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Hello to you all!

March 8th 2014

As you have all read in one of the last entries, last year the sweetest woman in the world crossed onto a different plane, one I call Summerland. She is with her Mother, Father, and Sister now. She is again able to do all of the Gardening she wants. She is my Grandma Honey.

But also last year, one of the Best Men I have ever met also went into the Summerland. His name is Mark Flannagan and I consider him to be one of my brothers. When I met him, we were both in prison and on the same housing unit. It was 2005 and he was new to the unit. I went over to where he was and said hello and introduced myself. He did the same and from that day on we were great friends.

A couple of years later we found out that he had a tumor growing inside of his brain. Immediately, he began treatment. Surgery went great and then chemo and radiation next. In the middle of all of this, his biological family was hit by a devastating blow. Mark's younger brother, his only brother, Patrick died from a blood clot in his leg. I never met Patrick but from the years of Mark telling me about him and his music, he was a great guy also. When

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Patrick died, it nearly killed Mark and their parents.

Mark beat the tumor, treatment was successful. He got out of prison and began his life free. After he got out we talked on the phone and wrote some. But over ~~the~~ time we drifted apart. He was getting his life in order and I was focusing on mine in here. I continuously thought about him but I no longer had his address or his phone number. I always missed him.

In 2013, it had been a couple of years and I had him on my mind and so I decided to try his parents house to see if I could get his address to write to him.

I was so excited to get a letter with a return address that was his parents.

But the excitement didn't last long for the first thing I pulled out of the envelope was a card with his photo inside. As I read, I quickly realized that it was his memorial notice. He passed away.

I got the letter that his mother wrote me out and began to read it through tears running away from my eyes. She wrote that in 2012, the tumors had come back.

He again went into treatment aggressively.

Unfortunately this time, the treatment

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did not work. His doctors gave him 2 weeks. His parents quickly got him into a hospice house. He never complained about anything, pain or sickness.

In the end, My brother, Mark Lived for 3 weeks and on May 10TH, 2013 he passed away.

I had all the thoughts of "if I'd just written sooner or even kept in contact." I was angry with myself. Here is someone I truly consider my brother and I lost contact with him.

For the month of February, I shaved my head completely bald. Mark's Birthday was on Feb. 6TH. He ~~was~~^{is} 33. I shaved my head in honor of him and also of my Grandmother as her Birthday was Feb. 25TH, she is 75 years old. I wanted to tell their stories to the world for I believe they are truly both amazing people. They are fighters for what they believe is right.

You might notice that I am writing about them as if they are still alive and breathing. That is because I still talk to them, they are still with me in my thought, prayers, and my heart. They never left me and never will. I love them both tremendously.

For me, February is forever

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going to be dedicated to Sylvia Marie Zackery-Craft (Grandma Honey) and to Mark Flannagan (my brother). I will continue to tell their stories because I believe they deserve to be told.

Grandma Honey, Mark, I Love you Both so much. You two are such inspiration for me and for the rest of the world.

Talk to you soon!



I ask each of you who are reading this please support the Hospice programs. Hospice helped my brother to die peacefully. It is amazing and the people who are involved are strong wonderful people for doing what they do. So please support, volunteer, donate to Hospice, they can use it.

Good Bye! Ray A.