



BARBARA EILEEN BOUDIER

April 4, 2019

Barbara Eileen Boudier, age 79, of Birmingham, Alabama, returned to her heavenly home, suddenly, on Thursday April 4th, 2019. She moved back to Birmingham, a few years ago, to be closer to family and to live with her daughter. She quickly weaved her magic into the fabric of their lives, friends included, cooking up a storm, to everyone's delight, and getting to know her grandkids and great grandkids. She became an active member of her family's beloved church, Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church (OLV) and until recently, was a member of the Adult Choir. When she wasn't singing with the choir she was praying her rosary, and would sit there patiently waiting for practice to be over, so she could head to Applebees, for their weekly outing with her new besties, who shall remain nameless because what goes on at Applebees, stays at Applebees!. She would sit on her throne at the high-top, the center of attention, and regale them with outlandish tales, most not acceptable in mixed company, making them laugh until they cried. Stopping only to flirt with every guy who walked by, except, of course, when a certain brazilian, who shall also remain nameless, was in attendance. Let's just say, there is not enough cold water to put out the fire when the two of them were in the same room. Her daughters cheeks are permanently sunburned from how they made her blush! She equally adored his beautiful brazillian wife, who would take her to play Bingo on Mondays, conveniently held at an establishment that sold libations, and well, as civic minded as they were, willingly participated in the economic stimulus of that certain establishment, offering up their currency in exchange for the libations, fostering the trendy buy local phenomena, helping to create a sense of well being, and laughter, lots of really loud laughter, and before you know it, your understanding of what a simple number means that is called at a Bingo game takes on a whole new meaning that you most likely need to go to confession for! She was truly one of a kind. Born in Brooklyn, New York, the middle child of seven brothers and sisters, to the late John & Lillian McCormick. She was married at 16, to the late Joseph Girace, her first husband, and the father of her daughter, Joann, and sons Paul and John, and at age 19, a child herself, found herself in the daunting position of having to raise three small children on her own. A natural born red-head, true to form, she was tough as nails, working 2-3 jobs to provide for her family in the best way she knew how. She eventually found her niche in the Restaurant and Entertainment industry,

wearing several hats, often at the same time, a waitress by day, a barmaid by night, a hostess, kitchen manager, chef and the occasional gig as a wedding singer, oh and lest we forget, legend has it, that she and her best friend, Judy were the first go-go dancers in New York City. Not the kind we think of today that may involve an apparatus similar to one in a fire station, but instead the sparkly cage that pretty young girls with mini-skirts and go-go boots would dance in during the sixties. From the private clubs of "Little Italy" in NYC, to the sandy beaches in Florida, to the Casinos in Vegas, her beauty and ability to light up a room led to a colorful and eventful life. Barbara was an incredible cook and found her greatest joy cooking for her family and friends, getting together every week with her seven brothers and sisters and their families, eating, drinking, singing while "grandpa", her dad, played the banjo or the "spoons", and her brothers and brother-in-laws, played the guitar, and she and her mother (a/k/a Bingo Lill) and her sisters, sang the old tunes, Heart of my Heart, Anytime, Summertime, In the Still of the Night, A Lion Sleeps Tonight, and her favorite Frankie & Johnny. Along the way, she met and married, her 2nd husband, John Boudier, Sr. (Jack) and gave birth to her youngest son, John, Jr. The Yin to her Yang, Jack provided her the stability and security she yearned for, enabling her to exhale and lean in to rest her weary soul. As her children, we were all astounded to watch our bigger than life, in your face, drop it like it's hot, party till dawn, mother, transform into Suzy homemaker almost overnight. Fiercely protective of our mother, we watched Jack like a hawk, trying to figure out the power he had over her, to the point of Johnny wearing garlic around his neck, and me anointing our rooms with Holy Water! It's amazing how someone so meek and mild can put the fear of God in you! But alas, after a long stint of 20 plus years, different as night and day, the quiet, gentleman Jack was no match for "Red" when "Red" came out to play and they went their separate ways. A heartbreak she never got over but in her resilience, she scooped up one of her many nine lives and forged ahead blazing a trail that will not soon be forgotten! She was the life of the party. She lived every day as if it were her last, often without boundaries, staying true to herself, come what may. A sassy red-head, who loved telling jokes, or stories so wild, they had to be true, because you couldn't make that stuff up, a wise-cracking, forever 21, shameless flirt, who melted the heart of everyone she met! Beloved Mother, in a rebel daughter, not your average mother, kind of way, to her children, including her sons from another mother, Roger and Keefer. Adored by her daughter-in-law, Traci, wife of John, Jr, and Shelly, Johnny's fiancé, proud Nana to her grandchildren, Mitch and Wes, who were given a parting gift by their Nana and a deep respect for the phrase "here's looking at you kid" and Mitch's wife Domini, who bless her heart, at the tender age of 15, was given gifts by Nana and words of wisdom she felt she needed to impart, that typically are not given or discussed until a woman is of legal age, if ever, and usually in brown paper wrappings without identifying characteristics and spoken in hushed tones, behind closed doors, away from children and the faint of heart; Nana to her late grandson Brandon who is now

