

Learning to Fly

By Jane Doe

"In three words I can sum up everything I've learned about life: it goes on."

- Robert Frost

A hot July morning. Filling the air; silence. The remorseful voice of my mom speaking into the phone. A nightmare turned reality. The Strongest woman I've ever met... gone. Never to return.

The smell of gram's cooking filled her tiny apartment. A five-year-old me sitting in her lap. Soothing me. Her steady heart beat bringing me comfort. Looking back now, life's hardships were predominantly showing on her withered face. The face of a fighter, the face of a woman who was abused by her uncle, but never told a soul. A woman who had to raised five children on her own during a time it was frowned upon. Coming home after long days having to clean up and single handily take care of the rambunctious children.

While she dreamed of becoming a teacher, she chose her high school sweetheart instead. Putting her dreams aside to live in the typical suburban living. When my dad was two, my grandfather left my gram to raise five children. Promising herself she would not fail her children. Driving a taxi around the bustling Long Island streets. Long hours little pay, discriminated for being a female as well as being a single mother. Although she did not let this stop her. She held her head high, showing her children everything would be okay. Fighter. That one word describes my grandmother. Someone who'd never let the negative aspect of life take over the good.

When I was ten gram's illness had taken a turn for the worst. Her heart become weaker, along with being diagnosed with dementia. The next two years were spent in and out of the hospital and nursing home. Each day becoming weaker but that smile never left her, always keeping her best foot forward. Fighting. Coming to the end she was fighting the battle of all battles. Life or death. Whether to give up like the people around her, or continue fighting. She did just that; fighting for her future. She wanted to see me graduate high school and see me to college.

Even in her last few days she kept her head up high. She fought until she finally had to let go. Although she passed away before that then, she's thought me to fight for my dream, and pursue them not letting people dictate what I do. My grandmother has always been my hero. She will stay my hero. She thought me that although we have struggles in life we must persevere and not give up. That even on the toughest day it will get better.

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