

Thoughts from THE HEART
BY: Joseph [Josephus] Smith
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0345Hours:

THE VANISHING MIND PART II

THIS COUNTRY IS THE ONLY COUNTRY, WHEREAS
ONCE OUR PARENTS GROW OLD, AND "WE" DON'T
WANT TO TAKE ON THE DUTY, BECAUSE IT IS
OUR "DUTY" WE PUT THEM IN A "D" NURSING
HOME!!! AND MY SO CALLED BLACK ARISTOCRAT
FAMILY WAS NO DIFFERENCE. THIS TRUTH CAME
WHEN I WAS SENT OVERSEAS TO RUSSIAN TO SERVE
A 8 MONTH TOUR OF DUTY. ONCE FINDING THIS
INFORMATION OUT FROM MY TWIN SISTER, I TOOK
LEAVE, WHEN BACK TO NEW YORK, HIRED A
LAWYER- AND OWNED TO PROBATE COURT. MY
FAMILY MEMBERS ALL STATED TO THE JUDGE
THIS WAS THE BEST PLACE FOR HER, HER DOCTORS
CAME IN AND SAID THE SAME AT THE
HEARING. MY NANA HAD DONE WELL FOR
HERSELF, AND WAS WEALTHY AND EVERY BODY WANTED
A PART OF IT, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE
WRITER. AND THE JUDGE SAW THROUGH IT, AND

She was put in my care. I left the Court House Bus when to the Nursing Home in Brooklyn New York and got my Nana. Didn't know or have an idea what I was going to do, or where we were going. But I, after getting the Milian permission to stay state side, we were on our way to Fort Bragg, NC. My Nana left this world three years later, I was not sad, but blessed, that I got those years to spend with her. I said at the outset that I did not want my experience to be seen as representative of how Alzheimer's patients handle the disease or how families deal with their loved ones. Each family is different. The disease, I know, is horrific, and it can only bring unimaginable sorrow to any family, in ways that are specific, brutally intimate, and often disabling. "EVEN" the "STRONGEST" family can pull apart under the enormous pressure of trying to conflate a wonderful past, or at least one where there was an assumed level of intimacy and identification with an increasingly disengaged present. It is at the height of horror to confront someone who has shaped the swell, and the aspect of a person with whom you have shared your most intimate

MOMENTS, AND yet THAT PERSON IS MERELY
A SHELL. IT'S LIKE CONFRONTING A SIMULATORUM
OF your FATHER OR BROTHER OR MOTHER; AND
STILL, AND THIS IS BOTH A BLESSING AND A
CURSE, he or she CAN SUDDENLY Blurt
out A SOUND, OR give you a slight nod,
or make a shell whistler-like noise, AND
THE WORLD IS RETURNED TO A MOMENT OF CLARITY,
OF IDENTIFICATION, WHERE YOU ONCE SHARED A
SPECIAL TIME TOGETHER. THE POET SAID IT
BEST, "WHAT DESTRUCTION AM I BLESSED WITH"
OR BY" NEAR THE END OF my NANA'S LIFE,
She Looked at me, smiled, Josephus, she said,
"Would you like to take me for a DRIVE? we
could Drive down the West Side Highway AND
go to The Village. I Thought for a second
about my Grandmother's Proposition. I could,
of course, Remind her that we were North
Carolina, not New York. But I was Driving
with my NANA, The CAR was slowly snaking
Down RIVERSIDE DRIVE Past The Brownstones
IN HARLEM, AND SOON WE'D CROSS OVER
SEVENTY-SECOND Street To get to The West
Side Highway, we'd Brush along The Hudson
River until TWENTY-THIRD Street, And Then
we'd Turn and go Down SEVENTH Avenue,
which would be full of people Hawking

WARES, AND POSSIBLY A STREET CONCERT WOULD
PROVIDE US WITH CONGAS, OR VIOLINS, OR A
TENDER DRAFT OF BRAHMS, THERE MIGHT
BE AN ART SHOW NEAR ST MARK'S PLACE,
SOMETHING SHE LOVED TO LOOK AT AND BUY.
BUT I COULD ALSO SENSE MY NANA
SADNESS, SO I TOUCHED HER SMALL BEAUTIFUL
FACE, AND SUGGESTED, WITH GREAT TENDERNESS,
"NANA LET'S SWING BY CENTRAL PARK. IT'S
LOVELY THIS TIME OF THE YEAR." I WAS
DRIVING WITH MY NANA FOR THE LAST
TIME, AND AS MANY TIMES WE HAD GONE
DRIVING, THIS WAS THE MOST WONDERFUL
DRIVE WE HAD EVER TAKEN AND LIKE
MY GRANDMOTHER WHO HAD TO BE PROTECTED
FROM PREDATORY FAMILY MEMBERS. PRISONERS
MUST BE PROTECTED FROM PREDATORY PRISONERS.
PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE FROM PRISONERS
WHO ASSAULT, ABUSE AND ROBB THEM. WHO JOB
DOES THIS FALL ON??? THE STAFF OR
OTHER PRISONERS?? I SAY BOTH.