

Appamma – My Inspirational Grandmother

The fondest memories I have of Appamma was the time she came to stay with us in South Africa in 1996. Although relatively old at that time, you would never be able to say it. I remember going to school and we would come back everyday to lunch that Appamma had spent the entire mornings cooking for us. I think Tuesdays and Fridays were the most challenging for her because she found it very difficult to cook the vegetables without a little *kooni* or dry fish

or maldive fish added to it to enhance the flavour which is the typical Batticaloa way of cooking!

During my Arangetram in 1999, Appamma ensured that everyone in the house (and god knows there were tons of people that came in and out) was entertained and fed. She was always in the kitchen cooking or making tea etc. Appamma had a very generous nature and always gave everyone as much as she could, without holding back. This especially applied when it came to her sons and her grandchildren. Every time someone went to Sri Lanka she would send us a whole lot of sweetmeats. Appa always got a packet of cashew nuts that he would try his best to hide from us. When we complained to Appamma about this she would say that she sent those especially for her son!

She was greatly loved and respected by her sons who stood true to her till the very end of her life. Although they all wanted her to live with them she always wanted to stay in the house Appappa built and I'm glad that she passed on from there. She never wanted to be a burden to any of her sons and always wanted to be independent and she managed to do this till the end of her life. Her life has inspired me in so many ways and I am thankful to God for giving me a wonderful woman as a grand mother.

I wish we could have spent more time with her and gone to visit her more often but that was not always possible. Nonetheless, I'm glad we got to spend a little time with her when she came to South Africa on two separate occasions. We got to experience her jovial and adventurous nature when we went traveling around South Africa with her. Although she found it difficult to walk long distances sometimes, she was always game to do everything.

As her eldest grand child and the only grand-daughter until little Suruthy was born, I had the privilege of being her favourite one for a long time. Since my maternal grand mother passed away long before I was born it was Appamma who played both the roles in my life and I dearly cherish her memories.

May God bless her soul.

South Africa

Katpaham Shantikumar

Tribute to a Loving Grandmother

Appamma, as we lovingly called her, was the most prominent grandparent in my life. My earliest memory of her was when she came to visit us in South Africa in 1996. I was 10 years old, and I vaguely remember that first moment we were in her presence. We embraced for the first time (that I could remember) and I couldn't explain it at the time, but looking back I now understand exactly what was happening. It was a simply, an intense, loving bond shared between a Grandmother and her grandson

During her trip in 1996, Appamma taught us Tamil, and the surprising part was we weren't resistant to learn. Amma had tried for so many years to get us to learn it, but we were always uncooperative. We really did enjoy her lessons. I suppose it was because Appamma was a teacher by profession. And to my knowledge, we were her last pupils which is something I'll always cherish.

I personally am very honoured to have been part of her life. She was truly a role model to me. Especially now, knowing of her accomplishments. After Appappa died, she raised five boys into successful men. A feat not many can accomplish. Though there were hardships, all the sweat, blood and tears paid off. Not only are my uncles and my father successful in terms of their careers, but all the values, morals and principles that were instilled in them by her, are still intact! And that has been passed onto our generation and will surely be passed onto the generation after.

Being her eldest grandson, I feel more inclined to live up to everything she expected of me. To live by the morals and values she expects me to live by. And one day I will look back on my life, look up and say "Its all thanks to you Appamma". Because I know she is watching over me, guiding me to always take the right path!

Rest in Peace Appamma,

South africa

Kumaran Shanthikumar

A Tribute to my Appamma

My earliest memory of Appamma was of her teaching me Tamil when she came to Mafikeng. We were sitting at the dining room table with my books. The memory is very fuzzy as I was only 8 years old then. All I remember was that I was not very happy to be there because I was very reluctant to learn.

I remember the last time I spoke to her. It was on her birthday last year. The conversation started with me saying

‘Happy Birthday’ in my best Tamil accent. She then replied, ‘Thank you, thank you, “Enna seykirai Mahane?” I was pretty much up the river without a paddle at this point. The conversation being the river in this metaphor and the paddle being my Tamil or lack of it. I tried my best to string a few random words together, but to no avail. I ended up just passing the phone to Kumaran who had taken a keen interest during her classes. I guess I should have paid more attention those many years earlier when she was trying to teach. Even though I was unable to converse fluently with her I always felt an extraordinary attachment towards her which the words can not describe.

When I look back at her life I find there is so much to learn from it. She has been a great mother to all her sons who dearly loved her to the end; A loving grand mother to all of us who I am sure will become successful as our fathers whom Appamma brought up single handedly after Appappa’s death.

I thank God Almighty for the life of Appamma and the painless death she had

May her soul rest in peace

South Africa

Kohulan Shantikumar

என் அப்பம்மா

ஒருவன் தானும் நன்கு வாழ்ந்து மற்றவர்களையும் வாழ வைக்கும் போது முழு மனிதனாகிறான். அந்த வகையில் அப்பம்மாவை நான் முழு மனிதனாகக் காண்கிறேன்.

