



Gayle Hawes

August 31, 1948 - July 9, 2023

Our Mother:

Trying to encapsulate all that a mother represents is truly a futile endeavor. That role is a sacred mission that can be bestowed upon us at any given point in our lives; and yet, there are so few of us who are acutely prepared for all that we will be required to embrace. It is a role fraught with the bittersweet dichotomies of love and pain, sacrifice and abundance, endurance and exhaustion, joy, and sadness. It is filled with missteps and regrets. We simply cannot get to the end and not look back on all the ways we wished we could have an opportunity for a 'do over' because simply put, experience will be our greatest teacher. This is a tale all too familiar in families with more than one child. Just ask the eldest child how much the youngest child got away with!

Mothers are expected to be all things to everyone and for that reason, we will always fall short and to our own disappointment more than anyone else's. What we do not often realize is that in the end, what will be remembered...how we will be remembered, is how we showed up in those moments of greatest need for our children. This is the imprint that has been left on our hearts with our own mother.

On paper, she should have passed on June 26th, 2023. Critically ill and unresponsive, she had hours left in her mortal body, but her spirit was not ready. True to form, our mother rallied her inner warrior and did just

that...warriored on. She fought her way back to the voices of her children and grandchildren, opening her eyes and her heart. She beat all odds. I remember standing outside of her room, speaking to her doctor about moving her to "comfort care" when my son popped his head out of her room and said, "Grams wants to speak with you." Saying I was shocked would be a huge understatement. The first thing she said to me was "I want to go home." Things moved quickly after that, within a day, she was downgraded to a lower ICU and then a day later, to the regular floor. She was fiercely determined. The day she was moved to the regular floor, she looked at my sister and me and said, "don't be mad." I asked why in the world we would be mad, and she responded, "I want to sit on the side of the bed and dangle my feet!" I told her there would be no foot dangling today! But, not to be ignored, two days later, when my sister and I were out of the room, she stood up on her own and plopped herself in a chair! She was going home!

We had over a week to sit and chat, hold her hand, brush her hair, share some lollipops (we will never see another Dum Dum without thinking of her, she ate 70 of them), and hold space for all that had been left unsaid...by her and us. In truth, looking back over the past two weeks, our mother was clearly running the show.

Life brutalized our beloved mother, forcing her to shelter and fortify herself within a dragon-like exterior. Softness only opened the door to more pain. She knew well the inherent and generational fragility of her womanhood and she fought against it. She embedded in her daughters the strength of spirit that she felt she lacked. But, of course, that was not true. It was exactly her strength of spirit and indomitable will that made us the women we are today; fiercely independent, driven, persevering, kind, and compassionate. She taught us we can do anything we set our minds to. She taught us to be fearless, to beat back adversity by never giving up and never underestimating our own worth, that our value is not found in others.

For our brothers, she understood the privilege of their gender. She fought to break those stereotypical roles of their generation. Likely, much to their chagrin, she raised them to make space for women, to embrace responsibilities that were considered to be outside their roles. Our brothers embraced her spirit and fiercely protected us and our mother when we were growing up. She loved how Bruce's smile lit up a room and how he would use his physical strength to make things easier for her and Billy's amazing sense of humor and willingness to do the "centipede" in the middle of a pizza shop! They have the best of her – Billy, her dance moves and Bruce, her ability to get a point across with just a glance.

Over the past week or so, we were gifted a rare glimpse into our mother, into the child she was before life's unrelenting battles. We received her softness, her gentle sense of humor, her words of endearment that have been sheltered in her heart, her sweet smile, and twinkling eyes. We were offered deeper insight and greater love. We witnessed courage and grace. We were given the greatest of gifts she could leave us with; her unwavering love.

Her stories and teachings will be passed down through the generations from her uncanny ability to improvise in any situation, her ability to make the best fried chicken, her sewing prowess, love of travel, and love of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. She was gifted with bearing witness to the three generations she brought forth: 4 children (Diane, Kathi, Bruce & Billy), 10 grandchildren (Morgan, Eric-Michael, Tiffany, Blake, Bruce, Ethan, Brandt, Myra, Brock, and Weston), and 6 great-grandchildren (Elijah, Morgan, Olivia, Elliana, Emmalee, and Harrison).

As she made her journey, our mother was lifted up with all our love and she was received by her beloved sister Diane and brother Donnie. She leaves

behind a legacy of having brought the children into the world that would break the intergenerational trauma that she fought against. We will fortify and comfort ourselves in our memories, especially those of the past week. We will be forever grateful for the extra days and the opportunity to say "I love you" one last time. We have all loved her our whole lives and we will look forward to her visits until we see her when she receives us on the other side. We love you mom.

Martha "Gayle" Hawes born in Modesto, CA August 31, 1948, took her final breath on July 9, 2023 @ 1:13 p.m. as her daughters called in her ancestors. She was surrounded by her family and her two dogs (Belle & Kicky) in the comfort of her own bedroom after a brief illness. She is preceded in death by our father, Robert Hawes whom she married in 1965, mother Inez Daniels, father Joseph Blan, sisters Diane Cunha and Pamela Neto, and brother Donald Blan. She is survived by her children: Diane and her spouse Jeff Gout of Saco, ME, Kathleen and her spouse Blaine Karas of Fresno, CA, Bruce and his spouse Cheri Hawes of Leander, TX, and Bill and his partner Stephanie Clemons of Fresno, CA, her 10 grandchildren, 6 great-grandchildren, and her long-time partner of 33 years, Luis "Louie" Moreno. There will be a celebration of life in late August on what would have been her 75th Birthday.

Tribute Wall



“ *Sweet Tranquility Basket was purchased for the family of Gayle Hawes.* ”



July 11, 2023 at 02:20 PM