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Lament for a Lost Grandmother

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My very darlingest
 my grad at convocation hall
I give you
 her proudest moment
this wonderful vase back
 the day's bright smile false hope
to cherish and to keep as
 the flowery vines on her dress
a token of the deep love
 twisted round each other like
affection, respect, gratitude
 her cancer constricting her bowels
for having a daughter
 she vomited worry
such as you – so caring,
 into a bowl beside her laid out body
so feeling, so understanding
 I shattered my Hippocratic Oath
and such a great support
 thinking I knew best
in these very difficult days
 she didn't know how to lie still to imagine
for me

the trajectory of my motherhood
I have so enjoyed
my first child then second
this piece of pottery and
gnarled knuckles from crochet and knitting
I know how much you
refused to thin out with the rest of her body
love it that is why I
hands waving deliriously
want you to have the
conducting our lives
pleasure of using it from
day timer filled from bedside
now on – and remember,
her husband an afterthought
always, the deep love which
until the pages blanked
accompanies it which will
morphine-faded
be with you forever –
calling to us luses
the saddest part of my
laughing through
illness is the realization
her back so straight on the commode chair
that this beautiful relationship
choosing not to eat
we have attained and worked
it still took her body months
towards, will end – however
dehydration is worse than starvation
it is my belief that life goes
in a bedside journal the family

on and as such I will
begin this lament
always be there for you,
my grandmother
who are an outstanding
a daughter such as myself
human being
only sits one day of shiva
with so much
uber responsibility
love
losing mourning
your very
twenty years later
devoted
generations of mothers and daughters
Mother
gambling intimacy
and friend
she allowed herself vulnerability
and admirer
writing about her love.

Joanne Sinai practices psychiatry in Victoria, BC. She is a sometimes writer of poetry. This piece was inspired by a long lost card she discovered written by her grandmother.