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### **Vividly Faded**

My aunt Viola arrived at the front door with a knock “hey it’s me” my aunt said . As we allowed her in through the front door all six pairs of little feet ran on a hardwood floor to greet her. Little arms were reaching as we embraced her with warm hugs filled with excitement. Following with that were lots of kisses and giggles then we allowed her to finally settle in. My mother and father on the other hand were getting ready to make their exit. As my mom is walking down the stairs in our house with her jacket on she says “See you guys later, you all better behave yourselves”. Seemingly that statement was for my four brothers. When the door locked with a click I rushed to the nearest window to see the car pull out the driveway. Off to rehearsal my parents went.

Since my aunt Viola was the baby sitter she had to prepare a meal for us. Most nights my siblings and I ate spaghetti and meatballs. I liked lots of tomato sauce. From as far I can remember my five siblings and myself were sitting at the table waiting to be served our yummy food. Our parents had a few rules when we were about to eat our food. With that being was to say our grace. We literally said the word “grace” and followed with an amen. Something little children would do when they are hungry. Another rule we had was to finish eating all of our food before getting our drinks. Of course my siblings and I made it a race to see who would finish first

and who was the last sitting at the table. Sometimes I would be the last one because I simply liked enjoying every bite or because I had a mouth full of vegetables.

“Whew” my aunt said, taking quick little steps as she wiggled to the stairs because she had to use the restroom. I have to use the bathroom please make sure you finish your food, she gently said to us. As everyone was finishing their food I went into my grandmother's room which also was my room. Our room was located on the first floor and everyone else slept upstairs.

My grandma was lying in her bed until she felt uneasy gripping her chest. She then slowly raised from under her cover swinging her feet around until it gently landed on the floor. It seemed as if she lost her sense of direction staggering to the laundry bags she had against the wall. She gasped for air as I asked Grandma are you ok?!? She then bent over on the laundry bags as I ran to the stairs screaming for my Aunt to hurry downstairs. When a seven year old is panicking sometimes it can be calm outwardly and I was just that. On the inside I was all over the place because I did not know what was going on. All I knew was that my grandma was hurting and I wanted her to get better.

My Aunt ran downstairs as fast as she could to the room to see what was going on with grandma Annette. Picking up the phone she began to call 9-1-1. She told them what was going on to the best of her ability. She then called my parents telling them what the matter was. My parents then rushed home to also see what was going on. My aunt and mother told all of us to go upstairs. We went into our parents room and I heard the sirens so loud that I ran to the three windows in my parents room. It was dark in my parents' room. The hands of my siblings were printed with sweat on the window with a mist of steam circling around their fingers. I told them to stay upstairs while I went downstairs to take a peek at what was going on. There was a crowd of people downstairs. I felt like everyone went into slow motion when I was navigating through

the crowd of all of these adults. Bumping into legs to get through. I finally made it to the room to see my best friend lying there in the bed with some of her children surrounding her as she gasped to say her last goodbyes. Starting from her feet the grayness of death flowed up to her head and covering her whole body. My Aunt then laid her head on her chest crying. My mother screams filled the room while salty warm tears covered her face. My dad held his head inhaling and exhaling very heavy.

The medical people in the ambulance then came inside the room once again with a body bag taking my grandmother's body. The zip up of the body bag felt like eternity. While crying I ran back upstairs to my siblings and told them Grandma was gone. We held each other crying. Then through the window we placed our hands there again. Watching the police cars, firefighters trucks and ambulances outside. The glare of the lights were so vivid. As we continued to watch the outsides flashing lights from the inside the ambulance slowly drove away.

On March 12th my grandmother Annette Parham vividly faded away like a flower that lost its life. Withered until there was no more life existing. Grandparents are so important to the family dynamic. To still know that there will never be another Annette Parham in this world is still yet surreal, I remained wrapped around the memories.