Karlene’s Transcript

Audio Description: Karlene, a middle aged woman, sits at a table in front of her kitchen. She has her hair in a bun and is wearing a bright orange and cream dress patterned with leaves. She concentrates as she neatly folds a pile of tea towels.

**Karlene:** When I was about 19, it was my dream to get my own place.

Karlene speaks directly to camera. She is sitting in front of a bookcase with a range of photos and sketches of her alone or with friends. In each of them she has her mouth open in a laugh or huge grin. In one she is sitting with her head tilted back and her hands on either side of her face. The photo frame is decorated with butterflies and flowers and has the words: Just Believe.

In a different scene, Karlene stands in the laundry and puts dirty clothes into the washing machine.

**Karlene:** I wanted privacy and go out if I want to. I had to fight hard to get my own home. It took a long time.

Audio Description: Karlene drives a power wheelchair along the footpath past shops and houses. Her handbag is slung in front of her. She passes a sign that says Right at Home In home Care & Assistance. She stops at an ATB and inserts her bankcard.

**Karlene:** When I first moved in,it felt great!

Back at home, Karlene uses a walker as she makes her way through the lounge room which has bookcases either side filled with more photos. One of the photos is of Karlene laughing with her arms around a tall man with dark hair, Michael.

**Karlene:** I’m in a relationship. It’s been 10 years.Michael stays over every week. He’s very cheeky (laughter), like me. He makes me laugh.

Audio Description: Out in the front yard Michael stands to the side of the ramp as Karlene enters from the house. They stop to share a kiss.

In the loungeroom they watch tv side by side, sharing a crocheted rug and some banter and holding hands. Karlene takes the remote and pretends to give it to Michael, but she moves it away when he reaches for it. They both laugh.

**Karlene:** We have a barbeque on Fridays. Sometimes I make damper.

Its good fun!

Audio Description: In the back courtyard, Michael barbeques onions while Karlie and her young support worker, Rosie, sit at the table and joke around.

At the kitchen table Karlene and Rosie make damper, their hands completely covered in flour. Karlene kneads the dough and after they muck around, laughing as they clap their hands and flour showers onto the table.

**Karlene:** I have a good neighbour and she comes over a lot. I am a social person.

Audio Description: A middle aged woman in jeans and jumper, with short blond streaked hair, walks through the front door and leans on the kitchen counter. They chat and laugh.

**Karlene:** I have good people around me.

Audio Description: In the kitchen Rosie hands Karlene a baking tray with the damper dough on it. Karlene puts it close to the oven shelves and Rosie slides it in.

**Karlene:** I run the house!I like my house neat and tidy.

Audio Description: Karlene washes up the dishes in a sink filled with suds. She rinses a cup and puts it to drain in the dish rack.

In the back garden Karlene wears a jacket as she sits in her chair watering the garden. She aims the hose at an aluminium garden bed filled with large lettuce.

**Karlene:** I water my garden every day. I go out there and relax. It’s a special place for me. After, Karlene sits quietly in a garden chair, having a cigarette.

Audio Description: An older woman with short dark hair, another support worker, carries a basket of washing into the courtyard. She hangs sheets out on a clothesline.

**Karlene:** I choose who works with me. I decide what time I go to bed, what I eat and what I want to do, when I have a smoke. I’m in charge.

Audio Description: Karlene and her support worker sit at the kitchen table as they discuss shopping and the support worker writes down what Karlene wants.

In the courtyard Karlene lights up a cigarette and has a smoke.

**Karlene:** My afternoons are just for me. I like being free to do what I like on my own. I go to shops, see my friends, and sometimes I get my hair done. I’m in charge of how I look.

Audio Description: Back on the streets Karlene travels by wheelchair to the shops. She crosses the street, and later emerges from a supermarket with a bag of shopping.

In a different street she wheels into a shop with the words *Salon Xpress* written above the door. Inside she chats to the one of the hairdressers, and then two of them work painting her hair with a white paste. They wash it in a basin. And then show her the new colour – a deep black – in the mirror. The hairdresser pulls it into a French plait and sprays it. She holds up a mirror from behind so Karlene can see the back reflected. Karlene nods in approval.

Back at home, Karlene sits in a comfy chair as she addresses the camera:

**Karlene:** Making my own decisions makes my life better. It always feels good to come home. I love it!

Text on screen:

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