

By Mina Parsont (Nelee's sister)

This is going to be the hardest letter I have ever written!

Dear Nelee,

In your film "Tombees du Ciel" you mention that you have taken care of me while we were separated from our parents during the war. That you did, indeed, but you have actually taken care of me and protected me throughout my life, especially these past few months during my dear husband's illness prior to his passing.

You have always wanted the best for me. You were even concerned about the way I looked! You wanted me to be well dressed. Debra informed me that you had told her to tell me that I should never the blouse that I had worn soon after my arrival this past July. You were thinking of me even during this terribly difficult time. I have not worn it since but cannot promise that I shall never wear it again.

Nelee, you have been the most courageous, the most helpful and thoughtful sister. You have also been the best daughter who visited our mother at her nursing home every single day during four years, the best wife, mother, grandmother and aunt. You never forgot birthdays, anniversaries and other happenings. You crossed the U.S.A. on many occasions in order to attend family events, such as Debra's dancing performances in New York, Margot's graduation also in New York, Marc and Heidi's wedding in Virginia, my 50th wedding anniversary in Maryland, my 75th birthday and Marc 50th this past April in Virginia. You also enjoyed granddaughter Cara's dance performances and grandparents' day at her school.

You can be very proud of your great daughters who took care of you in such a loving way. I will always remember the way they lifted you off your hospital bed.

I will never forget the day that you called to let me know that had found the children of the Christian family who had sheltered us during the war. You spent part of the next day composing a letter to send to Claude Beraud, the oldest. You read part of it to me. You wanted my opinion. You wanted it to be perfect, as always. You worked so hard planning our reunion in Bordeaux in 1998 which was a great success.

You were also the most faithful friend. A few days ago, one of your childhood friends from France stated over the phone the following (allow me to first say it in French):

J'AVAIS SON VISAGE DEVANT MOI,

ELLE NE ME QUITTAIT PAS...

(Her face was in front of me...She was not leaving me/she was at my side)

Nelee, you are in front of me, in front of us. You are not leaving us. You are with us now and forever but you are leaving a hole in my heart.

Nelee, je t'aime!