

Mia and Asher and the Search for a Good Idea:
(The Extended Edition)

There's a big house at the end of the driveway .
It's green & it's noisy; there's goings on within.

One day, one of the goings on was Andre receiving an email from Kirsty about doing an item for John & Karen's farewell. Andre rushed downstairs;
"I don't mean to panic anyone," he cried as he entered the kitchen. "But we need to do an item for John & Karen's farewell!"
"We'd better have a meeting," said Fiona. "So everyone can decide what the item should be."
"Right," said Malcolm. "I'll set up a doodle." He got out his iPhone & started typing.
"I'm happy to email everyone and write an agenda," said Maria.
"That's great," said Andre. "I'm going to head upstairs now & put together a document with a few ideas and a general process outline for going forward."
They watched Andre leave the room.
"It's a good thing this came up," said Malcolm. "I was wondering what I was going to do on Tuesday..."

(On Tuesday)

"Mum, can I stay for the meeting?" Mia asked Hannah
"You can darling, but I just don't think it's going to be very interesting for you," said Hannah. "Why don't you go and play with Asher & Iris & Jackson?"
"Muum! I'm not a little kid! I know how to sit still & listen," said Mia. "Anyway, I might have some ideas too!"
"Alright then, but if you get bored, you'll have to leave. Okay darling?"
"Yes Mum," Mia beamed and plonked herself down on a cushion.

The meeting didn't start for quite a while, there was lots of talking and laughter and hot drinks and quick nips out to use the toilet and more hot drinks and then someone went to find Andy and then finally Andre called everyone together.
"Alright, if I could just call everyone together," he said. "I think we should get started. Does anyone have any ideas?"
There was silence.
"Anyone at all..?" said Andre hopefully.
Maria piped up, "We should totally do a song!"
"I think that's a great idea Maria," said Debs
"Yeah, but INK's already doing a song," said Hannah gloomily.
"Young people these days!" Bex muttered.
Just then the door opened and Peter rushed in, "Sorry guys, I got the time wrong!"
"There's an app for that," said Malcolm
"If we could just get everyone back on track for a minute," said Bridget. "The point is..."
"Hang on-" Maria interrupted, "Bridget, what are you doing here??"
"Oh, I heard you were having a meeting & I thought I'd come along in the Spirit of unity," she said.
"Sweet," said Malcolm.
"Alright everyone," said Andre. "Let's carry on shall we?"
"Sorry to interrupt Andre, but I noticed some errors in the document you prepared for this meeting," said Fiona. "For example, there's an incorrect placement of a comma on page 26..."

Mia closed her eyes & groaned; the grown ups weren't getting ANYWHERE. She crept out of the room & went to find Asher.

Mia found Asher dangling precariously from the banister on the stairs.

"Asher get down from there, we have a serious problem!" she called up to him.

"Okay!" he yelled, and dropped from the banister onto the stair beside her.

"What's the problem?" he asked.

"The grown ups are supposed to be having a meeting to decide what we're going to do for our item for Oma & Papa's farewell, but they're just talking about punctuation and the right way to make a cup of coffee!" she said, exasperated.

"Oh," said Asher. **"What's punch-tu-ashon?"**

"Like, commas and things," said Mia.

"I don't think we can use commas as our item," said Asher

"No," said Mia. "We need to think of something that Oma & Papa REALLY LOVE for our item..."

They both sat down on the stairs to think.

"I've got it!" cried Asher. **"We should dress up!"**

"What?" asked Mia.

"We should dress up!" said Asher, loudly. Mia grimaced. **"Oma & Papa LOVE dressing up , so we should do a dress up item!"**

"Wow Asher," said Mia, impressed. "That's a really good idea. Oma & Papa do lots of dressing up, I bet they'll LOVE a dress up item! Let's go tell the grown ups!"

The first grown up they found was Andre. He was in his room trying on a blonde wig.

"Andre, what are you doing?" asked Asher.

