

This is the original version of the short story, before I made any changes:

A child goes for milk

By [Author]

“Ruth, I know you're upset, but let's try not to throw things”, said Nurse Andy. This is a typical Saturday morning for the patients and the nurses at Jefferson Nursing Home. It's especially normal for Ruth, who is 80 years old and had just recently slipped into stage four dementia. Ruth's doctor has recently switched her medication and she has become very aggressive, so much so that when they give her water to swallow her pills, she instantly throws the glass across the room. Ruth has always had difficulty swallowing pills with water, she has always needed a drink that was thicker with more taste. The problem is she can no longer communicate very well, and her frustration comes out in aggressive action. Today, Ruth is having her granddaughter, Alice, and 5 year old great grandson, Tommy, visit. Alice is worried about Tommy seeing his great grandmother in her new condition, she wants the memory of her to be of the sweet old lady she used to be. When Alice arrives, the nurses inform her of the rough morning they are having. This did not ease Alice at all and made her question visiting. When they entered, it was evident Ruth did not recognize her relatives. The next hour was full of one sided conversations from Alice, and Tommy observing the room as he normally does. Nurse Andy came back into the room to try to administer Ruth's pills again. Alice saw this as a perfect opportunity to pull out Tommy's snack, which consisted of a carton of milk and animal crackers. Ruth began her regular routine of going into a fit before chucking the glass of water across the room. Just as she was about to shatter the glass to pieces, Tommy had walked across the room and put his hand on Ruth's. He quietly said, “when I'm upset, my mom gives me milk to help calm me down”, and he handed her the carton from his lunch. Ruth smiled at Tommy and touched the side of his face, as she always had done in the years past. She took the pills and swallowed them down with the milk. Everyone stared in shock. Tommy may not have understood the exact reason why Ruth needed the milk, but his own experience with milk ended up benefiting her own needs. Ruth's dementia didn't improve much after that, but her days were filled with less aggression and lot less broken glass.

Here is my edited version. I didn't change the plot. My edits are focused around formatting and adding clarity to the story:

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By [Author]**

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Ruth's doctor recently switched her medication and she has become very aggressive. When they give her water to swallow her pills, she now instantly throws the glass across the room. Ruth has always had difficulty swallowing pills with water—she's always needed a drink that was thicker with more taste. The problem is she can no longer communicate very well, and her frustration comes out in aggressive action.

Today, Ruth is having her granddaughter, Alice, and 5 year old great grandson, Tommy, visit. Alice is worried about Tommy seeing his great grandmother in her new condition. Alice wants the memory of Ruth to be of the sweet old lady she used to be.

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Just as she was about to shatter the glass to pieces, Tommy walked over and put his hand on Ruth's.

“When I'm upset,” he said, “my mom gives me milk to help calm me down.”

He handed her the carton from his lunch.

Ruth smiled at Tommy and touched the side of his face, as she always had done in the years past. She took the pills and swallowed them with the milk.

Everyone stared in shock. Tommy may not have understood the exact reason why Ruth needed the milk, but his own experience with milk ended up helping her.

Ruth's dementia didn't improve much after that, but her days were filled with less aggression and a lot less broken glass.