



## Naomi Evadney (Mortenson) Shelnut

May 2, 1935 - August 31, 2017

Naomi Evadny Mortenson Shelnut was born on May 2, 1935 in New York City and went to join our ancestors on August 31, 2017 in Sacramento, California. Present at her bedside during her transition was her beloved daughter Stacey Shelnut-Hendrick, son-in-law Ellsworth Deron Hendrick; grandson Tour? Sylvester Deron Hendrick, whom she adored beyond words; faithful sister Lillian Mortenson Braxton and niece Brenda Braxton. Raised in the Bronx, Naomi was the elder sister to Lillian and Alfred Mortenson. She attended P.S. 54, Prospect Junior High School, Central Commercial High School (later known as Norman Thomas High School) and studied for two years at Herbert H. Lehman College. While at Prospect JHS, Naomi met Sylvester ?Shorty? Shelnut, whom she married on December 22, 1956. For 35 years, until his death in 1992, Naomi and Shorty were a strong, hardworking, and loving couple, and to their union was born Stacey Louise. Naomi was known for her diligent work ethic. Her career began at Metropolitan and Harlem Hospitals and later went on to City College of New York. In 1978, Naomi was very proud to be appointed the Administrative Assistant to the Vice Chancellor for Special Programs of The City University of New York. She served in the same role for the Dean for University Affairs and Educational Development. She was then promoted to Higher Education Associate for the Vice Chancellor for Faculty and Staff Relations, the position from which she retired in 1991. Naomi?s retirement was anything but quiet. She was a volunteer for Court-Appointed Special Advocates, Inc. (CASA), East Harlem Tutorial program, The

Foundation for AIDS Research, Roundabout Theatre Company, YUM Fresh Food program at Isabella's Senior Citizen Center, and conducted art workshops all over New York for Elder Craftsman, Inc. and the S.T.A.R. Senior Center, where she was a member. Naomi liked to travel ? going on a number of cruises and trips to Egypt, Japan, Europe (Paris and London), the Caribbean and Central America. An avid crafter, she was an active member of the 3-D Cloth Doll Club, Quilters of Color Network NYC, Empire Quilters, and Manhattan Doll Club. She also enjoyed aqua aerobics with friends and coordinating groups to see the latest Broadway shows. She attended Fort Washington Collegiate Church, identified for its commitment to social justice. Naomi was preceded in death by her husband Sylvester Shelnut; parents Walter Elias Mortenson of St. Croix, Virgin Islands and Lillian Horry Mortenson of Charleston, South Carolina; her brother Alfred Elias Mortenson; and six half-siblings. In addition to those mentioned above, left to mourn are Naomi's half-sister Melba Mortenson Glover and niece Barbara Taylor Moses; and grand-nieces and nephews. She will be missed by a host of wonderful friends, in-laws (The Hendricks, Herndons, and Bradleys), neighbors, colleagues, and kindred-spirits. Naomi was a force of life and loved by an ever growing circle of family and friends who celebrate her humor, style, candor, loyalty, generosity, determination, compassion, and leadership. She never backed down, gave up, or let it slide. She lived her life ?out loud,? and when asked by her daughter if she had any regrets, her reply was quick, simple and direct?? NOT A THING!?! Naomi's remains will be laid to rest with her late husband Sylvester ?Shorty? Shelnut at Mount Holiness Cemetery. Memorial donations may be made in her honor to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital 501 St Jude Place Memphis, TN 38105

# Tribute Wall

SS

“*Kate, I have put your whole poem up. Please know that it means the world to me!!!*

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**Stacey Shelnut-Hendrick** - May 14, 2018 at 02:40 PM

KI

“*In Memory of Naomi by Kate Iscol (September 2017) There is “Cher” and “Barbara.”There was “Elizabeth” and “Richard.”The world “Michelle” needs neither adjective or full name. iWe will hear the words “Barack” and be inspired to fight for the whole universe.No descriptions! No exclamations!Heroes, artists, do-gooders, rebels become identified by a single word.If you were very lucky and blessed in life you knew “Naomi!”No one ever said, or has asked, “Naomi --who?”An expert of her own magical faces--Devilish, stony, thoughtful, sweet, generous, a maker of dolls,a faker of anger meant to taunt and scare--followed by a grin; if you fell for her act.Only later for train the good and kindness she doled outNever letting on that she manned and a food table as a weekly fundraiser.She helped to create and donate jackets from scraps and jewels from fabricCoins flew from her window to supply neighborhood kids with treats.Her huge lip-kissing so was cheered as a political spoofDo you remember?Naomi stayed with us and New York for her last yearsLater she shared happiness with her adoring family in California.Her sisters and relatives were loved by her.Everyone who knew her has a Naomi memory!She was life and fun and sharpness and theater And music and work and beauty and friendship and Appetite and advice, and the best. “Naomi!”*

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**Kate Iscol** - May 14, 2018 at 02:38 PM

PF

“*A candle was lit in remembrance*

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**Pam Wallace-Campbell and Family** - November 13, 2017 at 06:50 PM

SY

“ To Stacey and family: Mom and I were enriched by sharing time with one another, growing to learn about relationships, sisterhood, and the meaning of "love" that grew through our friendship. We were able to give one another encouragement of strength as both of us experienced our illnesses. The greatest experience we learned was to know that God is the author and finisher of life and that he knows our length of days.

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**Shirley A Young** - October 27, 2017 at 05:31 PM

MG

“ May God continue to bless the family of Naomi Shelnut.

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**Mr. Steven & Mrs. Miriam Glover** - October 25, 2017 at 07:41 PM

KI

“ If you were very lucky and blessed in life you knew "NAOMI". An expert of her own magical faces - devilish, stony, thoughtful, sweet, generous, a maker of dolls. A faker of anger meant to taunt and scare - followed by a grin; if you fell for her act. Everyone who knew her has a Naomi memory! She was life and fun and sharpness and theater and music and work and beauty and friendship and appetite and advice, and the best, "Naomi". An excerpt from the poem " In Memory" by Kate Iscol

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**Kate Iscol** - October 25, 2017 at 06:12 PM