

Lisa Reiter

The Miracle Tree

Last year's Christmas tree was the perfect tree for me. The tree was perfectly shaped and full. After spending the day decorating with lights and ornaments, I thought it was beautiful. But, it became the miracle tree on the day my grandma came to visit. That tree, to all our surprise, helped her to remember Christmas.

My grandma has Alzheimer's, and she doesn't remember much. When my grandma walked into the house that day, she smiled and said, "It smells just like Christmas." Her eyes lit up when she saw the decorated tree, full of ornaments she had passed on to us after moving to the care center. She looked at me with the biggest smile I've ever seen. For just a few hours, she was the smiling, happy grandma I remember.

My family, Grandma and I all sat around the tree remembering the Christmases we shared at her house when we helped decorate her tree. We remembered Grandpa bringing in the tree; he *hated* to pay for them. Grandma had to have Grandpa re-adjust the tree, (to hide the holes) at least three times before she would let him put the lights on. Then, it was the grandkids turn to put the unbreakable decorations on the tree. Only then could we get out the delicate ornaments that went way on top of the tree and *only* grandma could touch those ones. Those special ornaments, hanging on our tree, were the ones that helped grandma remember Christmas.

Although Christmases come and go, there are certain moments we cherish always. I will remember that Christmas and the miracle tree because of the smile it put on my grandma's face. It's a smile I will never forget, a Christmas miracle that started with a perfect tree.