

Dreams of

by Renee Love

MOTHERHOOD

I wanted to share a reminder that even dreams that seem impossible may still grow into reality. As the poet William Blake wrote, “What is now proved was once only imagined.”

This is just what happened with my friend Vara. I have never met another person like her or even someone named Vara. It is not a common name, and she was not a common person. Vara may be a variation of the name Sarah, a connection that does not seem coincidental to me.

The biblical Sarah had wanted a baby, but year gave way to year, and there was still no baby. I imagine how Sarah must have felt about her dream, as her dark, raven-hair changed to a stardust swirl of gray and white. I imagine it must have been a day that started out like any other day, but then Sarah’s husband Abraham had unexpected visitors, and one of the guests told Abraham that Sarah would have a baby. When Abraham told his wife what the guest had said, she laughed incredulously. In the months to come, miraculously, Sarah had a baby boy. They named him “Isaac,” which means laughter.

My friend Vara had a similar dream. Physically, she was less than five feet tall and had the tiniest feet, like an ageless goddess from the 1940s, sporting red-hot Coty lipstick and Chanel No. 5 cologne. She was a master gardener, and her yard was a celebration of Mother Nature’s changing moods; anything she touched would grow. One of Vara’s most well-known “miracles” was to bring Christmas poinsettias back to life, a feat that dazzled the neighbors.

Vara and Johnny had always wanted to have a baby, but now Vara was 58 years old, and there was still no baby. I

imagine she could have easily lamented, “It’s too late to have a baby; my dream will never come true now.” But Vara was not like other people; instead of despairing, she continued to pray and to visualize her dream, imagining every detail of her dream as clearly as a photograph while having no idea how such a dream could ever be realized.

One day, new neighbors moved into the house beside Vara and Johnny – a young couple, expecting their first child. Vara and the young Father would talk back and forth over the fence while they did respective yard work, and through such conversations at the rosebushes, Vara learned the couple was looking for a babysitter, someone to take care of their baby when the mother returned to work. Without hesitation, Vara volunteered her childcare services, and the young father agreed.

Although it was certainly not required, Vara purchased everything a baby would need, making a nursery for the baby girl in her home. As the child grew, the room grew along with her, changing to meet every season of the girl’s life. The little girl could not pronounce the name Vara, so she called her by a different name, “Mrs. Page.”

After Johnny died, Mrs. Page and the girl grew even closer. They spent long hours together and had long

conversations; they shared an enthusiasm for creative projects from cross-stitch to gardening. Even after Mrs. Page moved beyond this world, the girl would always feel that Mrs. Page’s house was her first, true home. And this is how my friend Mrs. Page had a baby of her own when she was 58 years old.

I was that baby.

I learned many things from Mrs. Page. She taught me that “The greatest achievements are at first and for a time a dream” (James Allen). She taught me how to pursue dreams, no matter what the dream may be, and, when something feels impossible, she would say that the answers are often, simply, time and patience. ■

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