



Dodie's story of  
**Wanda**



Wanda Woodham, a charming, gifted and gregarious, Brazilian woman, died on Mother's Day, May 13, 2007, just one month less a day before her 93rd birthday.

She was fiercely independent, well educated and fluent in Portuguese, English, French and Spanish. She won a scholarship to attend an American university and obtained a degree in science in her second language.

When she shared her scholarship news with her family, her uncle expressed shock that her father was allowing her to go to the U.S.A.

First of all, her uncle insisted, good Brazilian families never allowed unmarried women to go anywhere without a male family member as chaperone and second, to go to the United States of America alone when everyone knew there were no virgins there, was just plain crazy.

Her father disagreed, saying that his daughter had earned the right to choose her own path and she had his blessing. This was unheard of in the Brazil of the 1930s.

In 1944 she married a Canadian and went on to become a high school teacher and later a school administrator and consultant. Her first child was born in 1945, her second in 1950. She lived in Canada for more than 50 years but never lost pride in her Brazilian roots and cultural heritage.

She died while at a special Mother's Day luncheon, with family and friends by her side. She was all dressed up in her best party attire. She was happy, smiling and waving to friends. While waiting for lunch to be served, she put her hand to her chest, turned to her daughter and commented that she felt peculiar. While holding her daughter's hand, she looked up, leaned back, and died.

A good life, a good death. Goodbye, mom.

The attached picture was taken about an hour before she died.