அப்பம்மா மறைந்து ஒரு வருடமாகிறது. அவர் நினைவுகள் என்றும் எங்கள் மனதில் இருக்கும். நாங்கள் அக்கரைப்பற்றில் வசித்து வந்த காலத்தில் விடுமுறை நாட்களில் அப்பம்மாவைப் பார்க்க வருவோம். அங்கு விளையாட இடமில்லாமல் இருந்த எனக்கு இங்கு பெரிய வீடும் வளவும் விளையாட பெரிய சந்தோஷமாக இருக்கும். நாங்கள் வந்து நிற்கும் வேளையில் காலையில் அப்பம் சுட்டுத் தருவார். லோகி அக்கா, கவின் அண்ணா, பிரவின் அண்ணா எல்லோரும் வருவார்கள். சந்தோஷமாக விளையாடுவோம். பெரியப்பா, அப்பா, சித்தப்பா எல்லோரும் சிறு வயதில் விளையாடிய விளையாட்டுப் பொருட்களைக் கூட பத்திரமாக வைத்திருந்து நான் விளையாட எடுத்துத் தருவார். எனக்கு தபால்தலை சேகரிக்கும் பழக்கம் இருந்ததையறிந்து அண்ணாச்சிப் பெரியப்பாவின் புத்தகங்களை எடுத்துத் தந்தார். அத்துடன் அவரிடமிருந்த வெவ்வேறு நாடுகளின் நாணயங்களை எல்லாம் எனக்குத் தந்தார்.

ஒவ்வொரு வருடப் பிறப்புக்கும் நான் அப்பம்மாவின் காலில் விழுந்து ஆசீர்வாதம் வாங்கி கைவிசேஷம் பெறுவேன். மற்றவர்களை விடக் கூடுதலாகக் காசுகிடைக்கும் என்பகற்காகத் தான் நான் காலில் விழுவதாக எல்லோரும் கேலி செய்வதுண்டு. உண்டியலில் காசு நிரம்பியதும் எனக்குத் தருவார். Cross stitch அலங்காரம் செய்த தலையணையுறைகள் எனக்குத் தைத்து தந்திருக்கிறார். நான் மட்டுமே அவருக்கப் பக்கத்தில் இருந்த பேரன் என்பதனால் அவருக்கு யார் எதைக் கொடுத்தாலும் அதை எனக்கே தருவார்.

அப்பம்மாவுக்கு நோய் அதிகரித்து மட்டக்களப்பு பெரியாஸ்பத்திரிக்கு மாற்றுவதற்கு சில மணித்தியாலங்களுக்கு முன்பு கூட அம்மாவிடமும் அப்பாவிடமும் என்னை நன்றாகப் பார்த்துக் கொள்ளும் படியும், படிக்கச் சொல்லி அதிகம் வற்புறுத்த வேண்டாமென்றும் கூறியிருக்கிறார். நான் வகுப்பு முடிந்து வந்து பார்க்கும் போது மயக்க நிலையிலிருந்தார். அதன் பின்னர் அவருக்கு நினைவு திரும்பவில்லை.

அப்பம்மாவின் நினைவுகள் மறக்கமுடியாதவை. அவர் எங்களை யெல்லாம் விட்டுப் பிரிந்தாலும் மேலுலகிலிருந்து ஆசீர்வதித்துக் கொண்டிருப்பார்.

சிங்கப்பூர்

ராகுலன் யோகேஸ்வரன்

OUR APPAMMA

My appamma is the only grandparent that I have met because all the rest died before I was even born. When we visited her she always cooked my favourite meal and she took care of me, my brother and sister. She also talked to me and always gave us some sweets when we finished eating our lunch in Sri-Lanka. She always looked forward to seeing us and so did we. I really miss her now.

U.K.

Harry Surendran

My Appamma

My Appamma was very special to me. She was the only living grandparent on my father's side. She was caring and loving. She always let us stay in her house when we go to Sri Lanka.

I visited her three times. I could not remember the first trip but my parents told me that I sat on the parapet wall and fell down and it caused me to have a big bump on my head. I could remember the second trip a bit, I played cricket with Vimal Mama, Ragulan and some other friends. Even though I was not good at cricket, I enjoyed myself very much. Also I remember that Kumaran almost threw me into the well, but of course it was for fun.

During my third trip I had a chance to meet all my Periappas and cousins but my cousins Katpaham, Kumaran and Kohulan couldn't make it. I had a great time with my Periappas, Periammas, cousins and Appamma. Appamma was very happy to see all her sons and her grand children. I also had a great time in the portable pool with Aathithan,

Pradha and Meenachi. Amma told me that Appamma cooked her special '*Appam*' for everyone, she started at 7o'clock morning and ended at 11.30 a.m. unfortunately, there was nothing left for her to eat. I think she loved all of us, and wanted us to be happy.

Appa told us lot of stories about appamma, especially of her strict discipline, kindness and her hard work to raise her sons. Amma also told that when ever Appamma visits us in Singapore she always took care of me and even fed me (we still have photos of Appama feeding me).

I am very thankful to Appamma for all her love and kindness she showed us over the years. Now we will never have the chance to re-live the happy moments with Appamma. I will never forget her.

I love you Appamma and may your soul rest in peace

Singapore

Sangkit Sathiyendra