

FLASHBACK

Par Trân Liên Khuong

Merci à Nguyễn Thanh Duc (JJR 63, USA), contributeur régulier au GM, pour ce texte issu de son site personnel

He reminisced back to the days when she was still alive. She was always vivacious and full of energy for a woman in her late seventies. She definitely brightened up his life before she passed away. Every morning he woke up with an air of anticipation, wondering what she had planned for the day.

Sometimes they would bake together, write letters to their grand-children, or sometimes they just sat and relaxed, talking about nothing in particular while sipping iced tea. His most favorite thing to do with her was to go on hikes. Coming back from their hikes up the hill, he would always pick a bouquet of daisies for her. They always had a good time together, and they were always jovial.

One morning, he awoke to find that she had died in her sleep. Even though he knew that it wasn't her choice to leave him, he still felt bitter towards her. He prepared a small funeral for her, and on top of her grave he gently placed a bouquet of daisies. The daisies were fresher than he ever remembered them to be, and the dirt that he had just turned over was smooth and rich.

"Why did you have to die?" he whispered furiously, tears streaming down his face as he angrily kicked the nearest thing to him, which happened to be a dead tree trunk. He angrily wiped his tears away and went inside the house, slamming the door so hard that it almost fell off.

It was strange; without her, he started feeling pessimistic about things. How come he never noticed that the walls were cracked, the paint was chipped, and that the chairs were broken? Slowly, he began to draw inward, no longer taking delight in anything, and before he knew it, winter came. Oh, it was a dreary winter! The rain pounding onto the wooden roof of the house and the wind howling only added to his gloominess more.

Then one day, the sun rose bright and early, and birds were chirping and flowers were blooming. He put on his coat and shuffled outside. The beautiful scene reminded him of her so much, but it was too painful to think of her. The sun's rays shone down blazingly, the grass was fresh and green with just a hint of the early morning dew on it, and the trees looked majestic as they towered over the welcoming spring scene.

Suddenly, he whispered, "Give me a sign, wherever you are, to let me know that you are safe." He waited for a couple of moments, but nothing happened. Disappointed and angry at his foolishness for thinking that she was able to hear him, he hobbled back inside. A while later, he went back outside, and what should he find but a patch of daisies blooming quite beautifully. He inhaled the fresh scent of the flowers and felt a little bit better about her dying.

"Thank you," he whispered, tears forming at his eyes. He picked the daisies carefully and laid them on her grave, crying, happy and sorrowful at the same time. He stood up and looked down at her grave, breathing in the scent of the flowers, and, after a moment, smiled for the first time since she had died.

Lien-KhuongTran, California (1999)