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Good afternoon, family and friends,
thank you for gathering to remember and to honour Patricia Anne Taylor — our Gran Pat.

She was born on 17 September 1945 in Port Elizabeth, now Gqeberha,
and left us at 79,
still unmistakably herself — dignified, curious, and quietly brave.

She was Michael's beloved wife,
mother to Jonathan and Ruth,
and Gran to Aiden, to Hannah, and to me, Daniel.
I speak as her oldest grandson,
the one she mentored through school timetables, exam nerves, and those first, uncertain career choices.
Her counsel steadied me long before I had words for what I wanted to become.

Gran Pat's life was shaped by words and by the good they can do.
She began as a literature teacher in Gqeberha,
moved to Cape Town in the late 1980s,
became Head of English,
and later, the school librarian — a role she wore like a calling.
She coached debating teams with that calm eyebrow that said, "Define your terms,"
loved Shakespeare and our South African poets,
and believed reading is not a pastime but a pathway.
Outside school she carried the same conviction:
Rotary meetings after dark,
literacy outreach on Saturday mornings,
quiet support for local charities that put books into children's hands.
Education changes lives — she never stopped proving it.

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We will each have our own store of memories.
Mine is a map of the Garden Route:
Gran at the wheel,
a coolbox of padkos packed with military accuracy,
and an ongoing commentary on the birds we'd spot out the window.
She claimed the Knysna turaco could make even a grey day look green.
If you've ever heard her whistle its call,
you'll know what I mean.

There was a structure to her kindness.
Hand-written notes tucked into books left on your chair,
each one angled to the exact page she wanted you to read.
Bridge on Wednesday nights,
scones on Saturday mornings — light as air and somehow always warm at the centre.
First-edition finds wrapped in brown paper, catalogued and treasured.
She kept her word the way librarians keep records:
neatly, carefully, and without fuss.
And her faith — never loud —
was stitched into action,
in how she showed up, week after week, where help was needed.

Her humour had an edge you wanted on your side.
Even in illness she could disarm a room with one dry line,
followed by that small smile that said we'd carry on.
Organised to the last,
she even left us instructions:
a touch of blue today,
and a hum of Amazing Grace.
It suits her — grace as something you do, not only something you sing.

What will we miss?
Her measured counsel,

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offered after a pause long enough to make you think.
The notes in her careful hand.
Those impeccable scones that made ordinary Saturdays feel like a holiday.

But we are not left empty-handed.
We have the values she lived by:
that fairness matters,
that promises are meant to be kept,
that learning is a door you hold open for others.

If you want to honour her — and I know we do —
read with a child,
fund a library shelf,
argue your point with kindness,
and keep to time.

Gran Pat, thank you for the road trips, for the books, for the notes,
for believing that words, well chosen and well kept, can alter a life.

We will carry your blue thread of grace through our own pages now,
and we will keep your door open.

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