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Hi everyone.

Thank you for being here to celebrate the life of my mom, Linda Marie Bennett—Lin to almost everyone who loved her.

Lin was born on January 3, 1955, in Denver. She made it to 69 years, and she filled those years the way she filled a room—warmth first, laughter close behind, and the smell of something good coming out of the oven not far away.

In her twenties, she did what her heart told her to do—she traveled. She collected sunrises, maps with coffee stains, and friends in unexpected places. Eventually, she came home to Colorado, rolled up her sleeves, and started a small bakery that somehow became the neighborhood's living room. People came in for sourdough and left with community. That was Lin's kind of alchemy.

She was partnered with Robert for twenty beautiful years. She was a mom to three—Evan, Zoe, and me—and a very proud grandma to two spirited little ones who already know that Sunday mornings are supposed to smell like bread and sound like a contagious laugh.

My relationship with my mom? I was her son, her co-pilot, her adventure buddy. We shared road trips that felt like long, winding playlists; late-night tacos eaten in parking lots that somehow tasted better than anything fancy; and heart-to-hearts that always seemed to land exactly where I needed them to.

If you knew Lin, you knew her spirit. Adventurous, creative, spontaneous, and fiercely loyal. She was the person who would text, "Want to catch the sunset?" at 4:12 p.m. and be waiting at the car with a thermos at 4:15. She never believed life had to wait for a plan. She believed in the spark of the moment, in saying yes to something a little wild, in finding the joy—because, as she loved to

say with that grin of hers, “Find the joy—there’s always a little spark somewhere.”

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The bakery wasn’t just her work; it was her heartbeat. Her sourdough had this crisp, singing crust, and she treated starters like they were family heirlooms. She mentored young bakers with generous hands and a steady voice. She taught them technique, yes, but also courage—how to trust your senses, how to keep going when a loaf falls flat, how to remember that every good thing rises in its own time. When the community needed help, Lin was already proofing dough and planning a fundraiser before anyone asked. She could rally a neighborhood with a tray of rolls and a can-do smile.

My favorite memory with her is a night I’ll hold forever. A spontaneous road trip to the desert to watch a meteor shower. We drove until the radio filled with static and the highway went quiet. We spread blankets on the hood, held hot cocoa in our hands, and watched the sky open up. The meteors kept surprising us—and every time they did, Mom would let out this delighted sound, half laugh, half gasp, like the universe had just told her the funniest secret. We talked about everything and nothing—dreams, recipes we hadn’t tried yet, how love feels like a kind of gravity. That night was simple, and it was everything.

Lin was spiritual in a way that felt grounded and generous. Gratitude wasn’t a ritual; it was her language. Nature was her sanctuary, whether it was a trail she knew by heart or a single wildflower growing through a crack in the sidewalk. She believed in the sacredness of everyday kindness—how a warm loaf on a doorstep or an extra seat at the table could be a prayer. In her presence, ordinary moments became a little more holy.

She loved hiking—boots dusty, camera swinging from her neck as she stopped to frame a shaft of light through aspen leaves. She loved photography—especially the kind that tells a story about people’s hands and laughter and the way flour lingers in the air. She loved live jazz—eyes closed, foot tapping, letting a horn line carry her somewhere bright. And in the kitchen she was a joyful scientist, always experimenting, always inviting someone to

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taste-test, always saying, “What if?” like it was the most magical question in the world.

What we’ll miss most is easy to name and hard to live without. Her contagious laugh that broke tension like a match to kindling. The way Sunday mornings smelled—yeast, butter, cinnamon, a welcome you could breathe in. Her fearless encouragement, which arrived like a pep talk and felt like a hand at your back. If you doubted yourself, she’d tell you a story about the first time she burned a batch and how she learned more from that one tray than from a dozen perfect bakes. With Lin, mistakes were never a verdict. They were part of the recipe.

To Robert—thank you for loving her with such steadiness. For two decades, you were her partner in all things: the quiet mornings, the late-night cleanup after a fundraiser, the long drives with the windows down. She adored the life you built together.

To Evan and Zoe—Mom was so proud of you. She cheered your strengths, saw the beauty in your quirks, and trusted you to find your own trails. And to her grandkids—she bragged about you with a baker’s pride, like you were her finest creation. You will always carry her in your giggles, in the way you look up at the night sky, and in the butter on your fingers.

Lin taught us to live with open hands. To give freely, forgive quickly, and show up with something warm to share. She taught us that community is a verb. That the table gets bigger when we pull up another chair. That love is not a scarce ingredient. And that joy is not naïve—it’s a choice we make together, even on the hard days.

She also taught us to say yes—to the hike even if the trail is muddy, to the new recipe even if the first try flops, to the road trip even if the map is vague. She believed that spontaneity could be a spiritual practice. That changing plans to catch a meteor shower is an excellent use of a Tuesday.

And she taught me, personally, how to listen with my whole heart. How to be

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brave enough to try, and humble enough to try again. How to laugh at myself and rinse the bowl and start over. She was my mom, and she was my adventure buddy, and I am who I am because of those miles we shared and the tacos we inhaled on the way.

So how do we honor her today, at this celebration of life? I think we do it the way she would want: by noticing the sacred in the ordinary. By bringing a loaf to a neighbor. By mentoring someone who’s just getting started. By finding the little spark of joy when the day feels dim and choosing to fan it brighter.

When grief sneaks up—and it will—let’s remember her words: “Find the joy—there’s always a little spark somewhere.” Maybe that spark will be in a warm slice of sourdough passed around a table. Maybe in the flash of a camera capturing a messy, happy moment. Maybe in a sax solo that turns a room gold. Maybe in a desert sky that reminds us how vast and generous the universe can be.

Tonight, if you can, step outside and look up. If the clouds are kind and the stars are out, let yourself be small and grateful. Think of Lin on that car hood, cocoa in hand, eyes bright, counting streaks of light and gasping with delight. Think of her faith in good things rising. Think of the way she loved each of us—fiercely, creatively, without reservation.

Mom, Lin, thank you for every loaf, every laugh, every mile, every mercy. Thank you for teaching us that love is an action and joy is a practice. Thank you for the courage you lent us and the community you made.

We will carry your spark forward. We will make room at the table. We will say yes to the road, yes to the moment, yes to the mystery. And on Sunday mornings, when the house fills with that familiar smell, we’ll know you’re near.

We love you. We celebrate you. And we’ll keep finding the joy, just like you taught us.

If anyone needs a copy of this eulogy you can reach me at cto@kuchventures.com.

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