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Losing Grandma is a little lesson in life, too

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Opinion Editor

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I spent most of last week and the weekend reading to my grandma. I brought pictures to share with her. I fed her dinner and held her hand while we watched television.



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I found myself doing all the things she did for me when I was a little girl.

But now she's 76, and she's dying. She's turned into a delicate, innocent being, which is probably how she saw me when I was little.

My grandma was a huge part of my life growing up, and we've always been close. She did all the things that grandmothers do -- took me shopping, had a cabinet stocked with Cheese Whiz, was always there when I needed a break from my parents. And I did what granddaughters do -- loved her like crazy.

When I got the call that she was in the hospital, I couldn't think about anything else but that lady, my grandmother, who spent her life working at Weinstocks and Liberty House. She was, after all, the queen of clothes and accessories. It was the perfect place for her to have a career.

I thought about the woman who would always see me sneak two extra chocolate chip cookies even though she said I could only have one. But she never ratted me out.

She's the woman who would buy me Scottie-dog sweaters for my birthday and Christmas

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They should be suspended because they should have kept an eye on that girl

They should be reprimanded, but not this harshly

It's not Sigma Kappas fault

The media is taking this too far

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until I was 12 -- which, of course, is far too old. But each holiday I'd smile, give her a hug, tell her I loved it and was sure to sport it the next time I went to her house.

When she'd put my cousin and me down for naps when were 5 or so, we'd wait until she closed the door and then tear off our Mickey Mouse covers and jump on the beds until our heads donked the ceilings. Then we'd hear her footsteps patting up the staircase and we'd lay down, all bundled up, denying everything when she asked what we were up to.

But this weekend, I was standing over her bed, holding her hand the way she did mine when I'd slip in the street or fall on my butt coming down the stairs. Every few minutes she'd open her eyes and look at me and squeeze my hand, and I found myself looking at her the way she had at me when I was young.

It's weird how Grandma always took care of me, always slipping me an extra \$10 on my way out the door or being my ally in a family full of boys.

And now it's reversed, and I'm the one who wants to take care of her.

She never failed as a grandmother, and now it's my turn to show her that I'll always be here as her granddaughter.

I'm not much for regret, but I can't help but think that I'd wear a Scottie dog sweater every day for the rest of my life if I could go shopping with her once more, or eat one of her Sunday dinners again or just hear her yell my name like I was in trouble. I wish that I hadn't flaked on the few weekends I'd said I was coming home and ended up getting too busy. She was never too busy for me.

But all I can do is squeeze out these last few moments and try to make up for all the things she did for me without hesitation. That is, after all, what grandmas do.

And at this point, I guess this is what granddaughters do.

Sarah Schaale can be reached at

opinioneditor@orion-online.net

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anonymous889

anonymous889

posted 10/09/04 @ 3:06 PM PST

Nice Column, Sarah! I've been going through the same thing with my sweetheart of a Grandma. Oh, by the way, nice photo of you this semester...hot!

Ryan The Lion, Teacher

CowTown

ryan-the-lion@sbcglobal. (Continued...)

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anonymous889

anonymous889

posted 12/31/04 @ 2:15 AM PST

Sarah - Congratulations. I enjoyed your column. - vici taus

vici taus

vici@chico.com

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anonymous889

anonymous889

posted 1/17/05 @ 2:16 PM PST

1-17-05

Sarah:

Congrats on your award. Nice piece of writing on a topic to which many people can relate.

Dr. Morris Brown, Mass Comm professor

Grand Junction, CO

mobrown@mesastate. (Continued...)

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anonymous889

anonymous889

posted 1/19/05 @ 6:18 PM PST

Hey congrats girl! Great accomplishment. Sure do you miss you and the peeps from the 3C, take care, keep in touch! Birdy Oh and i totally agree with Ryan the Lion, hot pic :) haha Love ya babe

Ty, RN
Los Angeles
tquintanat@netscape. (Continued...)

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anonymous889

anonymous889

posted 1/20/05 @ 6:52 PM PST

Good job, Sarah! That was a very touching piece, and I am happy for your success!!

Rachel, student
chico

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anonymous889

anonymous889

posted 7/14/05 @ 10:44 AM PST

Amazing. Congratulations on the award and a wonderful story.

Jon Miller, sports writer
Italy
jonmiller82@gmail.com

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