was to have this first dance with her dad, but... your great grandmother Mabel was doing a great job. A fine dancer she was. And, I was happy it was just me and her. It was nice to not have to share my mum with my other siblings. This night dancing with my mum was just as special, for me anyway.

They are having a great time all dancing. [Maybe, make up your own dance as a group to finish this scene?]

HOME OFFICE or SPARE ROOM or the space that represents this in the theatre version.

SHE twirls in the chair in the office.

She: This is so much fun, Nanna. I can see us all there dancing!

At the doorway, peering in is her family.

She: (giggling) I think I might get dizzy!

Mother: (Quietly to each other) I wondered where she got to.

Brother: (Quietly to each other) Who do you think she's talking to?

Sister: (Quietly to each other) It would be Nanna, of course.

Brother: (Quietly to each other) On the landline?

Sister: (Quietly to each other) Well, yeah, der!

Brother: (Quietly to each other) I've never rung anyone on a landline telephone.

Sister: (Quietly to each other) Are you serious?

Mother: (Quietly to each other) Sssshhhhh, she might hear us. Don't want to spoil the moment for her.

Father: (Quietly to each other) Wonder what they've been talking about?

SHE stops spinning and opens her eyes.

She: Can you talk about the family picnic photo now, please Nanna?

Nanna(VO): I was hoping you'd pick that one. Yes, we can. Now let me see, where to begin.

She: You could start with the games you played like: Ring-a-ring-a-rosy, Hide and Seek and Hop-scotch.

Brother: (Quietly to each other) I have an idea.

They quietly leave.

She: What other games did you play Nanna?

Nanna(VO): Rounders. Red Rover, What's the Time Mr Wolf-

Sister: _____? (Her name being called) Can you come here please?

She: Nanna, I have to go. But can I call you again tomorrow and you can tell me about your wedding photo and the baby photo of my dad (or mum, depending on the relationship to Nanna)?

Nanna(VO): You certainly can call me! That would be so lovely. I so enjoy our little talks. You have a good memory to remember the photos on my wall.

She: I remember because I like listening to your stories Nanna.

Nanna: Bless you.

She: I miss coming to your place Nanna.

Nanna(VO): This'll all be over soon and things can go back to normal and you can come and see me. How about a sleep over?

She: That sounds good, Nanna.

Nanna(VO): You can bring your favourite bedtime stories for me to read to you.

She: No thanks, I want to do this again. Use my imagination to take us anywhere! Maybe, we can go to another land, like to, ...Fairy Kingdom!

Nanna(VO): Sounds like fun! I look forward to our phone call tomorrow. I love you.

She: I love you, Nanna.

SHE leaves the room. SHE walks through the house looking for everybody, but no one is there. Then, SHE looks to the backyard and there they are!

BACK YARD or the space that represents this in the theatre version.

They've set up a picnic and are playing Ring-a-ring-a-rosy! They beckon her to come and join in. And SHE does! Joining

hands with her family they skip in a circle singing.

ALL: Ring-a-ring-a-rosey, a pocket full of posies. A
 tissue, a tissue we all fall down!

Laughing and giggling, having family fun time together.

The End.