**THE FAMILY DISPUTE** (Adult Dispute - Advanced)

Angela and Thomas are the adult children of Rose. Rose is living with mid-stage dementia. Thomas lives 10 minutes drive away from Rose and has been looking after her almost every day for the past two years whilst also working as medical receptionist at the local medical centre. Angela lives in Sydney where she works full time as a financial analyst. She visits Rose and Thomas once to twice a year.

Lately Rose has been rapidly getting more forgetful and has wandered from the house twice this month and gotten lost. Thomas is very worried about Rose and wants her to move to a full-time care facility for her own safety and well-being. Angela adamantly feels that Rose should stay at home as she is convinced that that is what Rose would want.

Thomas and Angela have been arguing over the phone about this for weeks and have now agreed to come to mediation.

**Thomas’ information**

You have been looking after your mother for the last two years. You are struggling with minding your job as well as caring for Rose. It is not that you resent the work but it has been very hard. Especially emotionally. You have always been very close to your mother and lately she often does not recognise you. She has been getting increasingly confused and anxious and you are not sure how to handle it.

You feel like you are spending all your time either working or looking after Rose. You feel exhausted, desperate and genuinely worried for Rose. The last time she got lost, it was a cold evening and you worry as to what may have happened if the neighbour had not noticed and found her. The situation has moved into a territory that you no longer feel equipped or comfortable to handle. You need help. You have found an excellent care facility with the loveliest staff and an absolutely stunning garden that you are convinced your mother would adore.

You have mentioned this to your sister but you feel that she is not listening to you. She is your older sister and always thinks she knows best. But she is not here, she is not the one looking after Rose. She has no idea how much work is involved or how poorly Rose has actually gotten. You don’t think that getting home help would not be enough, Rose needs full time care. Angela would see that if she could only be bothered to come and actually spend some time with Rose. You also wish that Angela would at least come and have a look at the care facility.

**Angela’s information**

You strongly feel that your mother should not be put in any kind of care facility. You think Rose should keep her independence for as long as possible. You once visited your aunt in a care facility and you thought it was a dreadful place. You can’t stomach the idea of Rose going to such a place.

The last few times you spoke to Rose over the phone, you think she sounded the same as usual. You don’t understand what the big problem is. Thomas is only working part time so what is the issue? If he needs help, can’t he just arrange for someone to come help him out? If it is money that is needed, you are more than happy to pay for it.

He really should listen to you, you know Rose, you know what she would want.

You feel guilty about not being there more and helping Thomas and Rose but your job is very demanding and you are far away. However, your mother is very important to you and though you don’t talk that much to Thomas, you still love him dearly and want the two of you to find a solution that will work for everyone.