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Dear family, dear friends, thank you for coming together — in bright colours, just as she wanted — to celebrate the life of my mum, Aisha Rahman, our Ishi.

Mum was born on 22 July 1975 in Birmingham, and she left us at 48.
Those numbers sit there, neat and small, but her life never was.
It was full and generous and gloriously noisy.

In her twenties she moved to London, met and married Karim, and turned a few trays of home-baked experiments into a neighbourhood bakery where everyone who walked through the door felt like they belonged.
If you ever stood by that door, you'll know the feeling — the hug first, then the aroma of cardamom buns and saffron cakes, and then her laugh rolling out from the kitchen like it had been waiting just for you.

To me, she was Mum, but also my fiercest supporter and my favourite person to laugh with.
We were inseparable.
My sharpest, happiest memory is us dancing to 90s bhangra in the kitchen while the dough proved — wooden spoon as a microphone, both of us singing off-key, both of us crying with laughter.
If you ever wondered what resilience sounds like, it might be that: a laugh that filled the room, even on the days when the ovens misbehaved and the world felt heavy.

She built a life with Dad — Karim — that was practical and tender in equal measure.
She raised Zara and Omar with the same warmth you felt at the bakery door.
She was the loving daughter of Fatima and Khalid, and she held our big family of cousins close, always finding space at the table, always knowing who liked extra saffron and who was secretly here for the savouries.

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Mum was self-made in the best sense.

She perfected her spice blends the hard way — early mornings, burnt trays, notebooks stained with tea — and then she shared what she'd learned.

She mentored young entrepreneurs, taught them costings and courage, and reminded them that kindness is not a soft skill.

Recipe testing ran late into the night.

Cricket murmured from the radio.

There were community fundraisers circled on the calendar and, when the lights went down, there were cups of chai with friends, the steam curling into the kind of conversations that make a neighbourhood stronger.

What defined her?

She was resilient, yes, and quick-witted — those side comments that made you snort into your pastry — and generous in ways that didn't ask for applause.

She stood up for the underdog as naturally as breathing.

She believed in hospitality, in charity, in inclusion that wasn't a slogan but a seat pulled out and a plate passed over.

What will we miss?

Her warm hugs at the bakery door.

Her perfectly balanced spice blends that somehow tasted like home for people from fifty different homes.

And her gift for making everyone feel seen — not in a grand gesture, but in the way she remembered your story and asked about the bit you didn't say out loud.

To Dad, to Zara and Omar, to Nana and Dada — Karim, my brother and sister, Fatima and Khalid — and to our cousins and friends who became family, I know today stings.

But look around.

Mum's life is in this room: in your colours, in your stories, in the way you greet one another with warmth first and words second.

That's her, still opening the door.

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After the service, her favourite pastries will be shared — please take one, or two, and tell a story while you eat.
And if you’re able, donations to a local food bank would mean the world; she believed no one should ever have to choose between dignity and dinner.

Mum, Ishi, thank you for the recipes and the courage, for the laughter in the kitchen and the standard you set — to welcome, to help, to stand up, to dance even when the dough’s not ready.
We’ll keep the oven warm.
We’ll keep the door open.
And we’ll keep your laugh alive in the way we love each other.

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