As I woke up the other morning and looked at a photograph of my Maw Maw and Paw Paw in their younger years by my bed, it hit me that I didn't have them anymore.
My Paw Paw died when I was 13 years old. And my Maw Maw died last week after a lengthy illness.
I had grown accustomed to not having my grandfather around. But my grandmother had always been there.
My stomach seemed to spin at the notion that I didn't have her around anymore.
She and I had our moments in our older years where we didn't always agree on things. But she was still my Maw Maw, and I admit I guess I always thought she'd be around.
Maw Maw would always comment during holidays and other special functions that "it would be her last year." It almost became a joke in our family.
The same woman who just knew it was her last year on this earth was able to see me graduate from high school. She sat in the front row of my wedding. And she held two babies with the birth of my children.
But now she won't be there.
Rather than think about the bad times or the last few hours I held her hand before she died, I would like to take a moment to remember the good times.
Maw Maw was a lady who made me milkshakes everyday and chopped my ham up for me whenever I wanted a snack.
Maw Maw was a lady who insisted that I snuggle my back up to hers in bed when I spent the night with her.
Maw Maw was a lady who shoved me in the station wagon at 3 a.m. on Black Fridays to catch all the early bird sales.
Maw Maw was a lady who loved to listen Fats Domino. He was her favorite musician.
Maw Maw was a lady who would ride me around town at midnight when I had a bad headache so that I could go to sleep.
Maw Maw was a lady who bought me an Archie comic book during every trip to town. I still have them all.
Maw Maw was a lady who sent me in the Piggly Wiggly to buy a loaf of bread but always gave me a little more extra change for a candy bar.
Maw Maw was a lady who would make gumbo, strawberry cake and a pot of snap beans if I wanted them.
Maw Maw was a lady who fed me and my teenage friends when we stopped by with no

invitation.
Maw Maw was a lady who insisted that the stuffed squirrel she bought for a quarter at a garage sale be proudly displayed on the dining room table.
Maw Maw was a lady who bought me a sweater with a giant duck on it even though I was in my 20s.
Maw Maw was a lady who would give me ten boxes of chocolate covered cherries because they were “on sale.” And I didn’t even like cherries.
Maw Maw was a lady who gave me a push when I was learning how to ride a bicycle without training wheels.
Maw Maw was a lady who would braid my hair after she gave it a quick scrub down in the sink.
Maw Maw was a lady who let me keep a mutt named Roho after he showed up in the carport.
Maw Maw was a lady who let me blare my boy band cassette tape in the car for three hours straight even though I know she hated it.
Maw Maw was a lady who bought me four new tires for my car when I was a broke teenager.
Maw Maw was a lady who bought every Christmas village accessory this side of the Mississippi.

Maw Maw was a lady who stopped at every vendor who sold rugs on the side of the road.
Maw Maw was a lady who refused to get the air conditioner in her red-interior car fixed because it cost too much.
Maw Maw was a lady who never entered the Save Value grocery store again because they didn’t honor her coupon for mayonnaise one time.
Maw Maw was a lady who bought me a sherbert cone every time she got her car serviced at the local gas station.
And Maw Maw was a lady who loved me.
After the funeral, I did something really silly. Sneaking off to my bedroom, I called her old phone number. I knew she wouldn’t pick up, but I kept wishing maybe she would one last time.
When the operator recording came on to tell me it had been disconnected, I hung up. And that was it.
All the Maw Maws and Paws Paws make the world a little sweeter. They are that soft sweater that keeps you warm or that fuzzy feeling in the bottom of your stomach.
I am thankful that I had mine for as long as I did.
When I drove back home the night she died, I had to pull over a moment to shed a few tears.
I barely heard it on the radio, but I quickly turned the volume up.
Fats Domino was singing Blue Heaven.
Putting my truck in gear, I headed back toward Yazoo.
I took a moment to look up at the dark sky, but I decided to let Fats do the all the talking.
And turning the radio as loud as it would go, I smiled.
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