

# Mama Wins

M.W. Story 16

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*Runner, momma, wife,  
lover of all things  
coffee and ice cream,  
and most importantly,  
a child of the King.*

## December 14th

I'll never forget the day my Grandma died. Somewhere in the back of my 9-year old brain, I had known it was coming. But like all things tragic, I was pushing the inevitable away, hoping and praying for a miracle. As I stepped off the school bus that day, I saw that my dad's car was in the driveway, unusual for a normal day. One look told me what happened, and I ran up to my room- punching my pillow as I fought the tears that wouldn't seem to stop. December 14<sup>th</sup> was just another day to me- until it became the day my Grandma died.

My Grandma Workman was a gentle woman who always had a big smile on her face. I remember special "hot chocolate parties". We used her gorgeous china hot chocolate set (who knew they even made such a thing?!) and I felt so grown up using fancy cups. We played with my dolls and polished silver and cooked in the kitchen. As I got older we would just talk. Looking back, I can't even recall the topics of our discussions, but I know I looked forward to my after-school visits. I know we had something special- what 9-year-old voluntarily goes to a nursing home several times a week after school?! I loved spending time with her; I always left with a big hug and the knowledge in my heart that she loved me. Losing her was the hardest thing I had to do in my 9 years of life.

Many years have passed since her death, and over the years, I've had many graveside chats with my Grandma. Celebrating birthdays (we were both born in March), asking her to welcome my aunt to Heaven when she died, expressing my anticipation of going to high school, and chats about

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starting college, challenges with my health, moving to Ohio or telling her about a boy I met in grad school (who is now my husband!). We've shared laughs, tears, celebrations, and struggles over the years; If you recorded every conversation I've had at her grave, I'm certain you would know a lot about my life.

Each year on December 14<sup>th</sup>, if I was in town, I would stop by my Grandma's grave and fill her in on my life. Lately, I can't really remember what her voice sounded like, but I know she's looking down, listening. Undoubtedly, I would start out our one-sided chat strong, and end in tears. I often felt like I got the short end of the stick- I only got my grandma for 9 short years. 9. A little less than a third of my life so far. And it didn't seem fair. I wanted her there- when I graduated as Valedictorian from my high school class, when I went to college, when I got my Master's Degree, when I ran my first marathon, and when I married the love of my life. But if there is one thing I've learned as I got older it was that life isn't always fair and we can't always have what we want.

When my husband and I found out we were pregnant with a little girl, I was overjoyed. I've dreamed of being a mother for many years and was and still am eternally grateful for this gift. But somewhere, in the back of my mind, I was sad- sad that my sweet Grandma would never get to meet my baby girl on this side of Heaven. Gifts are meant to be shared, and my little girl wouldn't know the gift of my Grandma. And it hurt- some days more than others. I knew that somehow, some way, we would honor my Grandma through my daughter. It was the only way I could think of to connect these two human beings who were so special to me. I looked forward to telling my daughter all about her Great Grandma.

My Grandma's given name was Nancy, and as I began to research her name and its meaning, I learned that Nancy means favor and grace. It took up until 3 weeks before my daughter was born to decide on her first name,

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but my husband and I immediately agreed on her middle name. It would be Grace, to honor and celebrate the life of my Grandma- with a new life.

After many hours of labor, and nearly four hours of pushing, our gorgeous Ava Grace Olson was born...two days after her due date at 9:44pm on December 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016. Eighteen years after my Grandma left our earth, our daughter was born. And just like that, God, in all of His grace and mercy, restored that day for me. I will be forever grateful for the way God connected my sweet grandma, my daughter, and December 14<sup>th</sup>.

December 14<sup>th</sup> used to be a really hard day for me. A day of missing my grandma, weeping over the many missed events and milestones, and wishing for things that would never happen. Now, it's a day of celebration, not only celebrating my Grandma's life, but the life of my daughter, and the day I became a mother. God is so good, and I'm humbled, and grateful.