

The Lost Moments

By Sasha Gabriel

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I remember...

When I was four years old, you took me to see my first movie, *Mary Poppins* with Julie Andrews and Dick Van Dyke. As soon as we entered the lobby the smell of hot popcorn filled my head and I asked you for some.

We sat in a side area, me on your lap, happily munching my popcorn. It was a matinee so most of the chairs were empty. From the moment the lights dimmed to the last song sung, I was lost in the experience.

You made that day special for me.

I remember...

When I was six, you took me for my first ice skating lesson. Even though I fell a lot, I liked it and that day started a passion that lasted over a decade.

After the lesson, you bought me my first skating outfit. I was so excited! Through the years, you bought me forty-five more beautiful outfits.

You made that day special for me.

I remember...

When, after working a long day and making a nice dinner, you sat with me for hours to help me with homework all through school. You took time with me and I always did well... even with fractions... thanks to your explanations.

You made those days special for me.

I remember...

When I was sixteen and went on my first date. I sat next to Adam at school and liked him so much. We first had dinner at Denny's, then saw a movie. I felt so grown up. You stayed up until I got home at 10:30 pm and only asked if I wanted some hot cocoa.

You made that day special for me.

I remember...

When my fiancé broke up with me because he fell in love with someone he just met at a convention. I thought my heart would never recover from the shock and anger I felt toward him and the world.

You talked to me for many days and nights, telling me that some things, as painful as they are, can be a catalyst for something better to happen. We just can't see it while it's happening. I told you that I'd have to see that *something better* for myself, to believe it.

Through the worst time in my life, you made me understand that I was special.

I remember...

When, two years later, you and Dad paid for my wedding to the love of my life, on a gorgeous yacht in Orange County. You made sure that everything would be perfect for us. And it was.

You made that day special for us.

I remember...

When, at my baby shower, you and Dad bought all the furniture for the nursery and even gave us a trip to Hawaii that we (very gratefully) took while you watched the baby.

You made those days special for us.

I remember...

How you listened to me, encouraged me, taught me, helped me, laughed and cried with me, and always supported me.

And through all that... how I never once said *Thank you*.

It wasn't that I didn't feel it... I just never said it.

And now, holding your hand in the hospital, looking down at your pale face as your life slowly ebbs away, I realize the moments in our lives that are lost... lost forever if we don't make the moments count.

I lean down and whisper in your ear, "Mama... Thank you for everything you've done for me. I love you so much and wish you could, somehow, hear me."

And the slight pressure in my hand told me she did.

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