

Good afternoon beloved family and friends, we are gathered here today to celebrate the life and honor the memory of my dear mother, Lystra Morgan.

A woman of incredible strength, compassion, and boundless love for her family.

I think it's fitting that we begin by reflecting on her early life and the challenges she overcame from a young age. Mom was born and raised in Trinidad and Tobago until the age of 29 when she made the courageous decision to immigrate to the United States. Coming to a new country alone, without knowing a soul, could not have been easy. But that was a testament to her resilience and determination to build a better life.

When my mom was a young child, she endured the devastating loss of her father, leaving her mother as a widow with seven children to raise alone. In those difficult circumstances, Mom stepped up as the oldest child to help care for her younger siblings - Marcel, Muriel, Ossie, Lawrence, Linda, and Janet. She made sure they were fed, dressed for school each morning, and ready for bed each night. The selflessness and responsibility she displayed at such a tender age was remarkable.

Later, as a young woman and new mother herself, she channeled that same nurturing spirit toward her own children - my brother Brian, sister Marlene, and me. She devoted her entire life to us, instilling the values of education, hard work, and always standing up for ourselves. Though we didn't have much in terms of material wealth, the richness of her love and guidance was immeasurable.

When the opportunity arose, Mom made the incredible sacrifice of leaving her home to provide better opportunities for her family. She immigrated to this country and immediately began working tirelessly to bring us to join her. I can't imagine how daunting that must have felt - building a new life in an unfamiliar place, all for the sake of her children's future.

Once we were all reunited in the United States, Mom continued to be the anchor that held our family together through her unconditional love and wisdom. She had a way of setting us straight with just one look - that stern gaze that let you know you had crossed a line. But it came from a place of deep care and an unwavering will to protect her loved ones.

My Mom was generally a calm and reserved woman, she was fiercely protective of her family. If she ever sensed someone was trying to take advantage of us, she roared like a lioness shielding her cubs. She simply would not be pushed around or allow harm to come to those she loved. That fighting spirit was something she imbued in us from a young age - a testament to her own fortitude and the high esteem in which she held self-advocacy.

Amid the sacrifices and struggles, Mom always maintained a generosity of spirit and found immense joy in simple pleasures. She loved soaking in the beauty of nature, learning about wildlife, and contributing in her own small way to conservation. Watching those nature documentaries brought her such peace and wonder.

She took just as much delight in celebrating the milestones of her family and friends, always remembering birthdays and special occasions with her trademark thoughtfulness.

In so many ways, Mom's life was one of quiet strength and selfless service to others. For over 30 years, she worked tirelessly as a home health aide, caring for the elderly with the same compassion and dignity she imbued in all her endeavors. The people she cared for in their homes became like a second family to her. And toward the end, when mom required care herself, she welcomed the aides who supported her with that same open heart. Her capacity to create community wherever she went was truly special.

I think one of the most powerful through-lines of Mom's life was her prioritization of family. Whether it was caring for her younger siblings after being orphaned or the sacrifices she made to provide a better life for her own children - putting family first was her unwavering mission. She went to incredible lengths to help those closest to her flourish.

In her final years, as mom's health declined, that love for family manifested in the simplest yet most profound ways. Despite her struggles, her first priority was always checking in on how we were doing. In those tender moments, she would look each of us in the eye and say "I love you" with a warmth and sincerity that still envelops my heart. Those words, and her entire life, were a masterclass in unconditional love.

So today, we don't mourn the loss of Lystra Morgan. Instead, we celebrate the extraordinary human being she was and the countless lives she impacted through her generosity, resilience, and unwavering care for her loved ones. Though she may have lacked formal education herself, her life's greatest lessons were imparted through her actions:

The importance of family. The dignity of honest work. The power of love, freely given. The courage to overcome adversity. The grace of a compassionate spirit.

These are the enduring teachings that will forever guide us and keep Mom's beautiful spirit alive in our hearts.

For me, and I know for all of you, she will always be that shining example of how to lead a life of purpose, decency, and boundless love for those around you.

In the days and years ahead, when we find ourselves faced with a challenging moment or decision, I hope we can call upon the strength and wisdom Mom embodied so fully. I hope we can hear her voice gently encouraging us to keep going, to stand up for what's right, and to approach the world with open arms and open hearts - just as she did.

Lystra Morgan has completed her extraordinary journey. But through the lives she touched, through the warmth of gathered here today and honored to call her a beloved mother, grandmother, and friend - her legacy will burn on forever as a beacon, guiding our way.

Thank you all for being here and for loving my mother as deeply as I did.

She knew she was blessed by your care and friendship. And I know she's looking down today, eyes shining with pride for the family she built through unwavering love.

My mother's spirit will be with us always. A woman of grace. Of resilience. Of compassion. We find solace in knowing that her kindness, courage, and the lessons borne of her selflessness will forever light our path.

May we all strive to walk through this world as she did - with an undying love for our families, a generous spirit, and a human decency that made an indelible impact on all who knew her.

In the garden of memory, you leave behind flowers of love and friendship that will forever bloom in the hearts of those whose lives you touched.

Your kindness, your laughter, and your spirit will remain with us today, tomorrow, and forever.

We love you; we miss you, and we will always remember you.

Your journey may have ended, but your legacy will live on forever.

Rest in peace, Mom, and may you find the solace that you so richly deserve.

Until we meet again.

Thanks again for everything.

You will be missed more than words can express.

God bless you and Godspeed, as we all say. Amen. 🙏

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