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Good afternoon, and thank you for being here to honor my sister, Evelyn Grace Carter—our Evie.

I’m her younger sister, and for as long as I can remember, Evie was my steady place to land.
She was born on February 3, 1956, and she left us at 68—too soon for us, just right for her quiet kind of completeness.

We grew up in Des Moines where she learned early how to listen more than she spoke.
She earned a degree in English—no surprise to anyone who saw the stack of books by her bed—and she spent thirty years pouring that love of words into middle school students.
That’s an age that scares some people.
Evie never flinched.
She understood that a kid with a loud voice might be hiding a soft heart, and a kid who never raised a hand might be solving the whole puzzle in their head.

In those three decades, she mentored more students than any one of us can count.
They kept finding her even after graduation—notes slipped under the school office door, chance encounters in grocery store aisles, and once, a very tall firefighter who appeared at the literacy center just to say, “You got me through eighth grade.”
She kept his thank-you card in a little box with so many others, not as trophies, but as reminders that words can be shelter.

Evie moved to Portland when she retired, to be near family and to be part of the everyday texture of our lives.
She loved the soft rain, the library on the corner, and the way her roses did

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better than anyone warned her they would.
She’d go out in the morning with her mug of tea and talk to those plants like old friends.
She knew which ones needed a little more sun, which ones were stubborn, and which ones would open when you weren’t looking.

If you knew Evie, you knew how steady she was.
She was generous in the quiet ways—showing up with soup, not asking what you needed, just placing it on the counter and asking where you kept the bowls.
She was an attentive listener who could let your tangled thoughts unspool without rushing them.
There was a quietly witty line tucked somewhere in her pocket for when the room needed a smile.
And in every storm, she was dependable.
We tested that more times than we meant to, and she met us each time with patience, a plan, and sometimes a crossword clue to lighten the mood.

Some of my favorite hours with her were the late-night teas on her porch during summer visits.
We’d talk until the crickets took over and even the street seemed to sleep.
She never concluded those talks for me.
She’d ask one more question, and it would sit beside my cup like a small lamp, so I could find my own way.
That was her teaching, just without the whiteboard.

Her faith was like that lamp, too—simple, steady, never a show.
She found comfort in short prayers and practiced her faith through consistent acts of service.
At the literacy center, she learned the schedules of volunteers so she could cover the quiet hours.
If a student needed a ride, she drove.
If a family needed a book in a language they could share, she found it or she wrote the note that would open the right door.

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She was preceded in death by our parents, Harold and June.
She carried their best qualities forward—the sturdiness from Dad, the hospitality from Mom—and she made them her own.
Evie is survived by her husband, Robert, who loved her with a patience that matched her own.
She’s also survived by two nieces and a nephew she treated like her own children.
They will tell you about birthday letters with folded newspaper clippings inside, and how Aunt Evie would sit on the floor to be exactly at their eye level, even when her knees did not agree.

What people will miss most is already being felt—the calm she brought into every room and the handwritten notes that seemed to arrive at the precise moment you thought you were invisible.
She had a way of ending those notes with one question—never advice—that lingered just long enough to turn doubt into motion.
I’ve found a few of those notes tucked into cookbooks and the pocket of a winter coat.
They still do what they did the first day: slow my breathing, widen the path.

Evie loved small, durable joys.
Historical novels with dog-eared pages.
Roses that taught patience.
Crosswords she insisted were better in pencil “because nobody is right on the first try.”
And a kettle on the stove, always ready for whoever might walk through the door.
If you listen for her, you may hear that kettle most of all.

Grief can make everything feel heavy.
Evie would not ask us to pretend it isn’t.
But she would ask us to carry it with purpose.
Read to a child, even if you’re tired.
Tend to something that grows slowly.

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Write the note you've been meaning to write.
Ask one good question, then wait for the answer.

If you wish to honor Evie in a way that would have made her smile, she asked that memorial donations support the youth literacy programs she cared about so deeply.
Our family is gathering and sharing those details, and you can reach us at cto@kuchventures.com.
She would say that every new reader is a kind of rose—just waiting for light, water, and someone patient enough to see what's possible.

Robert, thank you for the steadiness you gave her and for how gently you let the rest of us love her, too.
To her nieces and nephew—she saw you, each of you, and she loved the distinct sound of your laughter.
To her students, former and current—you were never just a class roster to her; you were stories she carried forward, proud and protective.

Tonight, when the house is quiet, I'll make a cup of tea and step onto the porch.
I will listen for the crickets and try to hear what she always heard beneath them: that the world is still full of sentences waiting to be finished, and that we get to help finish them.

Thank you, Evie, for every calm you brought, for every page you turned, for every note you sent out into the world and into us.
We will keep reading.
We will keep tending.
We will keep asking good questions.
And we will love as you did—steadily, generously, and without fanfare.

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