

Grandmother's Legacy

By Deniese Krall



Chad stood there, huffing and puffing from the steep jaunt he made up hill. The old farm house certainly looked different. He glanced at the once impeccable garden and knew that Grandmother had not gardened in years. Weeds conquered the garden bed with a boldness and fruitless strength. Chad observed how the front porch needed repair and paint, however the old wooden swing looked unaffected by time. He ran his fingers over the grain of the wood and smiled at the memories that flooded his mind. He sat in this very swing as a child and listened to his grandmother as she hummed old gospel tunes, as a teenager he listened to his grandmother lecture to him about the benefits of living a life centered in Christ, and as a young man he confided to his grandmother that the Lord had called him to leave home for missions work. He apprehensively opened the front door; the squeaky sound of the rusted hinge woke his grandmother who was sleeping peacefully on the sofa. "Chad is that you?" His grandmother asked in a weak voice. "I missed you, grandmother." Chad got down on one knee and gently stroked the gray tendrils of his grandmother's hair. He delicately kissed her cheek and wiped the tears that streamlined down his face. "Oh my dear grandson you are a sight for sore eyes. I think you grew another couple of inches from the last time I saw you. Take that cap off and let me have a look at you!" Grace peered adoringly at her grandson's thick, blonde hair. He was absolutely perfect in her eyes. Chad silently kneeled at Grace's bedside. The old hand of the grandfather clock ticked in unison to each erratic breath his grandmother took. Chad took temporary refuge in hearing its soft chimes and watching the movement of Grace's fragile chest

cavity that indicated she was still alive. “Chad, I have a confession to make. I used to sneak in your room when you were young and watch this same face surrender to the night sleep.” Grace placed her slender fingers ever so lovingly on the bridge of her grandson’s nose; she tentatively traced his cheek bones and sighed. “Chad, I don’t know where the time has gone. You are only here for a short time on this earth. Oh my dear Chad, old age has a way of sneaking up on you. One minute you are looking at an image you recognize in the mirror and the next minute you are not. Your hair changes texture and of course color. Your skin no longer is smooth to touch. It loses its radiance and glow. Your eyes and ears become weaker, and you find yourself struggling to do just the simple things...”

Chad stared at his reflection in the mirror. He smoothed out his thinning gray hair with the palm of his hand. He pushed his bifocals up the bridge of his nose and sighed. “Grandpa, why do you keep looking at yourself in the mirror? Don’t you want to go swing with me?” Chad peered into his young grandson’s eyes; the familiar creaking sound of the old wooden swing brought a smile to his face. “Benny, old age has a way of sneaking up on you. One minute you are looking at an image you recognize in the mirror and the next you are not.” Chad couldn’t help notice that he was winded after just a few minutes of swinging and he closed his eyes and remembered back to the time when his grandmother would hum old gospel songs to him. For a brief moment his age spots and wrinkles had disappeared, and his eyes no longer needed his spectacles to see. Benny anxiously tugged his grandpa’s arm. “Grandpa, wake up. I want you to hum to me.” Life had a way of repeating itself, Chad thought to himself. He cleared his throat, placed his arm upon his grandson’s small shoulders, and hummed the familiar tunes of his grandmother’s legacy.