

EULOGY FOR JOANN HAINLINE

delivered by

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You know, I wasn't really sure I was going to say something until just a couple days ago. Every time I stopped to think about what I might want to say, my thoughts were a bit all over the place, and I'm not sure I fully reigned them in, so, forgive me if any of this seems a bit disjointed.

My mom was a complicated person in many ways, the depths of which are not easy to communicate. And I had complicated feelings towards her. She was powerful, opinionated, and stubborn. She was loving, gentle, and understanding. She was stern and sometimes terrifying. She was so funny; that is definitely one of the things I will remember most. Some of the funniest moments of my life happened around the dinner table over the holidays laughing with her. I loved making her laugh, we all did. She was a source of absurdity and quirky dysfunctionality that was truly one of a kind. It was both hilarious, and tragic - a contradiction I still have not fully made peace with.

The morning my mom passed, I was at my parents' house, with my dad. I remember clearly a moment, I had been there for an hour or two already and, at this point, I was standing outside under the big tree in my parents' front yard, the tree branches still hanging over the half of the driveway where my mom always parked her car. When Jonathan and I were younger, seemingly all the birds in the neighborhood used to gather on those branches and... absolutely rain shit down on her car. It happened so often she made up a song called the bird shit blues and would sing it to Jonathan and me as she drove us to school, god we use to think that was so funny. Multiple times she had to take the car for an emergency car wash because she could barely see out the side windows there was so much shit. I remember looking at the other cars and they had small smudges or some speckles here and there, and there we were, really testing the full capabilities of the car wash. As I was standing there under the tree, and the medical examiners and paramedics were moving in and out of the house, my dad emerged from the front door and walked over to me. We looked at each other with tired teary eyes, still in disbelief. We hugged each other and my dad gave out a big sigh and said, "I hope she was done... I hope she finished what she was here to do..." I've thought about that moment often.

I don't think I could give a better account of who she was, the things she was passionate about, and the things she loved and cared about than the beautiful things my dad said. Instead, I'd like to channel her for a moment, and address the members of our family that are here today with my own interpretation of what some of her parting words, feelings and wisdom might have been. I hope to share a small glimpse through the lens I saw her, and honor how important our family was to her in her own unique way.

To Sandy and Richard, the first thing she would tell you both, is thank you. Thank you for always making an effort to get the family together, taking the initiative, and checking in on her. It was so easy for her to let life get in the way. She'd thank you for both being such significant influences on her in your own ways - seeing you three together it's obvious how strong of an influence you all had on each other and she always spoke so fondly of you to Jonathan and me, and I feel a piece of her in both of you. She would have apologized for being so busy, and crazy, and for not being able to see you both one last time, where I'm certain she would have happily spent all day and night just catching up, laughing, and reminiscing over the countless hilarious and memorable moments that you all shared together.

To Shane, I think mom would tell you how proud she was to see you become the father that you are and see you engaged and involved actively in this church community that she loved so dearly. She would no doubt lecture you on not getting run over by a forklift at work or something, and she would try to convince you to always wear full body protection to guard against poison oak when playing disk golf - preferably bright neon colors, shoes with slip on spikes on them, and a duffle bag full of combat grade flashlights, just in case. She would be filled with such joy hearing the way you talk about Kendra's volleyball games and how supportive you are. And she would remind you to always cherish and respect your duties as a parent, to guide by example with love and with light. She also would have been moved to tears to see you officiating Jonathan's wedding.

To Claudia, she would tell you how happy it made her working with you counseling and parenting, how much she loved sharing with you all the incredible things she learned, things she was interested in, and the experiences she'd had. She would no doubt compliment you on what you were wearing, she always felt you had an amazing fashion sense. She would tell you how tough and resilient in character she thought you were and would encourage you to follow your dreams and passions. And she would remind you to never be afraid to put Shane and Kendra in their place when needed.

To Kendra, it's no surprise to anyone in our family, she would ask how school was going and how your grades were - she was a teacher after all. She would likely turn that line of questioning into an hour-long lecture on the importance of being a good student. Not because grades in and of themselves are the end goal, but because she wanted you to believe in yourself, to believe that you deserve to be an excellent student and she wanted you to expect and demand nothing less from yourself. She would tell you that she'd known since you were very young that you would be talented in anything you put your mind to, that people would be drawn to you, and you'd have an energy that others would want a piece of. For some that can be an anchor, but not for you, she wanted you to know and believe, that anchor would only drag you down if you let it.

To Jalayne, she would tell you that she'd decided for certain she was retiring from counseling by the end of this year, she knew she had to make a change. She'd tell you how excited she would be to finally be able to start putting together the sauna that had been sitting unconstructed in her

living room for years, so that you and her could use it together. And she'd tell you that she'd started to clear out a back room that you could come up and stay in whenever you needed. It's not clear whether you would have to stay inside the sauna, but that's a small detail. She would tell you she saw you often in her dreams, that she misses you, and how badly she wants you to move back to Reno and be with family. She would tell you to not drive faster than your angels can fly (that was another one of her favorite sayings), and she would mean it literally, as in, however fast you're driving, it's too dang fast, slow down. She would also mean it metaphorically as a reminder to not be reckless or careless with your intention and attention towards your physical and spiritual needs.

To Jonathan, she would tell you that although she didn't really know what you actually do and didn't really understand most of what you say when you tried to tell her, she knew you were pursuing truth, and what could possibly be more noble than that. She'd tell you how much she was impressed by, and respected your discipline, and that she saw a lot of our dad's gentleness in you. She would thank you for being such a good son, and a good brother, and while she worried you might end up in some remote philosopher village spending your days gardening or basket weaving or whatever she thought philosophers did with their time, I think she saw that you are passionate about what you do, and that was enough for her. She would have told you how bad she felt to not be at your wedding, she was so happy for you. If she were there, she no doubt would have said the wedding was absolutely beautiful and that she felt a divine love in the sunlight that beamed through the window during the ceremony. She would have firmly stated that California and Florida are completely off limits for your honey-moon, not only due to the near certainty that you would get bitten by a shark if you ever stepped foot in the water, but also out of the water, being caught up in some sort of shark related tornado type event, nowhere is safe. Lastly, she would remind you to talk slow, don't speak to be heard, speak to be understood.

And finally, to my dad, I'm not sure even she would find the words to describe how much you helped her and supported her in all areas of her life. I'm not sure anyone could find the words. I think, if mom heard you that morning, under the tree, even though you already knew, she would remind you what she was here to do. She was here to bring knowledge, and guidance, and strength and purpose to all the students she taught. She was here to help people who were hurting and struggling to find their way. She was here to help families learn how to work together and support each other. As her health started to get in the way of her being able to effectively command a classroom, she didn't give up, she wasn't here to give up, she found a way to still provide for and help the children in need at her school. And even when every step in the walk from the house to her car caused her excruciating pain, she fought her way to her office for her two clients, who she saw for hours each, the day before she passed. Because that's what she was here to do. So, was she done? I think, for the things she felt she was here to do, she gave every part of her soul, her mind, and her body until they couldn't be done anymore.