

Strength and Courage

By Liesl Garner

We all know someone
who lived through
the Great Depression.

For me – it was my Nana

and what a tower
of strength she was
at 4'9".

She was mighty
within her tiny frame.

Much of her resolve,
I'm sure,
came from days of very little,
days of nothing,
days when no one knew
what would come next.

And they learned
to stick together
to share what little
they had with
those who had less.

They learned to play
games in the face
of uncertainty
and laugh
and show no fear.

They scrimped and saved
and reused whatever
could be washed
out and hung up
to dry and tried
all over again.

My Nana would walk
around her home
in a house coat

with a crumpled kleenex
in the pocket
and her hair up in curlers
every day.

But on the day she
went out to the
grocery store –
that woman was
dressed to the nines!
She looked like a
Saks Fifth Avenue
model in a suit she'd
sewn herself.

Part of this I'm sure,
was because
of growing up a little
hungry –

She knew how to
put on a happy face
and walk with shoulders
straight and back
straight and neck tall;
and no one can tell what
pain you're in
if you walk tall and proud
and wear your best
homemade clothes!

As we near our own
Great Test;
the test of our strength,
test of our will,
test of our spirit,
I find myself getting frightened
until I remember that
Nana lived through it.

Nana became a powerhouse
because of lessons learned

through adversity.

making these days memorable in the history of our race.”

I look around at my friends,
who are standing beside me
on this cliff
looking into
unknown territory;
and I see strength.
Perhaps not full tested,
not completely realized,
but strength and courage
ready for...

Come what may,
we're in this together!

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Great End

I'm going to borrow from one of the greatest speeches in history: Winston Churchill's "Never Give In" speech.

"Never give in. Never give in. Never, never, never - - in nothing, great or small, large or petty – never give in, except to convictions of honor and good sense. Never yield to force. Never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy."

And he summed up his speech with this: "Do not let us speak of darker days: let us speak rather of sterner days. These are not dark days; these are great days - - the greatest days our country has ever lived; and we must all thank God that we have been allowed, each of us according to our stations, to play a part in