

The Peale, Baltimore

Out of the Blocks Storytelling Series

Recorded by Aaron Henkin; Photographs and Music by Wendel Patrick

Produced for the *Out of the Blocks* website, created by the Peale, <https://ootb.thepeale.org/>

Out of the Blocks is supported by PRX and produced with grant funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the National Endowment for the Arts, the Cohen Opportunity Fund, The Hoffberger Foundation, Patricia and Mark Joseph, The Shelter Foundation, The Kenneth S Battye Charitable Trust, The Sana and Andy Brooks Family Fund, The Muse Web Foundation, and the William G. Baker, Jr. Memorial Fund, creator of the Baker Artist Portfolios



Pamela Martin ([00:01](#)):

Best Used Appliances, may I help you? Pamela Martin, 2126 Edmondson Avenue, Baltimore, Maryland, 21223. I'm a store manager. I not only take care of incoming traffic as far as customers on the phone delivery, service calls, pricing, touching up, things in that nature. My mom had a mental illness. She had gotten hit by a milk truck when she was... in 1920 after she had my brother and I. Put her in a coma for a couple of weeks and therefore gave her a chemical imbalance, which caused paranoia, bipolar symptoms. When she would have her breakdowns, as they called them, nervous breakdowns at the time. My younger brother and I by a year would have to, we went in foster care. So I'm the age three till I was approximately about 14 on and off because my mom was sick and wasn't able to take care of us like that. But she would always bring us home when she was able, when she was well, we were with her.

Speaker 2 ([01:08](#)):

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Was dad in the picture or?

Pamela Martin (01:10):

No, mm-mm (negative). When I lost my mom, I was there by her side, mainly the last three weeks of her life. And I'd seen a lot of changes and a lot of things that I would have never experienced. I've never experienced in my entire life. The cancer had grown from 2.5 centimeters to 10 centimeters in a month, a matter of three months. She had lung cancer. I'm going to be totally honest with you here, I'm not a big religious person and my mom was. And I would talk to her about God because that's what she believed in. And the hardest thing I ever dealt with that whole entire situation was when my mother looked at me and told me that she didn't want to die. I had to turn my head. I just turned my head from her real quick and just got myself together very quickly and said to my mom, "Go be with God, mum. Go be with God."

But the thing is that I'll share with you that I've never experienced in my entire life, that was my first earth experience to say. Number one, number two, my mom was 65 years old when she passed away. And when my mom passed away, she went back, I know 20 years. It was amazing. I've never, ever seen somebody so much at peace. She had not one wrinkle, her loose skin on her neck was gone, her mouth completely closed. I mean, she was gorgeous and I'm not exaggerating. I mean and I know this sounds crazy, but I wish I would have took a picture because people would have been blown away. It was amazing.

Of course after my mom passed, I had to go to her apartment for some personal things and a couple of items I was looking for, specifically her poetry. With her paranoia, she would hide things in odd, different places. And she sat a particular spot on the right hand end of the sofa at most of the time. And I lifted a cushion and there was a vanilla folder there. And I started breezing through the many poems that she had written that were on special type of paper. I found, God Gave Me You, which was dedicated to my brother and I from my mom.

And also I found this another one that I thought would be perfect for her the day of her viewing. So this is the name of it and this is how it reads. "Someday I'll meet him face to face. Jesus is my light, my day, I love him every way. He is my soul, my heart embrace. Someday, I'll meet him face to face. My anchor, my privilege, my love by far. The Lord Jesus, my every star. Jesus, my light, my faith in him. He shows me love again and again. Someday I'll meet him face to face. I cannot erase my sin, but my Lord can, again and again," by Diane Roxy.