"Oh hi guys," said Andre. "I was just checking to see whether this thing still fits in case Andrea wants to go to John & Karen's farewell."

"Cool!" said Asher.

"Actually, that's perfect Andre," said Mia. "Cos we've had this really great idea for the Greenhaus Community item: dressing up!"

"Wow!" said Andre. "That's a fantastic idea! Andrea will love it!"

"And so will Oma & Papa," said Asher.

"Great," said Andre. "Have you told the others?"

"Not yet," said Mia. "But we're going to now."

"Okay, I'll see you later," Andre waved to them as they left. "I just have to make sure Andrea's shoes still fit..."

The others were not so keen.

"There is no way I am dressing up in a full body leotard & going up on stage in front of the whole of Lifepoint. Who do you think I am - John Crawshaw?!" said Malcolm.

"Oh, but Andre thought it was a really good idea," said Asher. **"And Oma & Papa would really like it..."**

"What's YOUR idea then Malcolm?" asked Mia.

"I'm glad you asked Mia," said Malcolm, whipping out his iPhone. "I was cruising the app store this morning & I found this really cool app that we could use to do like a "technology showcase" item. I know John has a smartphone, so he's obviously a big fan of technology."

"Umm... but your iPhone is really small Malcolm," said Mia. "How would everyone see our item if it was on there?"

"Yeah," laughed Asher. **"We'd have to all look at it one at a time. It would take AGES!"**

"Oh, well," said Malcolm shrugging. "If everyone had an iPhone we could all sync together & people could view it on their own phone. It would be sweet."

"Mum says we're not allowed our own iPhone's till we can pay for them ourselves," said Mia sadly.

"Oh," said Malcolm. "Well, I guess someone else will just have to come up with another idea."

"**Yup**," said Asher.

Fiona & Maria were in the upstairs lounge, watching Downton Abbey.

Mia & Asher told them about their idea, and Malcolm's idea.

"Those are both really interesting ideas," said Fiona.

"Yes," agreed Maria. "Good job guys!"

"I have been thinking about this for a while," continued Fiona. "You know, John & Karen have really supported the Greenhaus Community over the years by lifting them up to the Lord. I think we should do a prayer as our item."

"**Oma & Papa do REALLY like praying**," agreed Asher.

"You're right Fiona," said Maria. "A prayer would be lovely."

"But isn't this supposed to be a celebration?" asked Mia. "Shouldn't we do something more fun?"

"Maybe Maria has an idea?" Fiona suggested

"Well, Karen's famous for making 'fla'," said Maria. "So I thought we should make 'fla' as our item!"

"Maria, I don't think food counts as an item..." said Mia

"Oh, why not?" asked Maria

"Umm... I'm not really sure," Mia replied awkwardly.

"Why don't we all just do a hip-hop dance like Nathan?" asked Brett, coming into the room.

"Andy's probably practicing one in his room right now..."

"**No he's not**," said Asher. "**I had a look. Does anyone know where he is?**" Everyone shook their heads.

"Let's go and see if John & Bex have any good ideas," said Mia.

Mia & Asher stomped up the stairs to Bex & John's place. Bex appeared in the back hallway with Grace.

"Hi Bex," said Mia. "We wanted to come and ask you if you had any good ideas of things Oma & Papa might like, you know, Karen & John, for the Greenhaus item for their farewell."

"**We need an idea 'cos all the grown ups talked about was commas**," added Asher.

"Right, well I do actually have an idea," said Bex. "I was thinking about how John really enjoys reading lots of books, especially theology books so my idea is that we should read excerpts from top theologians aloud to the musical genius of Sufjan Stevens."

"Bex, that sounds really weird," said Mia

"**And who's Surfy-yan??**" Asher added

"I think maybe we need another idea... is John home?" Mia asked

"Sure, he's upstairs," said Bex. "And it wasn't THAT weird..."

