

“Hello Daddy. Lani Daddy”. I am incapable of counting how many times those words came out of my mouth and yet it doesn’t seem like they were ever said enough. I can’t believe I will never be able to say those words to you again, to see you again, to talk to you again, to hug you again, to tell you I love you just once more. The incapability of hearing your voice again, hearing you call me ‘Ghoghogho’ or sing a very long happy birthday to me deeply disheartens me. I’m left with the echoes you left behind, ringing through my head like a constant reminder of the voice that once was. It doesn’t seem fair. I kept pushing it away, convincing myself that this cannot be real. Convincing myself that if I never think about it, if I constantly distract myself, I will never have to deal with you leaving me. How did I believe such a thing was possible when you played an enormously significant role in my life? I wish we had more time, I wish we spent more time getting to know each other, I wish you were still here. As a father of innumerable children, I understand now that you felt the responsibility to provide for us all and I will forever appreciate, admire and be grateful to you for that.

I remember when I was younger, and I didn’t do something I was supposed to do. That day was the first and only time you beat me with a cane. A day or a couple days after you came to me, sat next to me, apologised to me, and helped me with what I was supposed to have done. I recall this story because no matter how angry you got or how tough you seemed, you always had the kindest most genuine heart. Your heart glowed of the brightest angelic light, and everyone could see it. You always wanted the best for me and cared for me endlessly, and from that day onwards I was sure of it.

The memory I always go back to is the summer of 2019. The day I got my exam results was one of the most special of days. I remember seeing them and instantly crying into your arms. Your smile stretched out willingly from ear to ear. I knew that you were proud of me. I am extremely thankful to have been with you in that moment, and to have felt your overflowing love. It seems inexplicable why when I got my A level results this summer I couldn’t tell you about it, make you proud once more. Following the trip to China, we went to Dubai together and it was just the two of us. I will forever cherish that memory. Being able to spend time with you, just the two of taking on Dubai, is more special to me than you could ever imagine. I remember ironing your clothes and feeling important not only because you trusted me to do so but also because I’m sure you could have ironed it yourself, but you were dependent on me to help you. On the way back, you texted me and told me you were missing me, and that ‘It was a good time together’. It was a great time together, and now I’m the one missing you, every day.

You were in a long draining battle fighting against pain and evil, so I am grateful that what was once an unbearable torture is now an eternal freedom, and what seems like the end of an exceptionally precious life is just the beginning of an eternal wholesome journey into God’s Holy Kingdom of warmth and kindness. I do not fear because I know you are now in the mightiest, purest, and most powerful hands of all. I know you are soaring high and happily in heaven, and that one day I will see your beautiful smile again. One day I will feel your loving and charismatic energy. We will catch up on everything you missed, and I will tell you how much I missed you every unforgiving day that you were meant to be on this Earth with me. But for now, please watch over all of us. Please watch over me and protect

me from up above. Be present through every failure, every achievement, every laugh, every cry, and every single step of the way. I know you won't have the opportunity to physically see me grow but I know you will be with me in spirit through it all: on my wedding day, when I have children of my own, when I graduate, and much more. I know you will always be there. I will be successful and change people's lives for the better, like you did and even more. I will make you proud, you can count on that.

I love you forever daddy. I didn't say it enough times when you were here, so I love you. I love you. I love you.

Goodbye Daddy
Lani Daddy,

Oghogho