

VERNA'S INTRODUCTION: To understand this poem, you need to know that I am a resident of a nursing home, can no longer walk or talk, and have a feeding tube. At the time I wrote this poem, it had been more than five years since I had a bite of cake.

## A SLICE OF CHOCOLATE BIRTHDAY CAKE

*By Verna Kwiatkowski, for Geneva,  
one of my night aides at Sky View.*

Geneva, I know your birthday has passed,  
For you told me it was in the middle of last  
week. I made signs to say "Happy Birthday!"  
You caught on. You usually know what I "say."

But you didn't stop there; you went on instead,  
Making a request that remained stuck in my head:  
You would come for a slice of birthday cake, you said,  
Adding: "Chocolate, my favorite," while I was still in bed!

It was all said in fun; I knew that very well.  
I like the good clean fun I find where I dwell.  
So I decided to bake you the best chocolate cake  
My imaginary ingredients would allow me to make.

It is round, with two layers, and chocolate icing too,  
But it is also festive, in ways I will describe to you:  
It has multicolored sprinkles, for I do like variety,  
And various colorful candles make it so pretty!

So cut yourself a slice, and enjoy it whenever you can.  
It will always be moist and sweet, and on every diet plan:  
It has zero calories! Even I can eat cake of this kind!  
So let's eat cake as often as you wish. I won't mind!

GOD BLESS YOU, GENEVA!

Love, Verna 413