



## My best Friend

By Cherokee, 45 years old, 11 years on death row

I was just three when I first met him. His name was John. As I grew up, he was always there for me. Always. When I had problems with my parents we would go somewhere for lunch or dinner and talk for hours.

He always gave great advice. He once told me that if I always did what my heart told me was right, no matter the personal sacrifice, I would never be wrong. I should have listened to him more.

In March of 2021 John was diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer. He never knew he had cancer until then.

Because I was on death row, I wasn't there to talk to him. I wasn't there to let him know what he meant to me. I wasn't there to help him with the things that he suddenly couldn't do himself.

In June of 2021, just three months after his diagnosis, John died. I was devastated.

He was there for me every time I needed him but, when it mattered the most, I wasn't there for him. I think about that constantly. I can only blame myself for creating this situation through terrible decision making.

So, who was John? Who was my best friend? John was my grandfather. And the best friend I ever had.

October 2023

Cherokee can be contacted through [connectdeathrow](http://connectdeathrow.org)