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Good morning, everyone.

I’m Sarah, Linda’s daughter, and like so many of you, I knew her best by the simplest, truest name: Mum.

Thank you for being here to honour her life, to steady one another, and to remember the woman who had a way of making every room feel softer and safer just by walking into it.

Mum was born on May 14, 1961, in Sudbury, Ontario.
She grew up there, hands already busy with helping, heart already tuned to care.
Toronto would later become home for her studies and her calling.
She became a nurse—of course she did—and spent 35 years as a cardiac nurse at St. Michael’s Hospital.
Steady hands, calm voice, sleeves always rolled up.
If you asked her about it, she’d shrug and say she just did her job.
But you don’t spend a lifetime helping people find their breath and their bearings without leaving a mark on the city and on thousands of families.

At home, she stitched that same care into our daily life.
She was married to my dad, Douglas, for 41 years.
Together, they built a home where the kettle was never far from boiling and the door never really latched.
She raised Mark and me with a kind of patience that didn’t announce itself, it simply showed up, again and again.
Later, she became Nana to Chloe and Ethan, and some new part of her lit up—quieter perhaps, but brighter.
She was also a devoted sister to Paul and Denise, phoning often, arriving when it mattered, and sending along butter tarts as if that were the most natural form

of first aid.

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If you want to know Mum, picture mornings.
Not grand mornings—simple ones.
A cup of tea warming both hands, a list on the counter, a laugh that started low and rose like a kettle.
Or picture Sunday walks by the lake, where she would point out a heron with the same delight she felt the first time she saw one.
Or picture her in a garden hat, bending over the peonies she loved, talking to them like old friends, certain that listening was half the tending.

When Mum retired, she finally had time for that big garden she'd always dreamt of.
She adored it.
She was out there at sunrise and sundown, coaxing colour from soil, sending neighbours home with armfuls of blooms and a recipe or two tucked on top.
She knitted blankets for newborns—tiny, meticulous gifts that would warm more than one kind of small, shivering thing.
On weekends she baked, but not to show off.
She baked to comfort, to welcome, to say "you belong here" without using those words.

What defined her most wasn't any single skill.
It was her way of moving through the day: compassionate, steady, quietly funny, unshakeably patient.
She believed in kindness first.
She believed in community care and the kind of hard work that doesn't need to be noticed.
And, most of all, she believed in showing up for family.
I can't remember a single emergency—big or small—when Mum wasn't already halfway out the door, keys in hand, before I'd finished the story.

I will miss so many things about her.
Her warm laugh that made you feel like you'd earned it.

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Her calm advice, always offered over a cup of tea and never as a lecture.
The way she could put a hand on your forearm, look you in the eye, and somehow make the noise in your head turn down.

If I had to choose one favourite memory, it would be our summer camping trips to Algonquin Park.
Mum teaching us to paddle in the exact middle of the lake at sunrise, the canoe skimming along as mist lifted and the loons started calling.
She showed us how to read the water, how to turn together, and how to sit quiet long enough to be surprised by what shows up when you stop thrashing.
Later, around the fire, she taught us the important science of perfect s’mores—marshmallow golden, not charred, and the chocolate warmed just enough to give when you press the graham crackers.
That was Mum: practical, gentle, and a little bit precise about the things that make life sweet.

She was my first call for everything.
The good things—the promotions, the pies that didn’t collapse, the peonies that finally bloomed.
And the hard things—worries about the kids, troubles I couldn’t name yet, days that came apart in my hands.
She didn’t rush to fix it.
She made space.
She’d say, “Let’s sit,” and, “We’ll sort it out,” and somehow we always did.

We are heartbroken today because we loved her deeply.
But our grief is shaped by gratitude.
Mum lived 64 years that mattered—to her family, to her patients, to her community.
Born in Sudbury, shaped by Toronto, rooted in a garden that gave more than it took.
She passed peacefully on February 22, 2026, with the same grace she brought to everything else.

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Her legacy isn’t an abstract idea.
It’s right here.
It’s in Dad, who knew how to partner her strength with his own for 41 years.
It’s in Mark and me, trying to measure our days by the same quiet standards she kept.
It’s in Chloe and Ethan, who will grow up knowing that Nana was the kind of person who kept extra mittens by the door and extra patience in her pocket.
It’s in Paul and Denise, in the neighbours who swapped recipes over the fence, in the babies wrapped in the blankets she knit by the window when the light was good.

If you’re looking for a way to honour her, I think she’s already told us how.
Keep a kettle ready.
Offer the seat by the window.
Share what you grow.
Listen twice before you speak.
And in lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Canadian Cancer Society—something Mum asked for herself, because even now, her instinct is to help the next person through.

In the coming weeks, when the house is too quiet and the peonies haven’t quite opened yet, I know we’ll reach for our phones and remember all over again that she’s not going to pick up.
When that happens, I’ll try to do what she taught us on those Algonquin mornings:
Sit still for a moment.
Breathe.
Let the water settle.
Look for the light on the surface.
Then take a small, steady stroke, and another, and another.

Mum, thank you for every sunrise paddle, every butter tart left cooling on the counter, every soft word that turned a hard day around.
Thank you for loving us the way you did—with your hands, your humour, and

your fierce gentleness.

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We will carry you with us.
In our gardens.
On our Sunday walks by the lake.
In the tea we pour for each other when words are thin.

You showed us how to live well by loving well.
We’ll keep showing up, just like you did.

We love you, Mum.

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