

Dirty Marbles and Caydidids

The most drastic change in my life happened when my grandfather died of lung cancer. The months I spent with him until the end are now precious memories that I'll never forget. We always play tricks on each other, and he just wanted me to have an interesting school year when I moved.

It all started when they diagnosed him with stage three lung cancer. My mom left to take care of him in the middle of my sixth-grade year. I was passed around from family members until the end of the last semester. Mom came back, and told me to pack all my cloths, because we were moving to another city.

After spending two hours on the interstate, we went back to his house. I'll never forget his laugh and his bear slippers when he opened the door for us. I had to start seventh-grade in a new school. It got around fast that there was a new student because there were only four hundred kids. The teachers were friendly and showed me around so I wouldn't get lost. A group of guys let me sit at their table one day, and soon we all were best friends. Class was never boring with my new friends making a scene!

Around Thanksgiving, Papaw started getting worse. Mom gave him his medicine and we would play a game that we created called, "Dirty Marbles. He always would swear that I was cheating, when in truth he was just a sore loser. He used to make fun of me because I would beg my mom to buy me a quesadilla from Taco Bell on a daily basis. One night, he looked at her when she told me no and said, "Now go get that girl a caydidid, she's hungry!" I never let him live down that one. One night, Mom woke me up around two in the morning, crying. All she told me was to say goodbye. Papaw was laying in his bed making a gurgling noise. I said I loved him and would miss him. I know he heard me because he smiled for an instant. My Uncle and my grandmother came soon, and I stayed with him until he died. We had two tons of people I didn't know. We moved back here and tried to get me enrolled in school. Mom wanted me to go to one school, but they wouldn't take me. She told the other school beforehand that I was going there, so they wouldn't take me either. I spent over a month out of school, trying to fix everything.

My grandfather's death has had a tremendous effect on my family and I, and it still is today. There is a shoebox in my closet I keep one of his button-up shirts in, because it still smells like he did. Sometimes when I pass a Taco Bell, I can see him laughing and telling Mom to go buy me a "caydidid."