

## A Son's Tribute to His Mummy

**Nagulambikai Sivakaruniam (26 August 1936 - 18 January 2026)**

My Dearest Mummy,

I have written many things in my life—professional papers, speeches, lessons, reflections, even an entire book—but nothing has ever been harder than writing this. Words have always been my companion, yet today they feel inadequate, fragile, and small when placed against the life you lived and the love you gave so quietly and so completely.

You left us on **18 January 2026**, just as I had completed my book. It was finished, edited, refined—ready for the world. But fate decided that you would not be here to see it launched. And so, Mummy, this book no longer belongs to me. **It belongs to you.** I dedicate it wholly and unconditionally to you—my first teacher, my moral compass, my unyielding strength, and my greatest inspiration.

## My First Safe Place

Some children remember their mother as a voice. Some remember her as a face.

I remember you as a feeling of safety.

No matter how uncertain the world felt, how overwhelming school, life, expectations, or responsibilities became, there was one unshakable truth I carried with me: Mummy is there. That knowledge alone was enough to steady me.

You never had to announce your presence. Your strength was not loud. It was constant.

I grew up watching you manage the invisible work of life—the work that never earns applause yet sustains everything. You carried burdens without complaint, responsibilities without resentment, and sacrifices without keeping score. The magical

thing is. somehow, you made it all look natural.



## Lessons That Were Never Spoken

You did not sit me down to lecture me about values. You lived them.

From you, I learned discipline without fear, resilience without bitterness, and humility without weakness. I learned that dignity is not something one demands—it is something one practices daily.

I watched how you spoke to others—with gentleness, even when you were tired. I watched how you gave, even when you had little left to give. I watched how you respected my late Pappa—not just as a husband, but as a man devoted to service, education, and society.

You were his quiet partner, his emotional refuge, his stabilising force. While the world saw him as a teacher and civil servant, I saw how **you made his service possible** by holding the home together with unwavering resolve.



## The Turning Point You Gave Me

There is one moment in my life I return to often.

I was young. I was deeply immersed in football—passionate, distracted, convinced that talent alone was enough. You watched silently for a long time. You never mocked my dreams. You never belittled my enthusiasm. But one day, with gentleness and firmness only a mother can wield, you redirected me.

You didn't shout.

You didn't threaten.

You simply stood your ground.

You reminded me—quietly but decisively—that education was my lamp, that discipline was my anchor, and that potential meant nothing without direction.

That moment changed the trajectory of my life.

I even remember the days when you slept in the Hall Sofa just to ensure that I am studying and not asleep in the wee hours of the morning. This is the resultant of my success, which I fully attribute solely to you, Mummy and Pappa

Every qualification I earned, every role I assumed, every room I stood in with confidence—it all traces back to that turning point you gave me. You did not push me forward with force; you guided me forward with wisdom.

If the world today knows me as Dr Sivanesan, it must also know that you shaped that man long before any title ever did.

## Your Love Had No Boundaries

What made your love extraordinary was that it never stopped with me—or with our family and doted my family, especially your granddaughters with love, love and just love.

You opened your heart and home to others naturally, instinctively, without hesitation. Cousins, friends, children who were not your own—you cared for them all with the same quiet devotion. You never made anyone feel like a burden. You made them feel *chosen*.

I watched you feed, nurture, guide, and protect people who had no obligation to you—and you never once sought recognition. You simply believed that if you had the capacity to help, you must.

This, Mummy, is where I learned what true leadership looks like. Not authority. Not status. **Just Pure Service.**

## Faith in Action

Your faith was never performative. It was lived.

You walked alongside Pappa as he went from house to house collecting funds for the Queenstown Sathurthi Ceremony, and joined other women—hands tired, backs bent—preparing Modagam, Lord Vinayagar's favourite, with devotion and joy.

And then you came home and resumed your role as mother, wife, caregiver—without pause, without complaint.

You taught me that faith is not what one says.

It is what one does, repeatedly, even when unseen.

## When Pappa Left Too Soon – on 8 January 2003

When Pappa passed, something profound changed in our home.

And yet—you did not collapse.

