

One Last Thank You

By: Norimi Truskinovsky

August 9th, 2016, less than a week after my 12th birthday. On this day, I could no longer say “thank you” to my Grandpa. He always said, “I love you very much!” and gave me a hug and kiss. He had weak legs so while he sat in a big chair, he gave my family a hug, one by one, giving my dad, my mom, my brother, my two elder sisters, my little sister, and me his wonderful, warm, big hugs. We bumped into his big tummy, but he didn’t seem to mind. He always had a smile on his face.

At my Minnesota home, while my parents were busy at work, my grandma and grandpa would babysit me at their apartment when I was younger and take me on walks. My grandpa could not walk too far, so we went to the next-door pond of my grandparents’ apartment which still took a lot of strength for him to get there. Even if it was a struggle for him; he always held my hand and smiled as if it was a breeze. We enjoyed strolling to the pond where the geese and the mallard duck couples with their ducklings would swim. Once we arrived to the pond, I would either chase the birds or give them bread crumbs with my grandma and grandpa. Afterwards, we would call it a day and take a nap.

He and my grandma came to many of my school events. He came to my Shabbat programs, holiday events I would perform at, and sometimes my choir performances. Even if he didn’t like to go to the events, my grandma forced him to come. But, he especially enjoyed my performance at my band concert when I played the trumpet. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw him sitting and smiling happily, listening to the music.

My grandpa became sick many times. When I was little, he was sent to the hospital and had a mirror-like thing on his forehead which I did not know what it was. We went to the hospital many times to see how he was doing. When he saw me come in, he smiled at me. After I saw him, I smiled back. I will never forget how much he loved his family, especially his grandchildren.

Even if my grandpa was sick, he stayed and remained very strong. He taught me that even if you are sick, you can still be strong. That's why when my grandpa passed away, I had enough courage to take a shovel and cover dirt over his casket. One, two, three times I shoveled dirt on the casket. My cousin, who is one year younger than me, was so sad to say goodbye to him, that he could not even touch the shovel. My family, cousins, uncle, aunt, and other friends of ours wept, grieved, and mourned over my grandpa.

I can no longer come to my grandpa and say "thank you" to him. But, to the wonderful, inspirational person that taught me to be strong no matter what rough times you face - though he might not hear me - I whisper "Thank you for all you have done for me" over and over again. "I miss and love you, Grandpa".