

Grandma Mary had beautiful, soft hands. Her graceful fingers had often touched Chanel No.5 to her neck. Now, however, Mary lay silently in her bed as her body followed its natural process of leaving this life. An ICU nurse acquainted with death, **Brooke** did what came easily to her. She combed Mary's hair, adjusted her sheets, and moistened her lips, attending to details that expressed compassion. Then she found herself alone with Mary for two more hours. At first bored, Brooke frequently checked the time for when her aunt would return and take up vigil. Eventually, she relinquished the comfortable practice of caregiving tasks and settled into stillness. Brooke became present with Mary. As she sensed her connection to her grandma, memories and tears surfaced together. Brooke observed Mary's room, noticing her carefully chosen cosmetics, her jewelry, and her family genealogy album. What originally felt like a burden of lonely time, Brooke's visit was transformed into a silent sacred exchange between two generations of women. Just hours after Brooke held her grandma's silken hands, Mary left behind her 94 years in the flesh for another life experience. To this day, the fragrance of Chanel No.5 feels like a hug from grandma.

Brooke is Director of the ICU at St. Mark's Hospital.