John was in the dining room watching the Volvo Ocean Race with Jackson.

"Hi John! Hi Jackson!" said Mia.

"Mia! Asher!" Jackson cried.

"Hi guys, what are you two up to today?" asked John.

"**We need an idea for an item for Oma & Papa's farewell at church**," said Asher. "**But Bex's one was too weird.**"

"Ok," said John. "Well, I know John & Karen really like singing nice songs... what if we sang them a song that the Greenhaus sings all the time, like "Brother, Sister"?"

"How does it go?" asked Mia

"Ummm..." John thought for a moment, then he began;

"Brother sister, let me love you, let me walk the way with you--"

"No! No! No!" Jackson shouted. "Not those words! Not 'love you', 'serve you'!"

"Oh," said John. "I guess I've got the words wrong... hmmm..."

"That's okay John," said Asher.

"Hey!" said Mia. "I wonder whether Jackson has any ideas?" She crouched down to talk to him;

"Jackson, What would you like to do for John & Karen at the party?" she asked.

"Umm... I do RUNNING!" Jackson shouted, and set off down the hallway.

"That wasn't very helpful," said Asher, giggling.

Upstairs Debs & Josh were in their lounge listening to music on groovespark, there was a delicious smell coming from the kitchen.

"Hello darlings!" said Debs.

"What are you cooking?" asked Asher, eyeing the pot on the stove.

"Oh, we scored a whole lot of free produce at the market," said Josh. "So we're making a massive batch of soup; it'll do us for lunches for a month I reckon!"

"What are you two trouble makers up to?" asked Debs.

"We're looking for an idea for Oma & Papa's farewell," said Mia. "Do you have any?"

"Oh cool, I was just thinking about this actually," said Josh enthusiastically. "John is a big fan of Dietrich Bonhoeffer & the way he lived his life. What would be really cool, would be if we could somehow recreate his life on stage!"

"Who's Dye-trick Bunhopper??" asked Mia

"Bunhopper," Asher giggled.

"I don't think that's going to work Josh," said Debs. "It's not really relevant for the kids."

"Do you have an idea Debs?"asked Asher.

"Yes, well what I was thinking was that Karen is really good at listening to people," began Debs "So I think we should just go out there and, like, listen for our item."

"That sounds interesting," said Mia

"It would be very quiet..." Asher pointed out. **"Maybe we could do listening, and Josh & I could play the drums at the same time?!"**

"I'm not sure if that's quite the effect Debs was going for," said Josh

"Oh," said Asher. **"Maybe we need another idea..."**

On their way to Chris & Emma's house, they spotted Andre in the Greenhaus kitchen, wearing a dress & heels.

"I'm just practicing for our item" he said.

"But Andre, we're not doing a dress up item anymore!" said Asher

"I think we forgot to tell him," whispered Mia

"Well that's awkward!" said Andre. "I'll just pop upstairs then and, ah, put these away..."

"Bye Andre!" Asher called after him.

At Chris & Emma's house, they found Chris digging in the back garden.

"Hey guys," he said. "What are you up to today?"

"We're looking for an idea for Oma & Papa's farewell," said Asher.

"Oh! Right," said Chris. "Ah.. do you want one from me?"

"Yes please," said Mia.

"Okay," said Chris, and he sat down to think for a bit. "Well, I know Karen really loves her garden; she puts lots of work into it, and gives really good gardening advice... Maybe we should do, like, a gardening sort of thing for our item?"

"Could we have some chickens?" asked Asher. **"Oma really likes chickens!"**

"Oma does really like gardening," said Mia. "But the thing is that the farewell is going to be inside... it might be a bit tricky to do gardening inside, especially as Oma also really likes to keep the church carpet clean..."

"True," said Chris. "Maybe you'd better ask Emma, she's inside with Sara."

"Thanks Chris!" said Mia as they went inside.

"Hi Emma!" Asher called as they came into the lounge.

