A Mother's Love Never Dies

In Loving Memory of Izie Bell Hudson
April 16, 1949 – November 24, 2026

Today, we gather with heavy hearts to say goodbye to a very special woman. A woman whose love reached far beyond words, whose heart had room for everyone, and whose greatest accomplishment in life was the family she loved so dearly.

Her name is Izie Bell Hudson, but to so many of us, she was simply Nana.

Born on April 16, 1949, Nana blessed this world with 77 years of love, laughter, kindness, and unforgettable memories. On November 24, 2026, surrounded by the people she loved, she gained her angel wings, leaving behind a lifetime of memories and a family forever changed by her love.

She was a devoted wife to her beloved husband, Joel Hudson. Their love and commitment to one another became part of the foundation upon which this family was built. And although Joel preceded her in death, there is comfort today in believing that they are reunited once more.

She was a loving mother to three boys: Tim Hudson and his wife, Laurie; Todd Hudson and his wife, Brandie; and Terry Hudson.

But her heart didn't stop there. She opened her arms and her heart to two bonus boys, Bennie Joel Brooks and his wife, Edna, and Randy Mayo, loving them as her own.

Nana understood that family was about more than blood. It was about love, acceptance, and being there for one another.

And then there were her grandchildren: Matt Hudson and his wife, Ashley; Courtney Mayo and her husband, Sean; Bradley O'Connell and his wife, Courtney; Morgan Singleton and her husband, Cord; Kerrie Hudson; Jessica Burchfield and her husband, Patrick; Amber Hudson; Alyson Hudson and Wyatt; and Haley Hudson and Lane.

Each one was a special piece of her heart, bringing her joy, laughter, and a kind of love that only a grandmother can understand.

She was also blessed with an abundance of great-grandchildren, each representing another generation of the beautiful family she helped create. What an extraordinary blessing it was for her to witness her family continue to grow.

She wasn't just a mother because she gave birth to children. She was a mother because she loved, sacrificed, worried, encouraged, protected, and stood by the people she called family. She was the kind of woman who made sure everyone else was taken care of, sometimes putting her own needs last.

But Nana was so much more than a wife, a mother, and a grandmother.

Nana was a woman who loved to live.

She loved to travel, experience new places, and make memories along the way. She had a special place in her heart for animals and a compassionate spirit for those in need.

She had a remarkable ability to find the good in even the most difficult situations. Where others might have seen something to complain about, Nana could find something to appreciate.

She loved music, and she loved to dance. If there was music playing, there was always a reason to enjoy the moment. And when we hear Dan Seals singing *Bop*, one of her favorite songs, may we always remember her not with sadness, but with a smile.

May we remember her dancing.

May we remember her laughing.

May we remember the woman who understood that life was meant to be lived.

Above all, her family was her world. Her greatest legacy isn't measured by the things she owned, the places she went, or the things she accomplished. It is measured by the lives she touched, the love she gave, the memories she created, and the family she leaves behind.

And that brings us to something called The Dash.

When we look at the dates that represent Nana's life, we see April 16, 1949, and November 24, 2026.

Two dates separated by a small dash.

The first date represents the day she entered this world. The second represents the day she left it.

But that little dash between them represents everything else.

It represents the love she shared with Joel. It represents the children she raised, the grandchildren she adored, and the great-grandchildren she was blessed to know.

It represents every family gathering, every adventure, every song she danced to, every laugh she shared, every tear she wiped away, and every sacrifice she made.

It represents the kindness she showed to others, the lives she touched, and the countless moments that may have seemed ordinary at the time but have now become priceless memories.

Nana filled her dash with something far more valuable than possessions or accomplishments.

She filled it with love.

And now, as we face the days ahead without her, there will be moments when we wish we could pick up the phone and hear her voice. Days when we would give anything for one more hug, one more conversation, one more dance, or just one more moment together.

There will be birthdays, holidays, and ordinary days when her absence feels especially heavy.

There will be songs that remind us of her, photographs that bring tears to our eyes, and memories that make us laugh when we least expect it.

But I hope her family remembers this:

She may no longer be standing beside you, but she will forever be a part of you.

Her three boys and two bonus boys will carry her lessons and her love. Her grandchildren will carry the memories of the amazing grandmother they were blessed to know. Her great-grandchildren will hear the stories of the remarkable woman whose love helped shape the family they were born into.

And every person who was blessed enough to know her will carry a memory that time can never take away.

Today, we don't just mourn the life we've lost. We celebrate the beautiful life she lived and the love she gave so freely.

If there is one thing we can do to honor Nana, it is to continue living by the example she left us.

Love your family a little harder.

Make time for the people who matter.

Take the trip.

Make the memories.

Show kindness to someone who needs it.

Find the good, even when life makes it difficult.

And when the music starts playing, don't be afraid to dance.

Because one day, all of us will leave behind a dash of our own. And what matters most is what we choose to fill it with.

A mother's love doesn't end with her last breath. It lives on in her children, in her grandchildren, in her great-grandchildren, in family traditions, in familiar sayings, in old photographs, and in the countless memories that will be shared for generations.

So today, we say goodbye with tears in our eyes, gratitude in our hearts, and the comfort of knowing that being loved by her was a gift we will always carry.

Nana, thank you for the sacrifices we saw and the countless ones we never knew about.

Thank you for the laughter, the lessons, the memories, and the unconditional love that held this family together.

We find comfort in believing that Joel was there to welcome you home, that your pain is gone, and that you are dancing once again.

Rest peacefully, Nana.

Your work here is done. Your family will carry your legacy forward, your stories will continue to be told, and your memory will live within each of us.

Because a mother's love never dies.

And neither will ours for you.

Until we meet again, Nana.

Forever loved. Forever missed. Forever remembered.