Athena’s Transcript

Audio Description: In a beautiful loungeroom, a golden vase and three golden balls sit in the middle of a dining table. Some distance ahead, doors open to a courtyard where two older women sit at an outdoor table.

Athena has short white hair and glasses and is seated in her power wheelchair. Across from her is her sister who has dark curly hair and holds a drink. They chat and laugh. The walls in the background are painted terracotta and have greenery in front.

Athena: I’m Athena. I’ve got two sons, grown up, grandkids and I’ve always enjoyed just being myself and doing what I want.

Audio Description: Photos of children and grandchildren crowd tables and sideboards inside, along with one of Athena in her chair flanked by her two adult sons, both with beards.

Outside, Athena’s van pulls into the garage of her two storey home. It is large and has many parts, all painted terracotta. In the garden there is a statue of a small boy carrying an urn. Athena drives her chair up to the front door. Inside she wheels through the hallway with its marble floor, past a grand staircase with a wrought iron balustrade and a hall table with silver candlesticks and a potted orchid.

Athena: This is my home and I enjoy living here. I’m lucky enough to live in such a terrific place. Mum and my sister live next door, so it’s quite a unique little community we have here. And it’s like living in a Greek little town or something you know like, everyone’s around, everyone’s close by. I love it when they just drop by.

Audio Description: Outside Athena’s mum greets her sister who walks from her house at the back, via a side passage. Athena’s Mum uses her walker to move around. Her Mum waves and calls out when she comes into Athena’s home. Athena, her Mum and her sister, who holds a newspaper, sit and chat at the kitchen table.

Athena: Well I grew up in a very traditional Greek family. The unity of family is so important and how we do stick together. There’s that comfort in knowing that family’s all around and it’s just fun.

Audio Description: In the driveway outside, Athena’s sister and her sister’s husband stand and chat with Athena. The house has balconies with curved wrought iron balustrades and raised garden beds bordered by terracotta walls in the back courtyard. There are pottery images on the wall of women in traditional Greek dress carrying urns.

Athena: The house was built with my ideas in mind and I wanted to live in a Tuscan-style house. It’s me, it’s my personality that’s in this and yeah I’ve accumulated some paintings, I’ve got a few of my own. And I just love collecting other nice pieces of art.

I go to art classes. I go once a week. It’s like another little catchup with friends when I get there. I quite surprised myself that, the fact that I can actually paint with a paintbrush in my mouth.

Audio Description: In the hallway, painted a soft pink, there are many paintings on the wall, including one that features a white vase and a mass of red and orange ranunculus. In Athena’s studio room, a painting of a gourd with stems and leaves has paper leaves pasted on. It sits on an easel. In the loungeroom there are many brightly patterned decorative plates on stands on the sideboard, plus a classical stature of a woman, nude except for a slip around the top of her legs.

Athena sits next to a younger woman, her support worker, in a different art studio. Athena is wearing a pinafore and has a table easel in front. Their teacher sits in front of a different painting. She points something out to Athena. Another student with curly blond hair also looks at Athena’s painting. Athena dips her paintbrush in mint green paint then paints more of the gourd, operating the brush by her mouth. She moves the brush very precisely.

At Spritz café, the owner, who has a tea towel over one shoulder and is carrying menus, leans down to greet Athena and wave her inside. Ingredients are poured into a large wine glass, which has a large slice of lemon, and the owner brings over three glasses to Athena and her support worker and a friend, now seated inside.

Athena: I love going out and enjoying life. It could be even a pub with friends, it’s going to the movies, concerts, restaurants, just being with friends and I enjoy being with people and just having a good laugh and having a good time. Basically that sums me up you know, I just like to do fun things.

Audio Description: Outside the Luna cinema in Leederville the sign says: Baz Luhrmann’s Elvis Screening Now. Athena wheels up to the entrance with her support worker. She goes up to the ticket desk and then into the cinema where an usher talks to her as she passes through the red velvet curtains.

Back at the café, Athena and her friends have now been joined by her Dad and they all have a laugh as they chat.

Athena: The house is nice and quiet. I have a nice little room where my computer is set up and I’ve got everything there. I like to challenge my brain and do a good jigsaw and it’s just nice to relax in a quiet time.

Audio Description: Athena wheels from her courtyard into the house, then into her office and in front of her computer which has a colourful screen. On screen she fits pieces into the virtual jigsaw.

Athena: I appreciate the good things in life and it’s sort of part of my DNA, inherited from my mum. I like the best of whatever I’m going to do and have. Aaah, all the good things in life, yeah great coffee, great food, I love flavours on my food, good company. I appreciate quality. I appreciate beautiful things and like scenery. Flowers inspire me. I enjoy the colour around here.

Audio Description: Athena and her sister chat in the kitchen near a coffee machine which is slowly dripping coffee into a cup. Her Mum brings homemade biscuits over to the table.

Out near some shops Athena and her support worker move along the pavement in front of a huge wall mural with a giant and small houses. They sit down in a café with two cups of coffee in takeaway cups.

At the base of the stairs in Athena’s home, a mirrored tile vase sits atop a small table full of glorious yellow fronds and leaves. In the courtyard there are lots of different plants including potted cacti and succulents on the back table and leafy greens in the garden beds.

Athena: My home makes me feel safe and yeah, life is beautiful, and life is good, very good!

Audio Description: Athena waits for lift doors to open on the ground floor of her house and then wheels out at the top to a balcony with a view over the suburbs and river. She sits and savours the view.

Text on screen:

The Lives We Lead Homelife. This story is part of The Lives We Lead Homelife and has been funded by the Department of Communities, Disability Services

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