"Hi Asher! Hi Mia!" Emma said. "Have you come for a visit?"

"No," said Mia. "We're looking for an idea for Oma & Papa's farewell."

"That sounds like fun," said Emma. "How're you getting on?"

"Umm...We're still looking," said Mia.

"Yeah, Grown ups have really weird ideas!" said Asher

"Oh, that's no good," said Emma. "Perhaps I can help. Let me see..."

"I know," she said after a moment. "John is actually a really good dancer. It would be great if we could put together an interpretive dance item to perform at the farewell."

"Not leotards again!" said Malcolm, entering the room. "I think I made it pretty clear that I am not going to be wearing one!"

"Malcolm, what are you doing here?" asked Asher.

"I came to drop off these parenting books based on personality typing for Chris & Emma," he replied.

"Isn't Sara a bit young for enneagram??" Mia asked.

"It's never too early to start personality typing!" exclaimed Malcolm. "Grace is already showing strong J tendencies..."

Mia sighed, "Come on Asher, let's go home."

Asher & Mia trudged back up the hill to their house.

"We talked to ALL those grown ups & we STILL don't have a good idea for Oma & Papa's party!" exclaimed Mia.

"Maybe we should ask Mum & dad," suggested Asher. **"They sometimes have good ideas."**

They found their Mum in the lounge standing staring at the baskets of clean washing.

"Hi kids," she said. "I was just thinking I should probably find you."

"We've been looking for an idea," said Asher

"That sounds like a good activity," Hannah said. "Did you find any?"

"No!" said Mia, sighing & sitting down on the floor to play with Evie

"Do you have any good ideas Mum?" asked Asher.

"Sometimes," said Hannah. "Let me think for a bit..."

A few minutes later she said,

"I know! I've got it! Karen is like this super child / baby loving person; she really can't get enough of them! We could show how much we love her by just giving her all the kids to look after for the evening."

"What, ALL of them?" asked Asher

"Yeah, sure!" said Hannah

"Even Grace & Sara?!!" Mia asked

"Honestly Mia, you know Oma! she'll LOVE IT!" cried Hannah

"Who'll love what?!" asked Nic, popping his head through the door

"Mum says Oma will love looking after all the Greenhaus kids for the farewell, and that that should be our item," explained Mia.

"Oh," said Nic. "Sweet. That sounds great! Though I did have quite an awesome idea myself..."

"What was YOUR idea Dad?" asked Asher

"MY idea," said Nic expansively. "Was that Papa really loves getting to the heart of deep theological issues; we should totally stage a theological debate for him. It'll be AWESOME!"

"It would have to be a timed debate" put in Hannah

"Isn't debating just like people talking the whole time?" said Mia

"Well yes..." said Nic. "But this whole story is basically just people talking the whole time, & it's entertaining, isn't it?!"

"What??!" asked Mia, confused.

"Nevermind darling," said Hannah.

"Have you asked Iris?"

"Asked me what?" asked Iris

"Asked you if you have an idea for Oma & Papa's party," said Asher

"Oh," said Iris. "Can I come to the party?"

"Yes Iris," Hannah replied.

"Hmmm...." said Iris, thinking. "I know! Maybe... maybe Lady Lollipop could do a meeting? And we could have cake?!"

"A meeting doesn't sound very fun Iris," said Mia

"I like cake," said Asher

"Hug!" said Evie

"What was that Evie?" asked Mia

"HUG!" said Evie

"You think we should all give Oma & Papa a hug for our item??" Mia asked.

Evie smiled & dribbled... a lot.

"That's a REALLY good idea!" said Asher. "Isn't it a bit early for Evie to be talking?" Nic asked Hannah. Hannah shrugged,

"Well, she does think she's one of the big kids..."

"I'm glad that's sorted out," said Andre. "Now we just need to figure out what gift to get John & Karen. I was thinking of a filing cabinet... or maybe some socks? Karen really likes socks..."