Losing Grandma



She only had a 4th grade education;
But Grandma possessed more wisdom than anyone
I have ever known.

She didn't go to medical school;
But her hands on a fevered brow felt better
Than any doctor's hands ever could.

She never went to seminary;
But her life was a living testament
On how to get it right.

She always said she didn't know much
But to me what she knew mattered most.

When I was young I loved to be with her -
Especially on Sundays.
When it was cold Grandma wore a coat
With a fur collar.
I liked to rest my head
On her shoulder.
She and her fur collar were soft and comforting.
She made me feel:
Safe
Warm
Loved.

I thought that Grandma was a saint.

When she was old and frail
She fooled every doctor who cared for her.

"She won't live through the night," they'd say;
But she did - for nearly a year.
"Independence" is what she called her resolve.

"I never knew it would be this hard," she'd say;
But Grandma never let on how hard it really was.
"She doesn't understand how close to death she is."
But she did - she planned her own funeral.
"Keeps the details simple for everyone else."

People say:
"Well, she had a good, long life."
She did.
Maybe that's why we miss her so much.

When she married, her "Pa" had just died
So her wedding dress was black.

She had a simple wish at the end:
To wear that 80-year old dress to her grave.
She did.

"Ma, why do you want to wear
that old dress?"
"Ma, why don't you let me buy you
a new one?"

Her black dress had a collar
Of ivory lace.
The collar had not lasted 80 years -
It was yellowed and frayed.
Grandma didn't mind:
"The collar can be replaced, can't it?"
It was.

Because to Grandma, the only dress worth wearing
at the end,
Was the one she wore
at the beginning
Of her adult life

She would have liked how she looked in it.

Why did she insist on wearing her wedding dress?
I know she believed she was going to meet grandpa;
She hadn't seen him in 22 years.
Maybe she wanted to meet him
In death
Like she had met him
In life:
Wearing the same dress she wore
At the start of their life together
On earth
At the start of their life together
In heaven.

It would have been like her to think so.

Credits:

From a book of poetry, entitled *Life is a Non-Stop Event*, by Carole Bos.

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