



OUR STORY

My name is AILSA MATILDA WHATLEY, I AM NOW 3.5 YEARS OLD AND MY STORY STARTS WAY BEFORE I WAS BORN. IN 2013 MUMMY AND DADDY DECIDED THAT THEY WANTED TO START A FAMILY AND AFTER A YEAR OF NOTHING HAPPENING, MUMMY DECIDED THAT SHE SHOULD GET CHECKED OUT. IT WAS ANOTHER LONG YEAR OF MUMMY BEING TESTED BEFORE ANY TREATMENT COULD BE GIVEN, BUT FINALLY MUMMY HAD TRIED ALL THE MEDICATIONS AVAILABLE AND WAS TOLD IN IN APRIL 2018 THAT SHE COULD HAVE IVF. MUMMY AND DADDY WENT TO THE CLINIC TO HAVE ME IMPLANTED. THE NEXT 2 WEEKS WERE LONG AS THEY HAD TO WAIT TO SEE IF I WAS GOING TO STICK AROUND. MUMMY AND DADDY COULDN'T BELIEVE THEIR EYES WHEN A DOUBLE LINE APPEARED ON THE PREGNANCY TEST FROM THE CLINIC. THEY KNEW THEY LOVED ME ALREADY.



THERE WERE PLENTY OF SCARES ALONG THE WAY, BUT MUMMY AND DADDY WERE RELEASED BACK TO THE NHS WHEN MUMMY WAS 8 WEEKS PREGNANT, ALTHOUGH SADLY IT WASN'T PLAIN SAILING. AT 12 WEEKS MUMMY WAS DIAGNOSED WITH GESTATIONAL DIABETES AND HAD TO SELF-INJECT INSULIN, STRUGGLE WITH SUGAR INTAKE AND WITH BALANCING ENOUGH ENERGY AND NUTRITION FOR ME WITH LIMITING HER CARBOHYDRATE INTAKE. AFTER SEVERAL MONTHS OF THIS SHE THOUGHT SHE HAD HAD ENOUGH OF THE NEEDLES WITH THE IVF, BUT NO SUCH LUCK

BY THE 22 WEEK SCAN THE SONOGRAPHER PICKED UP WHAT SHE THOUGHT WAS A CYST BROUGHT ON BY THE IVF. SHE WAS SENT TO A CONSULTANT AND SCANNED AGAIN AT 23 WEEKS, BY WHICH TIME THE CYST HAD GROWN EXPONENTIALLY TO 12X12X10CM. BY THIS TIME MUMMY WAS BACK IN HOSPITAL AS SHE HAD A BLADDER AND BOWEL BLOCKAGE, AT WHICH POINT SHE WAS ADVISED THAT THEY COULD OPERATE ON THE CYST WHILST PREGNANT, BUT THEY RISKED LOSING ME. BOTH MUMMY AND DADDY DECLINED THIS AND OPTED TO SEE IF IT WOULD GET BETTER OF ITS OWN ACCORD. AT THIS POINT MUMMY WAS UNDER A SPECIALIST WHO DIDN'T LIKE THE LOOK OF THE CYST WHICH WAS GROWING AT SUCH A FAST RATE. ONCE HER BOWELS AND BLADDER WERE WORKING AGAIN, MUMMY WAS ALLOWED HOME AND I CONTINUED TO GROW, ALONGSIDE A CYST AND WITH A DIABETIC MUMMY AND STRESSED-OUT DADDY TO CONTEND WITH. MUMMY WAS HAVING LOTS OF SYMPTOMS LIKE BLOATING, RAPID SIZE CHANGES AND TIREDNESS BUT PUT IT DOWN TO THE PREGNANCY. SHE WAS REGULARLY BEING SCANNED TO CHECK ON THE GROWTH. AT THIS POINT SHE WAS ADVISED TO HAVE AN MRI SCAN (ALTHOUGH IT COULD HAVE BEEN HARMFUL TO ME) TO SEE WHAT WAS GOING ON. THE CONSULTANT AND MUMMY AND DADDY DECIDED TO HOLD FIRE FOR A COUPLE MORE WEEKS.



BY 32 WEEKS MUMMY STARTED TO HAVE LABOUR PAINS, SO SHE PHONED DADDY AT WORK, AND THEY WENT TO THE HOSPITAL ON 29TH NOVEMBER 2018; LITTLE DID THEY KNOW THEY WOULD FINALLY GET TO LEAVE AS A FAMILY OF THREE. MUMMY WAS ADVISED THAT AS THE CYST WAS NOW SO LARGE (30 CM BY 30CM BY 30CM ROUGHLY) THAT SHE WOULD NEED TO HAVE AN EMERGENCY C SECTION ON 6TH DECEMBER 2018 (MY BIRTHDAY). THEY WOULD PERFORM THE C SECTION THEN PUT MUMMY UNDER A GENERAL ANAESTHETIC AND REMOVE THE CYST, WHILST LOOKING FOR SIGNS OF OTHER COMPLICATIONS.