enjoying her antics as much as we did, Nana, to Jacob, Jaquelyn, Collin, and Deanna whom she spent so many years with that I'm afraid to even imagine what your stories of her are might be, but I'm guessing their awesome because all of you had that gleam in your eyes whenever you saw her, the kind of gleam you have when your with someone who brings you joy, and Nana to Nicole, whom she knew for just a brief period, but who is the spitting image of her Nana, another gorgeous red head that I'm sure she will be watching over, finally able to see her whenever she wants, and Nana to her great-grandchildren, Lawson and Hudson, who also lit-up when they saw her, especially when she would pull out her bottomless bag of candy, never quite knowing what she would say next, they listened to her intently, because it was usually so off the wall it would amuse them for hours, bringing her great joy to see them laugh, and Nana to Liam, and Nicolas who's pictures she spent pouring over this past year bragging to anyone who would listen how handsome her grandsons were and of course they got it from her! Loving sister to the late Patricia (Patsy), and her late brother Alfred (Ally), her sisters Joan (Joanie), Dorothy (Dotty), Kathleen (Kathy), and her baby brother John (Johnny Jr). Aunt Barb or Bebe to her countless nieces and nephews who would flock around her whenever she was around, they too telling the legendary stories about Aunt Barbara. Bahbwa to her friends, especially, our choir crew, whom she shared these past few years with, who appreciated all things Babwha, and gave her the permission to be who she was, and loved her long winded jokes, instigated her precociousness, and helped her sneak drinks, when she thought I wasn't looking, and gave her free license to say whatever she wanted to and because of that they now can tell you stories that would make a grown man blush! I thank you for accepting her so readily into your lives. Once again she felt that she mattered, and instead of being the tough girl, protecting herself, acting out like a defiant child, your love for her allowed her to be vulnerable, laugh at herself, and once again, truly enjoy the skin she was in. You helped me see her in a different light and helped me begin to love her again.

I will forever be grateful for this special gift. That spunky red head to her neighbors who absolutely adored her. I spent a lifetime trying not to be like her, not to make the same mistakes, judging her from the lofty and righteous place that I believed I had attained, hating the choices she made, constantly cleaning up the wake she left behind, only to find, that my Mother was my teacher, teaching me lessons, that kept me on the right path, that kept me safe, lessons that made me desire the life that I was fortunate to give my children. And when she came back into my life, when I was at my lowest point, so lost and lonely, God slammed her in my face, and forced me to recognize and acknowledge how she could or why she took the wrong turns, that I was no better than she and how much alike we truly are. The realization almost destroyed me, and for a brief time, I despised her more than I ever had before but a beautiful thing began to happen and I began to see her without the cloud of indignation over my eyes. I began to appreciate the joy and laughter

she brought wherever she went, I began to notice that people truly enjoyed her company, truly missed her if she wasn't able to be with us. But I also saw the pain in her eyes, either at my hand by an unkind word I would say or the embarrassment she knew I felt when we were with others, or the sly whispers she couldn't help but hear, that were killing her spirit, little by little chipping away at the armor she wrapped herself so tightly in, and the more God forced me to look away from her and look instead at myself, I recognized her broken pieces, because they looked just like mine, I recognized the sighs she let slip when she thought no one could hear when she was trying to mask her pain because it was the same as mine. And the more I saw her in me, the more I saw me in her, and slowly the bitterness I felt toward her started to slip away and before I even knew it I had forgiven her but it had to start with me first forgiving me for the pain I caused her. I am so grateful for this gift the Lord gave us both and although I'm sad now at the loss of her, I know I will be one of those who the memory of her will feel like a hug that you feel straight down to your toes and will cause a smile that I will feel with my soul. I hope the apple doesn't fall from the tree and that her broken pieces will fill in the empty spaces of my broken pieces and make me whole again. My mother, and in the end, my healer, kissing my pain away, nurturing me as a mother does, gentle woman, so filled with love.

The family will be receiving guests from 12:30 PM until 1:30 PM, Monday, April 15, 2019, at Our Lady of the Valley Catholic Church, 5514 Double Oak Lane, Birmingham, AL 35242. There will be a Funeral Mass at the Church at 1:30 PM, Liturgical Ministers Monsignor Paul Rohling and Father Liju Parambath officiating. A reception will follow at the Social Hall at the Church.