Grief came, but it did not break you. You stood upright, dignified, composed. You carried loss with grace and turned sorrow into strength for your children. You became both shelter and direction, exactly as the poem written about you so beautifully says.

You taught me that resilience is not the absence of pain—it is the decision to continue loving life despite it.

## The Book You Never Saw Launched

Mummy, this is the part that aches the most.

You knew I was writing a book. You knew it mattered deeply to me. You saw me labour over drafts, refine ideas, question myself, push through exhaustion. When I finally completed it—you are no longer here.

The book was done.

But my heart is still not ready.

I wanted you to hold it.

I wanted you to smile quietly, the way you always did.

I wanted to say, *“This is because of you.”*

So now, this book carries your name in spirit. Every principle, every lesson, every page is infused with your influence. This dedication is my way of saying what I perhaps did not say enough while you were here:

Thank you, Mummy.



Thank you for the life you gave me.

Thank you for the man you shaped me to.

Thank you for believing in me even when I doubted myself.

My gratitude to you is forever unpaid, and I offer it with reverence, humility, and love.

## My Eternal Salute

You were never loud, never demanding, never self-promoting.

Yet you were formidable.

You showed me that true power is quiet, that real influence is moral, and that the greatest legacy a person can leave behind is character.

You are my role model—not because you were perfect, but because you were consistent, compassionate, and courageous in silence.

Even in your absence, you had, have and will continue to guide me always. I love you Mummy. Thanks for being my Mummy and making me what I am today. It would not have been possible without you, Mummy and Pappa.

Your humble and grateful son,

**Dr S Sivanesan, CIA, CISA, CRISC (alias Thamby Boy)**

## A Tribute to My Dearest Appamah

Appamah was more than just my grandmother — she was one of the brightest lights in my life, a constant presence filled with warmth, love, and quiet joy. When I think of her, the first image that comes to mind is her gentle smile — the kind that made everything feel safe, calm, and beautiful.

From as early as I can remember, Appamah doted on me with endless love. It was a love that asked for nothing in return, a love that was patient, comforting, and always present. Whether it was through her affectionate words, her caring gestures, or simply the way she looked at me with pride, she made me feel deeply cherished every single day.

One of the things I will forever hold close to my heart is how Appamah never missed my birthdays. Year after year, she would be there — celebrating, smiling, and sharing in my happiness. Her presence made each birthday feel complete. It was not just about the celebration; it was about knowing that someone who loved me so deeply was there to witness another year of my life.

Some of my happiest memories are the outings we shared across Singapore. Whether it was a simple family meal, a leisurely trip, or just spending time together outside the home, Appamah joined us with enthusiasm and quiet delight. She did not need grand plans to be happy — being with family was enough. Looking back now, I realise those moments were her way of showing love: by being present, by sharing time, and by creating memories we would one day treasure.

Appamah was also one of my greatest supporters. She gave me unwavering moral strength in everything I pursued, especially in my artistic journey. She attended my Hindustani vocal singing and Kathak dancing performances at the Singapore Indian Fine Arts Society and many other Indian platforms and forums. Seeing her in the audience always filled me with confidence. No matter how nervous I felt before stepping onto the stage, the moment I knew Appamah was watching, I felt reassured.

Her encouragement did not always come in long speeches — often it was a proud smile, a nod of approval, or gentle words after a performance. But those simple gestures meant the world to me. They reminded me to believe in myself and to give my best in everything I do.

What made Appamah truly special was her ever-smiling face. She carried a softness that made people naturally gravitate toward her. There was kindness in her eyes and love in her presence. To me, she was not just a grandmother — she was comfort, reassurance, and unconditional love wrapped into one beautiful soul.

I will miss her more than words can express — her smile, her warmth, her quiet strength, and the way she loved me so effortlessly. But I also know that her love has not

left me. It lives on in my memories, in the values she showed me, and in the courage she inspired within me.



Appamah, thank you for loving me so deeply, for standing by me, and for being such an important part of my life. I will carry your love with me wherever I go, and I hope to make you proud in everything I become.

You will always remain in my heart — not just as my grandmother, but as my guiding light.

**I love you, Appamah. Always and forever.**

Dharini Sivanesan

Granddaughter