MUMMY AND DADDY WENT THROUGH TO THEATRE, AND I WAS DELIVERED AT 34 WEEKS, WEIGHING A HEFTY 5 LB 6OZ. MUMMY SAYS IT WAS A MAGICAL EXPERIENCE, ALTHOUGH SHE WAS THEN PUT UNDER AND HAD MAJOR SURGERY. I WAS WHISKED OFF TO SCBU AS I WAS HAVING DIFFICULTY BREATHING AND DADDY WAS LEFT WITH ME. I MET ALL MY GRANDPARENTS BUT HADN'T YET HAD MUCH TO DO WITH MY MUMMY. DADDY TOLD ME THAT MUMMY WAS IN HIGH DEPENDENCY UNIT, AND IT WOULD BE A WHILE BEFORE I MET HER. DADDY SPENT ALL HIS TIME RUSHING BETWEEN SCBU AND HDU AND BRINGING ME THE MUCH-NEEDED BREAST MILK, BUT I COULD SENSE THAT DADDY WAS STRESSED AND SCARED FOR ME AND MUMMY.... AND HE EVEN HAD TO GO TO A&E WITH CHEST PAINS DURING ALL THIS.

THE CONSULTANT CAME TO SEE MUMMY AND CONFIRMED THE DEVASTATING NEWS THAT IT WAS CANCER, BUT A RARE FORM WHICH HE COULDN'T DEAL WITH. HE THEREFORE REFERRED HER TO LEICESTER, WHO IN TURN SAID THAT IT WAS TOO RARE FOR THEM TO DEAL AND SO SENT HER TO (THE AMAZING) PROFESSOR SECKL IN CHARING CROSS HOSPITAL. HE FINALLY MANAGED TO DIAGNOSE HER WITH THREE FORMS OF EXTREMELY RARE OVARIAN CANCERS WHICH HAD BEGUN TO SPREAD.

WHEN MUMMY WAS ADMITTED FOR INTENSIVE CHEMOTHERAPY ON 7TH JANUARY 2019, I WAS JUST 4 WEEKS OLD. MUMMY'S CHEMOTHERAPY THEN STARTED, AND SHE HAD TO STAY IN LONDON EVERY OTHER WEEK UNTIL APRIL 24TH 2019, WITH DADDY AND SOMETIMES ME GOING UP AND DOWN TO SEE HER AND SUPPORT HER. SHE HAS MISSED A HUGE CHUNK OF ME GROWING UP, BUT THANKFULLY SHE NOW HAS THE ALL-CLEAR AND IS NOW IN REMISSION.

So... THIS IS OUR WAY OF SAYING THANK YOU TO THE PEOPLE WHO HELPED SAVE MY LIFE AND THE LIFE OF MY MUMMY, AS WITHOUT THEM WE WOULDN'T BE HERE AT ALL.

THROUGH AILSA'S AIM WE BEGAN BY RAISING FUNDS TO HELP PEOPLE FROM ALL ASPECTS OF OUR JOURNEY AND TO HELP THE STAFF WHO WORK TIRELESSLY TO MAKE SURE THAT THE THREE OF US CAN ENJOY THE TIME WE HAVE TOGETHER. SINCE THEN, WE HAVE DEVELOPED INTO A BUSY LITTLE CHARITY, WORKING WITH HOSPITALS, CLINICS, SCHOOLS, COMMUNITY CENTRES, CARE ORGANISATIONS AND OTHER CHARITIES ACROSS SEVERAL COUNTIES AND REGIONS, TO PROVIDE ESSENTIAL CARE PACKS FOR THOSE PEOPLE AFFECTED BY UNEXPECTED CANCER, NEONATAL SPECIAL CARE AND OTHER ASSOCIATED DIAGNOSES. WE HAVE DEVELOPED A RANGE OF QUALITY CARE PACKS AND SEASONAL OR SPECIAL GIFTS FOR BENEFICIARIES WITH DIFFERENT NEEDS AND WE HAVE A WONDERFUL TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS, TRUSTEES AND ASSOCIATES WORKING UNPAID EVERY DAY TO SOURCE, PREPARE AND DELIVER OUR PACKS AND ORGANISE, ATTEND AND PROMOTE COMMUNITY FUNDRAISING EVENTS!

LOVE, AILSA MATILDA WHATLEY XXX

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