

*When I remember my mum or I talk about her, when someone tells me stories about her or shows me a photo, her mark inside of me shines strongly and does my heart good.*

*Her name in my heart protects me, hugs me, and gives me strength to carry on.*



## Painting Stones

Sammy loves searching for rocks. One day he came back home from a friend's house with five beautiful stones. What Sammy liked the most was that on one side they were smooth and very soft to the touch. When he put them on the table, his father told him that since they had a smooth side, they were ideal for painting. Thus, they spent the afternoon together painting the stones. His father used acrylic paints and Sammy permanent markers.

While they were painting, his dad told Sammy that each of those stones had a story of their own. Now they were round and smooth, but at some stage they might have been on a river bed or at the bottom of the sea. The water that passed over them wore them, shaped them and smoothed them, softening their hardness and transforming them. They had gone through a lot, but after painting them, they were going to look beautiful.

What his dad said reminded Sammy of his own story, and that's why he painted the stones with his mum in mind. Yes, you guessed it! He made a heart with her name on one of the stones. On others, he drew pictures and words. After the pebbles dried in the sun, her father varnished them to make them last longer outdoors.

In the next few months, Sammy left the painted stones in places that reminded him of his mum. He tries to remember to take one of them with him when he knows that he will be going to one of those special places. He sometimes leaves them behind a tree, under a bush, half hidden in the corner of a house, or outside a restaurant. There are places to which he takes a stone every year and a little stone hill begins!

From time to time he forgets where he leaves them; other times he remembers and looks for them. When he finds them, it feels as if he has found a treasure. Sometimes, he feels as if they have been waiting for him. Other times, he cannot find them but, if he wants, he leaves another one in its place.

Sammy feels that leaving these painted stones is a way of celebrating his mum's life and of expressing his gratitude towards her. They are small signs that that his mother continues to be remembered in all those places.

*What do you think of what Sammy does? Would you like to do something similar? Where would you bring your stones to?*

*Ask an adult to help you look for smooth stones and leave your little signs where that special person left theirs.*

