

NOTES

Alzheimer's is a debilitating neurodegenerative disease that typically affects the elderly and worsens over time, often causing dementia and short-term memory loss. In this heartwarming short story, Kelly Tran pays tribute to the grandmother, whose life serves as a reminder of just how precious our time with loved ones truly is. This selection may be performed by a female or male and may be entered in Prose Interpretation; however, since the story is written in first-person, a performer may choose to enter this selection in Dramatic Interpretation. If used in Prose Interpretation, the drama mask icons are simply visible to show the performer when to turn the pages of the manuscript.

"Wow, look at that girl flip! I think she will win. She's very athletic!"

"That's a Playtex tampon commercial, Grandma—not a competition."

My grandma stares at the screen with a silly smile on her face, barely understanding any of the English being spoken to her on the television.

"I love the Olympics."



My grandma is an immigrant from Vietnam. She has lived here in America for over two decades; however, even after 20 plus years, the American culture still hasn't entered her bloodstream. That is what makes her different from the other grandmas in my neighborhood. She never knits sweaters or bakes cookies like the TV always promises me, but she destroys bees' nests with karate chops and kills snakes with her garden hoe.

"Kelly, get me my bigger hoe."

"But Grandma, this is the biggest hoe you have."

"There's always bigger hoe."

Grandma is a tough, liver-spotted woman who stands a towering 4' 9". She tells me to never change; but even if I do, she wants me to know that her love for me will last forever.



In fourth grade, our teacher, Mrs. Vu, taught us an entire unit on food. One of our assignments was to write a story about the first recipe we ever learned. While all of my classmates were taught how to make spaghetti or peanut butter cookies, I learned how to make instant ramen!

“My grandma taught me how to make it! First, you take your noodles and put them in a bowl. Then, you add really hot water. Next, you put the flavor in. Finally, you wait three minutes and boom! You’re done!” My teacher laughed at me.

“Honey, this is supposed to be a recipe! Not just a couple of steps on how to—”

“It was three steps.”

“Well, the assignment was to teach the class something.”

“But I *am* teaching something. I’m teaching everyone what my grandma taught me.”

“I think you just misunderstood the assignment.”



“Kelly, you want Ramen?”

“Yes, thank you, Grandma.”

That night, my grandma made me instant ramen noodles. I tried to give her a hug, but she gave me a fist bump instead.

“Eat up! It’s hot! You won’t get soup like this from anyone but Grandma!”

“I won’t eat it from anyone else BUT you, Grandma!”



Grandma doesn’t make me instant ramen anymore. Instead, she just lies on the couch facing the TV, as the days and nights pass before her. She wears sunglasses while she watches the tiny screen. She thinks the sunglasses will salvage her vision. Only old people and Bono—okay, *sometimes* Bono—can get away with wearing sunglasses indoors. Old